



Developing Foundational Knowledge – Our Approach:

Curriculum Intent:

We aim to secure the foundational knowledge and skills in every child (by the end of Key Stage One and beyond if necessary) to give them the best chance of educational success right across the curriculum.

We ensure that high-quality early education establishes the foundations for later success including academic achievement, good health and wellbeing. We recognise that this is particularly important for those who are disadvantaged and whose language and communication is delayed.

Carefully designed curriculum resources, accurate use of assessment and high-quality teaching and learning approaches ensure that children can learn clearly defined foundational knowledge.

Defining Foundational Knowledge



Foundational knowledge refers to the 'knowledge that children need to be able to communicate, read, write and calculate' by the end of Key Stage 1 as outlined in the Strong Foundations report. This includes the general knowledge that will help them to understand the world around them recognising that their physical, emotional and social development are also important (in addition to developing executive function).

EYFS As the Bedrock:

When children join in Reception, what they know already differs greatly and some require some additional teaching. Our EYFS teaching aims to equip all children with the foundational knowledge that they need. This is implemented by:

- A carefully designed EYFS curriculum which is an entitlement for all children (with no opportunity to opt out) and equitable learning experiences. – including social conversations and caring interactions.
- Focus on learning (as opposed to experiences) specifying what we want children to learn with opportunities for fluency regularly provided.
- Adaptations based on children's knowledge, skills and behaviour.
 - High-quality adult interactions.
 - High-quality literature at the core.
- A combination of direct instruction and play-based learning.
- Purposeful recording of assessment (assessing learning over participation) supporting high-quality transition.

Curriculum Design:

Our EYFS, KS1 and KS2 Curriculum is designed to ensure that the five components of foundational knowledge are planned, taught, developed and encouraged through high-quality teaching. This includes:

- Clearly identifying the knowledge that children need to know in EYFS and KS1 (with the curriculum setting out the path to proficiency in the subject).
- Discrete teaching of Early Writing, Early Reading, handwriting, and spelling (post phonics).
- Careful design of the school timetable to focus on the acquisition of foundational knowledge.
- Complex tasks not being introduced too soon – focus on the five components of foundational knowledge prioritising communication and language.
 - Reading at the Beating Heart of the curriculum.
 - End of KS1 Assessments used to accurately assess previously taught knowledge and not dictate the curriculum.

1.) Executive Function:

This means that children can:

- Focus their attention on what matters and screen out what is not relevant.
- Hold information in their minds in order to work on it.
- Focus on a goal and work out when it is necessary to change their approach to achieve it.

Our Provision:

- Attention to the physical environment and resources as well as the daily structures and routines that establish expectations. A clear learning environment strategy.
- Pupils are explicitly taught routines within the curriculum.
 - Children are taught with Cognitive Science in mind including research into the children's working memory.
- Play based learning challenges pupils' thinking, problem solving, persistence and collaboration – thus, developing executive function.
- Time to develop Executive Function built into the EYFS timetable.

2.) Communication and Language

Our Provision:

- Application of Voice21 and oracy strategies across the curriculum.
 - High-quality back and forth talk [SHREC model].
 - High-quality scaffolding including oral prompts.
- Interacting with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities.
 - Communicating and modelling language
- Encouraging, questioning, recalling and providing a narrative for what children are doing.
- Equitable opportunities for spoken interaction.
- Clear role of the adult within play-based learning.
- Clear vocabulary focus through explicit teaching and across provision.



3.) Early Writing – Transcription:

Our Provision:

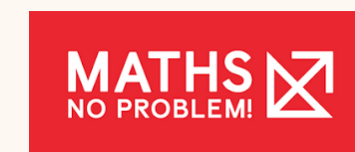
- The foundations begin through oral composition and age-appropriate transcription (this includes early-mark making for our youngest learners).
- Literacy Counts teaches early writing through its structured programme Ready Steady Write, which is designed to build strong foundations in Reception and Year 1.
- Focus on transcription through build a sentence, hold a sentence and decoding activities in addition to the discrete teaching of handwriting and spelling.
- The teaching pedagogy is grounded in teaching and learning pedagogy following the below structure (Reception – Y1).



4.) Early Mathematics:

Our Provision:

- Instil positive attitudes to maths at an early age with maths resources that help children learn in fun, hands-on, practical ways.
- Regular routines provided within all Mathematics lessons.
 - Focus on number formation.
- Mastering Number programme delivered from Reception to Year 2.
- Times Table Strategy delivered from Year 1 to Year 6.
 - Focus on Mathematical language.



