



Understanding the World Curriculum Policy

GENERAL

The Early Years Foundation Stage identifies 3 “Prime Areas” of learning, which are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

These are fundamental, work together and support development in all other areas.

The 4 “Specific Areas” include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the Prime Areas and provide important contexts for learning. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

WHY TEACH UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD?

Understanding the World is designated as a “Specific Area” of learning. At Chichester Nursery School, Children and Family Centre we support children to develop a wide range of skills and gain extensive practical knowledge based on their first-hand experiences, enabling them to begin to make sense of their world.

Children are naturally inquisitive and enjoy exploring their world. In a typical day, this might be finding their way around the indoor and outdoor Nursery environment, exploring the Interactive Whiteboard, hunting for mini-beasts in the garden, or helping to prepare and eat food from around the world.

CURRICULUM CONTEXT

The teaching of Understanding the World within the Nursery School, Children and Family Centre is based upon the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Our long-held and central philosophy is that young children learn best when given the opportunity to be independent, self-motivated learners, free to pursue interests and consolidate their learning over several days. Equal importance is placed on both learning through planned adult-led activities and child-initiated learning, which arises from a rich, stimulating and easily accessible environment.

The Understanding the World Curriculum is delivered through the following learning strands:

- People and Communities
- The World
- Technology

Through planned and spontaneous play opportunities, children will have the opportunity to:

- Explore and investigate
- Experiment and predict
- Explore actions and reactions
- Design, make and problem solve
- Talk about what they see, gather and record information
- Learn about themselves and others

- Learn about living things
- Learn about their immediate environment and the wider world

KEY FEATURES OF OUR UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD TEACHING:

- There are opportunities for children to “bump into” the Understanding the World curriculum throughout the indoor and outdoor environment, through both planned activities and the self-selection of easily accessible, quality resources representing a range of different cultures and religions
- Whenever possible, children’s interests are used as a vehicle for delivering the curriculum e.g. the visit of a relative from abroad might lead to finding their home country on a globe, tasting some regional foods and sending and receiving e-mails on their return. Each Keyworker group has an email address which enables parents/carers to share special “WOW” moments that occur outside Nursery, potentially providing opportunities to build on a child’s current interest
- Differentiated activities meet the needs of children of differing abilities and learning styles e.g. giving visual learners the opportunity to examine maps and have opportunities to create their own
- Appropriate scaffolding and challenge is provided to support and extend children’s learning
- Careful observation and tracking using iPads enables staff to rapidly monitor the progress both of individuals and groups of children, and plan for the next stage in their learning
- We encourage children to take appropriate risks in their learning, however adults are vigilant and ready to intervene to ensure children’s safety. Health and Safety policies and Risk Assessments support us in maintaining a safe learning environment for our children.
- Staff take the opportunity to extend children’s learning using a variety of sources, including their families, visitors, local events, the media and books. iPads provide a powerful way to instantly support and extend children’s interests by accessing the Internet for information or You Tube clips to bring things to life, e.g. space rocket launches
- Staff employ open-ended questions to stimulate experimentation and learning, e.g. *“What do you think would happen if...?”* *“What do you notice about...?”*
- Staff model appropriate scientific and technical terms
- Children will have experience of handling a wide range of ICT, including computers, iPads, programmable toys, CD players, digital cameras and a digital microscope
- As they learn about themselves and others, staff encourage children to respect and value all people and learn to avoid misapprehensions and negative attitudes
- Children who use a means of communication other than spoken English are supported to access this area of the Curriculum through the use of their home language and signing methods.
- Staff ensure children with Special Educational Needs are, wherever possible, able to fully access the Understanding the World curriculum e.g. supporting a child with motor difficulties to access a computer which has a touchscreen facility rather than a mouse
- We understand that a few children may well achieve the Understanding the World Early Learning Goals during their time in Nursery and familiarity with the National Curriculum allows us to plan for their future learning
- Transition from home to Nursery, from the Up to 3s’ into Nursery School (if applicable), and then the move to Primary School is carefully managed, with a free exchange of information ensuring children’s learning is as seamless as possible
- Examples of the children’s learning in this area will form part of their POW Update which will be sent to parents each half term
- Examples of how Understanding the World is taught within the Nursery School and Children’s Centre can be viewed electronically in the Curriculum Portfolio
- This policy covers all the provision for Understanding the World within the Nursery School, Children and Family Centre