

The EYFS Curriculum at Excalibur

The Early Years Foundation Stage 2026/27 – Pre-school



The EYFS has 7 areas of learning.

The Prime areas are: communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development.

The Specific areas are: literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

Each area involves the children in activities and experiences that facilitate learning and take into account the background and interests of the children as well as local, national and international events (e.g. National bee day or Diwali).

The Characteristics of Effective Learning **playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically** permeate through all 7 areas of learning.

‘Development Matters’ contains non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS. It offers a top level view of how children develop and learn. The guidance sets out the pathways of children’s development in broad ages and stages (0-3 year olds, 3-4 year olds and, reception).

“Language is the foundation of children’s learning and thinking. The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development”(Development Matters). With that in mind children’s communication and language is at the heart of our curriculum.

Expectations

On entry to our Excalibur pre-school, most children start broadly in line with the national average, at the beginning of the 3-4 year old statements from Development Matters. However, those children who have just turned three may be within the statements for 0-3 year olds. When they leave the EYFS most children's development will be working securely in the 3-4 statements. Some children may be beginning to work within the reception statements.

Shaping the Curriculum

PSED is crucial for children to lead happy and healthy lives. At Excalibur we have shaped our curriculum across the whole school to reflect this. Our children come from many different backgrounds with some children attending other settings prior to starting, whilst others have no previous experience. We recognise the importance of developing warm and supportive relationships with adults in the setting and for children to feel safe and secure. Some children may require an adaptation in transition arrangements to help establish this. We are flexible, working together with parents and carers to ensure a successful transition into our pre-school.

Our curriculum focuses on developing muscle memory and core strength through both large scale and small scale movements to help children to develop their fine and gross motor skills. We do daily 'Dough Disco' and 'Funky Finger' sessions as well as the highly regarded 'Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle' programme. There is a clear progression to teach cutting skills and encourage mark making. Children have access to a wide range of tools and mark making implements in both the indoor and outdoor environment. Access to large climbing equipment in our A frame and Trim trail areas help teach children to balance, jump, climb, assess risk and develop upper body and limb strength. Indoor hall sessions also help children to develop their fine and gross motor skills as well as listening skills.

Early phonic skills are taught through songs, rhymes, listening games and weekly Rhythm Time sessions. After researching the benefits of 'Helicopter stories', our children take part in regular sessions telling stories and performing them with their friends. We know that reading regularly to children and actively engaging them in stories, songs, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and then providing them with opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts allows them to thrive. Adults in the setting model quality conversations, interactions, story-telling and role-play. Children are encouraged to be part of this supported and challenged to share and extend their thoughts and ideas and become comfortable using a range of rich vocabulary. Talk is promoted and encouraged through the ShREC model.

Our morning routine uses 5 frames for self-registration, as well as songs and rhymes, to ensure that children are making connections and relationships and developing a deeper understanding of numbers. We have created an open ended maths rich environment whereby maths talk and maths learning can take place whenever and wherever both inside and outside. Maths and maths talk is everywhere. We use the White Rose maths scheme to shape our maths teaching. This is then built upon in reception and the rest of the school.

In Understanding the world children learn about their immediate locality so they learn about places around our school and grounds. They learn about familiar features such as houses, the train station and shops, building on their everyday experiences and talking about what they see in Alsager and beyond. They encounter distant places through topics and stories and when sharing personal experiences. The children observe and discuss the weather regularly, becoming familiar with types of weather and how it can affect us such as needing coats when it is cold. The children also learn about the different jobs which people do in our community. They learn and understand History by talking about the very recent past. They begin to use language like 'yesterday' and 'last week'. They use their senses to explore the world around them noticing change/difference. For example noticing what happens to ice on a warm day.

Our expressive arts allows children an outlet for their imagination, thoughts and ideas. Helicopter stories allows children to tell and perform their own stories. Children move expressively through music during daily 'Dough Disco', other songs and rhymes. They take part in an additional weekly Rhythm Time session.