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5.) Early Reading:

Teaching and Learning Considerations:

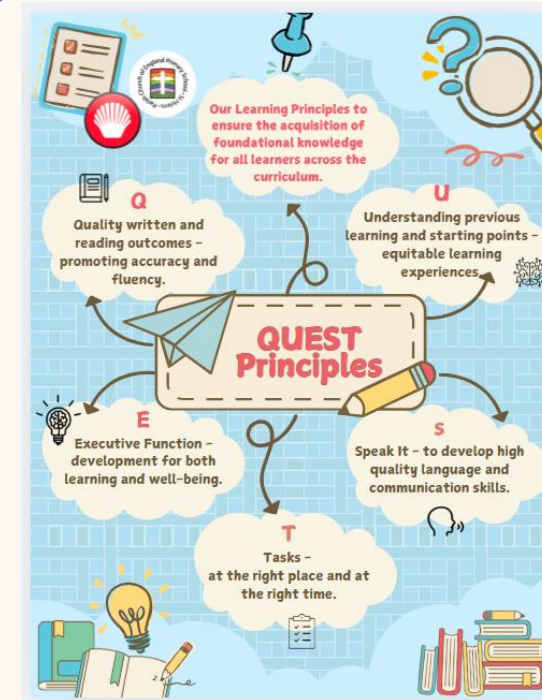
Our QUEST Principles – Teaching and Learning:

Our Provision:

- Use of high-quality decodable texts through the RWI programme and beyond.
- Before formal phonics instruction begins in Reception, nursery-age children build a "listening ear" by identifying and differentiating between sounds. This prepares them for phonics by developing their auditory discrimination.
- When children start the RWI program in Reception (or in Summer Term of Nursery if developmentally ready), they learn the 44 phonemes (sounds) of the English language and the graphemes (letters) that represent them.
 - Progress through RWI small, consistent steps with ample opportunities for children to practice what they learn, ensuring all students achieve fluency.
 - Regular assessments ensure that any child falling behind is identified quickly and given "Fast Track Tutoring" or one-on-one sessions to help them keep up.
- Across the curriculum, reading stories aloud to inspire play and imagination.



- How do you make sure that all children get enough **practice** to become fluent in using important foundational knowledge?
- How are **tasks broken down** to focus on small steps of learning and to prepare children for what comes next?
- What **routines** help children to **maintain attention** without overloading their working memory?
- How are **distractions kept to a minimum** to help children focus?
- Does instruction **involve all children**, including those who find learning more difficult?
- How do you make sure that children with lower starting points have **enough opportunities to interact with adults**?
- To what extent have you considered what children are thinking during play-based learning?
- Do all staff understand how **play can develop children's language** and **executive functioning** and help them to learn important knowledge?
- Do staff know how to **address children's speech, language and communication difficulties**?



In addition to our carefully designed curriculum considering the five components of foundational knowledge, our bespoke QUEST principles support all staff when planning, delivering and supporting children's learning across all year groups.

With a focus on EYFS and KS1 (but applied throughout all year groups), these five principles support staff by providing a framework to deliver the curriculum. Considering these five features ensures that all learners truly acquire and build upon foundational knowledge as they progress in their learning and are fundamental alongside adaptive teaching strategies.

They are able to be applied throughout the curriculum across all subjects.

Our QUEST Principles – Explained:

Our Principles	Explanation
Q – Quality Written and Reading Outcomes	Prompting accuracy and fluency in decoding and transcription ensuring that children have learned the knowledge and skills prior to completing the task. Tasks that children are asked to complete are appropriate for their stage of Early Reading and Writing development.
U – Understanding previous learning and starting points)	Children who fall behind early on struggle to catch up. Previous learning is considered in the delivery of the curriculum and teaching and learning approaches are adapted as necessary. Also considering how children can progress at different rates (considering different amounts of teaching and practice to succeed) through high-quality assessment.
E – Executive Function.	This is important for both learning and well-being. Children are limited in what they can hold in their working memory at any one time, and this is considered in the delivery of a lesson.
S – Speak It	In order to develop high quality language and communication skills language development is essential for all. Language is the bedrock of thinking and learning. Children need to compose sentences orally – dictation is regularly used alongside developing independence.
T – Tasks.	At the right place at at the right time. Ensuring children do not do too much too soon and the task meets individual children's needs (with a focus on teaching and learning pedagogy). Careful consideration of how best children can learn what is intended with a focus on long-term success.

The Research:

- **Strong Foundations in the First Years of School**
- **Best start in life: a research review for early years'**, which examines the early years foundation stage (EYFS) areas of learning, with a focus on children aged from birth to 4
- **OFSTED curriculum research reviews.**
- **OFSTED subject reports (national curriculum subjects) 'Education inspection framework: overview of research'**
- **'Bold beginnings: the Reception curriculum in a sample of good and outstanding schools'**

Staff CPD:

- High quality CPD (as part of our CPD overview) is provided across the year in relation to the following elements of the curriculum. This takes place through spaced retrieval and is regularly revisited with all staff (through different CPD mechanisms including coaching):
 - ✓ **Early Writing** – Literacy Counts full day inset 24/25 for all staff revisited termly.
 - ✓ **Early Reading** – All staff were RWI trained in 24/25 with regular RWI CPD and coaching.
 - ✓ **Transcription** – Bespoke CPD for Spelling and Handwriting 24/25.
 - ✓ **Specific foundational knowledge** for all staff across the last 12 months.
 - ✓ **Extensive CPD for English Leader** disseminated to all staff.