



# Vale of Evesham School

'a specialist school for cognition and learning - enabling inclusion in the community'

## Key Stage 1

In Key stage 1 children access a wide range of active learning opportunities. There are regular opportunities throughout the day for the children to generalise their learning through play based, child led activities that the children access as part of KS1 continuous provision. The curriculum covers literacy, thinking skills, science, physical development, understanding of the world (History, Geography and R.E) and creativity.

The Vale of Evesham First School Curriculum addresses the key themes and topics of the National Curriculum 2014 and encompasses the high level of differentiation needed to meet the wide range of learning needs of the children. Pupil progress is regularly assessed, for many of the children this assessment is against Vale of Evesham assessment framework. Each child has individualised learning targets set termly. Some pupils with social communication difficulties or an Autism diagnosis access our ARC (Autism Resource Centre) for regular sessions throughout the week. The centre uses the T.E.A.C.CH approach of highly structured learning and focuses on developing interaction and communication skills. The T.E.A.C.CH approach is used for some children in the classroom to allow them to focus on their learning and to develop the essential skills of working independently. Some children in Key Stage 1 have a range of needs best met by a more highly specialised curriculum. The needs of these pupils are met by the Vale of Evesham PMLD curriculum. Timetables are set by class teachers to best meet the needs of the group. Some pupils have such highly individualised needs that they have individual timetables. Many pupils have significant sensory processing needs that are addressed using a sensory diet that is integral to the curriculum at key stage 1

## Communication

Communication is central to learning and teaching across the curriculum. Staff plan opportunities for interaction, including intensive interaction. We support receptive and expressive language skills using a total communication approach incorporating speech, sign, objects and visual cues. Strategies to support individual children are planned in conjunction with speech and language therapists and include PECS (picture exchange communication) TaSSeLS (a tactile signing system) and intensive interaction. In addition to intrinsic communication work pupils have 2 communication groups each week that focus on developing expressive and receptive skills.

## **Literacy**

The children have daily individual learning sessions focused on books and stories. They develop interactive skills, attention and joint attention and their ability to decode in the widest sense including their understanding of objects, miniatures and pictures. Some children develop early narrative skills, book knowledge and a wide range of decoding skills. There are regular Words and Sounds lessons to support individual work on reading and daily, multisensory, story sessions. Children develop their handwriting using a multisensory approach with a strong emphasis on developing underpinning gross motor and fine motor skills. They develop understanding of narrative and creative writing using a Talk for Writing approach. They develop an understanding of sentence structure through the use of colourful semantics and communicate in print.

## **Thinking Skills**

Within Key Stage One thinking skills encompasses numeracy as highlighted in the National Curriculum 2014, cognition and problem solving. skills are taught four times each week and enhanced further by our Continuous Provision.

## **Science**

Pupils have 1 hour of science learning each week to develop their investigative skills including; observation, prediction and evaluation. This is done through hands on approach, with the children encouraged to use their senses as much as possible.

## **ICT**

We plan the use of ICT to balance the need for children to develop functional skills and means of curriculum access whilst managing the amount of 'screen time' they have as part of their school day. ICT is not taught as a separate subject but is used as a tool to access learning across the curriculum.

## **Physical Skills**

Pupils are encouraged to be as physically active as possible. Staff plan a wide range of physical activities to develop gross and fine motor skills and to foster independence and cooperation. The children have a weekly swimming session for 5 weeks in 3 blocks across the year. They access forest school weekly. The children have PE once or twice each week. Some pupils have significant physical difficulties. They have a positioning and movement programme, planned in conjunction with the physiotherapist. They may also have some tailored movement activities as part of their individual timetable.

## **Personal, social and Emotional development**

The development of PSED skills is intrinsic to the curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop self help skills, build relationships with their peers and with staff and gain an understanding of themselves as individuals. The school adopts a Thrive approach to emotional literacy. Regular 'together times' are planned twice each day so the children can learn that they are part of a class community. Where appropriate the children take part in circle times .

## **Creativity**

Children in Key stage 1 are given regular opportunities to explore the world around them in a multisensory way. This includes regular opportunities for messy play, drawing, painting, making and cooking as part of a creativity afternoon.

## **Understanding the World**

At Key Stage 1 understanding of the wider world is fostered by topic days that allow the children to explore history, geography and RE themes. Topic days are planned each half term. The children finish each day with a reflection time.

## **Continuous Provision**

In KS1 children have continuous access to a range of play experiences. Experiences are planned to develop children's curiosity, imaginative play skills and \_\_\_\_\_. Children will always have access to 4 areas:

**Messy** – to include a wide range of sensory based experiences including malleable materials, food, wet and dry media and the use of tools and containers. Where appropriate teachers may also develop this to include small world, role play and construction opportunities.

**Literacy** - to include the a book based area and communication friendly spaces supplemented with appropriate resources to extend book knowledge and enjoyment of reading; for example puppets, sensory stories/pages and small world play based around topics and class interests (carried out through planning in the moment by teachers).

**Construction** – to include a range of building materials including large and small, different media and textures and role play opportunities; for example dressing up and use of tools. A focus of this is the development of problem solving and thinking skills.

**Schema** – Schema play is integral to KS1 continuous provision. Areas are highlighted and developed by class teachers based on the needs of individuals and class groups.

## **Key Stage 1 classroom**

### **Creating a communication friendly classroom**

Within Key Stage One we actively seek to create communication friendly spaces within the classroom environment. In the classroom this may look like:

- Neutral environment to include display boards and resources. Wherever possible staff will endeavour to use natural materials (inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach)
- Use of small covered spaces
- Creation of 'safe spaces'
- Classrooms to be labelled using photos, symbols, words, objects of reference to allow for independence
- Ensuring minimum clutter and clear surfaces

### **Classroom Setup in Key Stage 1**

Within Key Stage 1 we aim to provide an open plan learning environment with clear zones for playing and exploration and more formalised learning. Each class will have at least one workstation, a reading area, a space for movement and physiotherapy. Each class will have a daily timetable using either photos, symbols, objects of reference and where appropriate will have individual timetables.

Children will be encouraged to 'work at their level'. We appreciate the importance of working at the table at times but wherever possible will actively encourage children to work in a position that suits their needs. We will encourage children to explore and play at different levels to develop a range of core and gross motor skills.

Within each class there is continuous daily access to a range of sculpted play activities. These include messy/sensory exploration, construction play, literacy and schema (see above). In Key Stage One classrooms there will be no permanent number line or alphabets. Teachers will plan for the inclusion of number and letter based experiences through cross-curricular learning.

### **Encouraging Independence and Resilience**

Independence is integral to the development of children. We foster this through a 'friendly sabotage' approach. This encourages children to problem solve and where needed actively seek and request help. At times we will let children fail in structured situations in order to develop a sense of perseverance.

Independence is promoted at all stages in the school day; for example encouraging children to find own belongings or transitioning around school without direct adult support. For children with profound and multiple learning difficulties we foster independence through active communication of choices and preference.

## **Role of the adult**

The role of the adult within the Key Stage One classroom is to:

- Be good role model
- Support independence
- Promote play and exploration
- Facilitate communication
- Be in tune with the children to allow them to feel safe taking risks, failing and encouraging them to stick with tasks
- Help regulate emotions and sensory needs
- Celebrate success and achievements
- Be active