Intentions for entering Reception

Our children will be confident learners who can manage themselves with some independence e.g. put on their own coat and shoes, manage their toileting needs. They can follow simple instructions and routines and are able to listen to a story, song or rhyme and join in, if it is familiar to them.

Subject	Area of the EYFS	Key skills/knowledge	How we teach it	Early Learning Goals
PSED	Personal, social and emotional development Communication and language	To recognise my own feelings To start to understand others might feel different than I To use strategies/language to help me deal with social situations To 'have a go'	Twinkl PSHE Games that require taking turns/sharing Promoting independence Praising the effort not the product The power of 'yet'	Self- regulation Managing self Building relationships People, culture and communities
PE	Physical development	To hold a pencil comfortably To use scissors safely and effectively To demonstrate control over my body and other objects	Music and movement Gross motor – bikes, scooters, outdoor equipment e.g. A frame area. Fine motor and muscle memory: Dough disco and Funky Fingers Scissor skills progression	Gross motor skills Fine motor skills
Literacy: a) Speaking and listening b) Reading c) Writing	Communication and language Literacy Physical development	To ask and answer questions To retell a story To tell stories of my own. Describe some events in detail To explain how things work and why they might happen	Helicopter Stories The Poetry Basket – oral poems and rhymes RWI phonics – (from Easter onwards) Dough disco and Funky Fingers	Listening, attention and understanding Speaking Comprehension Word reading Writing

Maths	Mathematics	To recognise patterns and shapes To compare quantities To subitise small quantities and explore their composition.	White Rose Karen Wilding – developing early number sense work. Maths takes place throughout the provision Maths through stories	Number Numerical patterns
History	Understanding the world Literacy (comprehension) Communication and language	To use language like ‘yesterday’ and ‘last week’. To speak in past tense To understand places and people change over time To notice difference. To use a simple timeline to record events such as ‘when I was born’, ‘When my parents were born’, ‘When the dinosaurs lived’	Stories Songs about the passing of time. Sharing personal events and experiences	Past and present People, culture and communities
Geography	Understanding the world Mathematics (special awareness) Language and communication	To learn about the immediate locality. To learn about familiar features such as houses, community buildings and shops building on their everyday experiences.	Exploring traditional tales e.g. making a map of Red Riding Hood’s journey Stories	People, culture and communities The natural world

		To encounter distant places through topics and stories. To observe and discuss the weather and the changing seasons To learn about the different jobs which people do in our community.	Observations of the local environment e.g. visit to the library Stories with a journey e.g. Rosie's Walk	
Science	Understanding the world Communication and language Mathematics	To explore, problem solve, observe, predict, think, make decisions and talk about the world around them. They will explore creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environment To notice change/difference To experiment with textures and materials	Through experiences such as planting seeds. Using their senses to play games and explore the world around them Concrete experiences such as investigating magnets, observing ice melting cooking e.g. making bread and soup, melting chocolate	The natural world Creating with materials Self-regulation
DT	Expressive arts and design Physical development	To use tools safely To join materials To talk about what we create	Tinkering Table Role play prop making Make and Do area	Fine motor skills Creating with materials
Art	Expressive arts and design	To mix colours To use simple tools and materials To talk about what we create	Self-portraits Observational paintings	Fine motor skills Creating with materials

	Physical development			
Music	Expressive arts and design	To sing a range of rhymes and songs To Clap out a rhythm To understand different tempos. To perform in front of an audience	Singing Dough Disco Rhythm Time classes Dance/Drama lessons	Being imaginative and expressive
RE	Personal, social and emotional development Communication and language Understanding of world	To celebrate difference our differences. To know that there are special times such as Easter, Diwali, Lunar New Year and Christmas	Christmas performance Concrete experiences e.g. acting out what happens at a christening	People, culture and communities Building relationships
Computing		To programme the Codapillar to carry out a short sequence. To know simple e-safety and know when to ask a grown-up for help when online.	E-safety Smartie the Penguin	