

Understanding The World

People and Communities

The World

Technology



People and Communities

People and Communities encourages children to talk about past and present events in their own lives and the lives of family members. They learn about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and between families, communities and traditions.

Nursery, kindergarten and pre-school practitioners organise the routines and practices to emphasise that the nursery or pre-school is, in itself, a community for the children and their families, maintaining a family atmosphere where individuals – their likes, needs and differences – are respected. In addition to paying attention to the cultural and ethnic diversity of the children, they provide open-ended resources for the children to use.



At school when children are very familiar with everyone and everything which makes up the school community they acquire a developing understanding of the lives and traditions of the families of their friends in school. We aim to extend their understanding of the people and places in their local community and beyond both by taking the children on visits and by inviting visitors into school to talk to the children about their occupations and their ways of life. Staff are able to build on the children's interests by the visits they arrange, as well as helping them to learn more about people and places. Visits to the local church for example, have provided a wealth of stimulation for the children's curiosity. Alongside the visits made by the children, we invite a range of people into school to talk about their jobs, their hobbies, or special events. Sometimes the visitors are family members, but very often they are not. Receiving visitors helps children to learn to listen, to treat the visitors with respect, and to gain knowledge about other people and how they live – essential for young citizens.

The World

Learning about 'The World' inspires exploration, investigation a sense of place. Children learn about similarities and differences in the world around them. They learn to make observations of animals and plants, to explain why some things occur and to talk about how and why things change, including opportunities for experimentation. We have a stimulating environment which offers a range of activities which will encourage children's interest and curiosity both indoors and out of doors. We plan activities based on first-hand experiences that encourage exploration, experimentation, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, decision making, and discussion.

Nurseries, kindergartens and pre-schools make excellent use of the potential of collections of everyday objects as well as gardening in part of the outdoor areas and using their natural environment. Throughout the year there are resources available which the children use effectively as they demonstrate their curiosity about the outdoor environment.



At school we are very aware of the importance of building on prior learning and incorporating the children's everchanging interests and fascinations. Understanding the world around us is a complex business and we know that many children possess sophisticated thinking skills and creativity which can be fostered by providing the time and space for children to explore in depth those things which fascinate them. We take time to listen attentively to what the children have to say about their discoveries and challenge children to reflect on, and explain, their ideas to encourage the development of higher level thinking skills. We are also aware that the children are interested in investigating the world in ways which include an element of risk. We provide activities, experiences and resources which will develop science skills and knowledge - mechanisms and how things work, how things and people move, materials and how they behave, the effects of magnetism, light, electricity, sound, and weather. We have an 'outdoors in all weathers' policy and exploring out of doors fosters a sense of pleasure in the children as they make sense of their physical world. The outdoor area is seen as an environment for curiosity and the children are supported by the provision of a wide range of resources which enable them to further their knowledge about living things and their natural habitats. A wildlife-friendly garden, with a bug hotel has been set up providing a habitat – food, shelter and a breeding ground - for a wide range of small invertebrates. We are also extremely fortunate to have nature at our doorstep. Our garden overlooks the Grand Union Canal and we have built a 'Nature Lookout' so that the children can safely observe the wonderful wildlife if Wendover - including ducks, ducklings, swans, cygnets, moorhens, herons and egrets, to name but a few.

Areas that Facilitate 'The World' Learning



discovery area in the Octagon



People and Communities



home Corner



small world



outside café



lookout hut



bug hotel



natural outside area



growing area tuff spot



flower beds



herb garden



STEM Shed

STEM educations stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The world depends on these areas of learning: our general well-being, the economy are both linked to developments in technology, engineering and science, These subjects are vital to maths. manufacturing, food production, healthcare and so much more. Teaching STEM in the early years enables children to make those vital connections between everyday life and the STEM disciplines. It also lays down the foundations for future academic success because the skills learned are transferable to other subjects.

Technology

'Technology' helps children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. At nursery, kindergarten and preschool this involves discussions with the children's family members and from their own experiences as staff are aware of how competent the two- and three-year-old children are when using technology, never underestimating many children's capabilities in using technology equipment at home – many can scroll through images on an iPhone, play games on an I-pad or computer, operate the CD or DVD player independently, or change channels on the television without help. The resources provided in the role play area for the children to use reflect their home interests and capabilities. However, the practitioners are aware that many children will not have access to the same technological opportunities at home so, they introduce resources and equipment which will work for children with wide-ranging experiences and capabilities in their technological learning and development. The children may have independent access to CD players, a small range of electronic toys and light boxes – all of which foster their interests in how things work and what they do as well as supporting the other areas of learning and development in the EYFS.

By the time children come to school, staff are very conscious that they will have technological 'experts' in their care; experts who know how to use a washing machine or how to retrieve information from a computer, who speak to their grandparents or relatives using Skype, or are very familiar with how bar code scanning operates in the supermarket. These are children who are already competent in ICT and design technology – knowing how science is applied to make things work, to design, build and control equipment used in daily life. In addition to having independent access to the resources, the children use programmable toys to support the other areas of learning, developing their technological skills in contexts which encourage their mathematical, communication, and literacy skills development. The staff use laptops and Learn Pads with the children to support their learning and development.

Technology Within The Environment

