**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

**INTENT:**

Understanding the World is designated as a “Specific Area” of learning. At Chichester Nursery School 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 physical world and their community.

The Understanding the World Curriculum covers a wide range of strands and through opportunities to explore and investigate a richly resourced environment, together with adult support, the children will develop their knowledge and understanding of**:**

* Similarities, differences and positive attitudes towards diversity, culture and faith
* Our community and those people who are in our community
* Our world, by comparing countries, cities and places and particularly places which are ‘special’ to some members of the community
* Friends, Families and personal history
* Occupations
* Materials by exploring them using their senses and noticing changes in materials
* The natural world by exploring natural phenomena such as standing in the rain with wellies, splashing in puddles, looking at Minibeasts, noticing blossom and bulbs growing in the spring and talking about the different seasons
* How things work through exploration, prediction and experimentation
* How to care and show respect for living things including plants and animals
* Forces by exploring and talking about different forces they can feel
* The information shown in simple maps
* A range of books to extend their understanding of things they are unable to experience such as lives of people living in other countries and stories of people from the past both fiction and non-fiction
* An enriched vocabulary to support future reading comprehension

The teaching of Understanding the World within the Nursery School 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.

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, hunting for mini-beasts in the garden, or helping to prepare and eat food from around the world. As the range of children’s personal experiences form their knowledge of the world around them visits to local places of interest and welcoming visitors from the community into the setting is valued and arranged where possible.

Child-initiated learning allows the children to follow their interests which arise from the rich, stimulating and easily accessible environment both inside and out.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

* There are opportunities for children to “bump into” the Understanding the World curriculum throughout the indoor and outdoor environment, through the self-selection of easily accessible, quality resources representing a range of cultures, beliefs and diversity.
* 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’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
* Staff will use a variety of fiction and non-fiction books to support children with their understanding and knowledge of areas which they are unable to access in real life for example, the lives of people/animals living in other countries, historical information such as past events or people. This will enrich their vocabulary ready for reading comprehension later in their development
* Staff are skilled at meeting 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 identify 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, adding additional resources to extend interest the following day. 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 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, Makaton signing and visual communication methods, such as PECS
* Staff ensure children with Special Educational Needs are, wherever possible, able to fully access the Understanding the World curriculum e.g. providing a child with their self-chosen resources on a surface that can be accessed by a wheelchair or standing frame
* 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 ensures children’s learning is as seamless as possible
* Careful observation using iPads and termly Developmental Reflections enables staff to rapidly keep track of children’s progress, and that of groups of children, and identify the next stage in their learning. This means that children are challenged and supported effectively
* Progress is closely monitored by the Subject Coordinator and Senior Leadership Team. Monitoring will include: lesson observations, gathering evidence of good practice, talking to the children, looking at data and regular learning walks. The findings of this monitoring will be used to inform next steps for the children and the implementation of Communication, Language and Literacy across the Nursery as a whole
* Examples of the children’s learning in this area forms part of their POW Portfolio Update which is sent to parents each half term
* A Top Tips leaflet to help parents’ support their children’s development in Understanding the World is available in the entrance to Nursery

**IMPACT**

* Examples of how Understanding the World is taught within the Nursery School can be viewed in the Understanding the World Curriculum Portfolio and children’s individual portfolios
* Our children develop in to confident and inquisitive learners, who want to explore and investigate mechanical processes and the natural world, understanding how to care and respect all living things. They learn to be kind and respectful of others and form positive attitudes towards race, cultural diversity and beliefs. Finally, children engage in experiences not experiences relevant and immediate to their own lives and things beyond their own lives in the wider world such as what it is like to live in another country, what life is like for a child within a different faith or what life was like for their grandparents when they were small.

**Date:** Autumn 2021 **To be reviewed:** Autumn 2024