

Nursery and Reception at Moss Valley



Intent: why do we teach what we teach?

At Moss Valley Academy we place great value on the development of children as individuals and providing them with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to prepare them for the challenges in Key Stage One and beyond. Our aim in the EYFS is to build strong foundations rooted in academic success as well as moral and spiritual development, so that ultimately our pupils can be happy, curious life-long learners, be successful at university and go on to be active citizens of society.

Our curriculum therefore provides the cultural capital we know our pupils need so that they can gain the knowledge, skills and understanding they require for success. Our children can only be successful if we embed the right habits for learning through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning – Play and Exploration, Active Learning and Creative and Critical Thinking.

Many of our pupils arrive well below national expectations for their age and a high proportion come from disadvantaged backgrounds and with complex needs. We have to teach them how to listen, speak and meet the high expectations for behaviour by working together and being kind. As such, we prioritise personal, social and emotional development and communication and language in the Nursery curriculum. Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration.

As the pupils progress through EYFS, we invest time and energy into helping pupils achieve their own goals by aiming high and developing a love of reading, writing and number. To enable this, we deliver a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum which maximises opportunities for meaningful learning experiences. In addition, we promote the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking following children's interests and ideas. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through a vibrant continuous indoor and outdoor provision, alongside trips and visits.

Implementation: how do we teach what we teach?

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. The timetable is carefully structured so that children have rigorous directed teaching in Literacy, Maths and Phonics everyday with regular circle time sessions to focus on PSED. We further promote PSED through weekly certificates, lanyards and stickers. In addition to this, children also have access to weekly EAD and UTW sessions whereby each half term is broken down into an overarching theme.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the week and have a variety of challenges carefully planned to engage, extend and allow them to apply learning in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classrooms and equal importance is given to learning in both areas. Each week, we make more detailed observations on our six VIP children, focusing on their key individual targets. These targets are shared with parents and carers, and evidence

is documented through our online learning platform – Seesaw. Each half term, the EYFS team gather to discuss each child's bespoke targets and potential next steps.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. Children follow the highly successful Read, Write Inc programme faithfully so that they meet good outcomes for reading with almost all children passing the Year One phonics screening. Our language rich environment ensures that children are being exposed to written language continuously and can be referred to during key adult interactions. In line with the rest of Moss Valley Primary, both Nursery and Reception have a weekly P4C (Philosophy 4 Children) session. As part of the P4C programme, each morning Nursery choose their 'Book of the Day' and Reception complete their own 'Question of the Day'. This helping to promote talk, enhance thinking and communication skills, develop verbal reasoning as well as improve questioning, reading and understanding. We foster a love for reading and have chosen 20 high-quality texts for Nursery and Reception which range from traditional tales, rhyming books and stories with links to festivals to extend our pupils' vocabulary and understanding.

In Reception, we follow the Ready Steady Write Scheme in Literacy which is a sequenced and an ambitious curriculum, that places quality literature at its core. In Nursery, Literacy is planned around our 10 core stories, as well as children's interests and ideas. **Our stimulating and accessible classroom fosters creativity, language and fine motor development through various mark-making and writing resources.** Resources to support 'writing' are in all areas, including clipboards, which allow the children to take paper and pens to any areas they wish. Story scribing is an effective way in which we encourage our children to write. Over the year, these stories are used to record and identify a child's language development, story-writing, imagination, pencil control and their phonics and writing development.

At Moss Valley Primary Academy, Reception follow the Power Maths Scheme with an emphasis on developing a strong grounding in numbers to 20 so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives which are then rehearsed and applied to their own learning during continuous provision. Nursery pupils begin to develop key mathematical skills during daily maths sessions where they explore sorting, quantities, shape, number and counting awareness. In addition to this, **there are many opportunities to teach maths through our daily routines and provision.** We are constantly seeking opportunities for children to think mathematically whether this is counting pupils in the dinner line, sharing a cake in the home corner or counting to 10 whilst waiting for bread to toast; wherever possible, we encourage our pupils to think in mathematical ways.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential. This includes, for example, WELLCOMM or Speech and Language interventions or additional 'catch-up' provision in Maths. Staff also use 'pinny time' which is a quick, on the spot intervention focused on sight words, blending and number retention with target individuals. The characteristics of effective learning are viewed as an integral part of all areas of learning and are reflected in our observations of children.

Impact: how do we know what pupils have learnt and how well they have learnt it?

Our curriculum needs to meet the needs of our children, including our disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, so we spend time looking at and evaluating how children are learning. This is achieved through talking to children, looking at their work, observing their learning experiences and analysing data and progress by year group and individuals.

Every member of staff uses **ongoing observational assessment** to identify children's starting points and plan experiences which ensure progress. This information is tracked through our online platform – Seesaw. We use this information on a weekly basis to plan learning experiences and next steps so that knowledge and skills are built cumulatively. Evidence of children's learning including observations, work samples, photographs and contributions from parents can be found here. During each assessment window, three times a year, teachers update the progress children have made onto our own **Moss Valley Assessment Tracker** which enables us to measure our starting points and monitor progress each term, as well as assess the impact of teaching and evaluate whether it has been enough.

Our curriculum and its delivery ensures that children make good progress. Children in our early years, on average, arrive with much lower starting points than national. During their time in our EYFS, children make rapid progress and we strive for all our children to meet the national expectation for GLD at the end of the year. Pupils also make good progress toward their age-related expectations before transitioning into Year One. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and teaching the children have as they move through the early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.