



Early Years, Year 1

Understanding the World



What does Understanding of the World look like in Early Years at Castle School?

Intent

A stimulating environment is provided which offers a range of activities where children can observe, explore, play and show interest and curiosity both indoors and outdoors, involving objects, people, places and technology. It involves encouraging and guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities given. The concepts of understanding the world helps children learn about similarities and differences in the world around them. They learn to make observations of animals and plants in their environment, to develop a child's familiarity and understanding with technology, being able to talk about themselves and their family through planned activities based on first hand experiences.

Children have access to a wide range of sensory play and use small world toys as well as role play activities to make sense of their physical world and their community. We focus on changes in weather and seasons, dressing up and using symbols to communicate and make sense of the world. They will begin to notice similarities and differences between themselves and others, their family and other people's families. Sharing photographs, a range of books including non-fiction, rhymes and poems and play materials.

We also enjoy celebrating festivals from different cultures, using our senses to explore the natural world and how things work and are encouraged to look closely and talk about what they can see, hear, feel and touch. As well as building on knowledge, extending and developing new vocabulary.

We recognise that Knowledge of the World underpins science, history and geography and as a consequence, children able to access a more formalised approach will have differentiated learning opportunities based upon Cherry Garden planning and assessment.

Implementation – Click on learning map to see implementation

Impact

We structure learning from a child's starting point regarding their understanding of the world. This may result in children being supported to explore equipment or through discreet teaching of topic-based work on 'Myself and my Home' for example. Work is highly differentiated to ensure children gain an understanding of the world we live in and their place within it. We measure outcomes using Cherry Garden and this includes baselining children's understanding of the activities in the Understanding the World outcomes. Progress is recorded and all children make progress across the year.

The Cherry Garden system of assessment provides Castle with a child centred, flexible approach to assessing children with learning differences, which is proven to enhance parental engagement. We ensure all children make measurable progress

which we build upon across the school year. Those children at risk of not achieving targets access highly structured interventions to boost learning potential.

Our approach:

- Provides teachers/support staff with key milestones in typically developing young children, we use this information to establish developmental stages of the children we work with in order to plan highly structured steps to learning. As such, we establish a child's developmental stage in order to plan a progressive and sequential approach to learning from their starting points. We measure progress and provide updates on achievement in line with the whole school's approach. Every child makes progress and for those with 'splinter skills' in areas of learning, usually linked to autistic strengths and motivations, we measure progress using the EYFS framework as well as Cherry Garden.
- Demonstrates not only linear but also lateral progress – this is highly supportive of children with complex needs. 100% of learners within EYF,Y1 have complex needs associated with their diagnosis of SEND. As a result, it is important to provide a broad and balanced curriculum offer commensurate to ability. If a child makes linear progress by generalising taught skills in functional situations this is an achievement we celebrate. This is linked to the whole school curriculum approach 'spiralised learning model'.
- Enables parents to explore and understand their child's learning through the unique Cherry Orchard approach. We value parental partnerships which are invaluable in achieving success for our learners. The impact of our work is shared with parents who are involved in joint target setting activities in school.