

Chestnut Lane School's Early Years Curriculum

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is used to describe children who are in our Nursery and Reception classes.

At Chestnut Lane School (CLS) we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

For our full EYFS Policy please contact the school office.

EYFS Curriculum

Our EYFS setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the [EYFS statutory framework](#) with guidance from [Development Matters 2021](#).

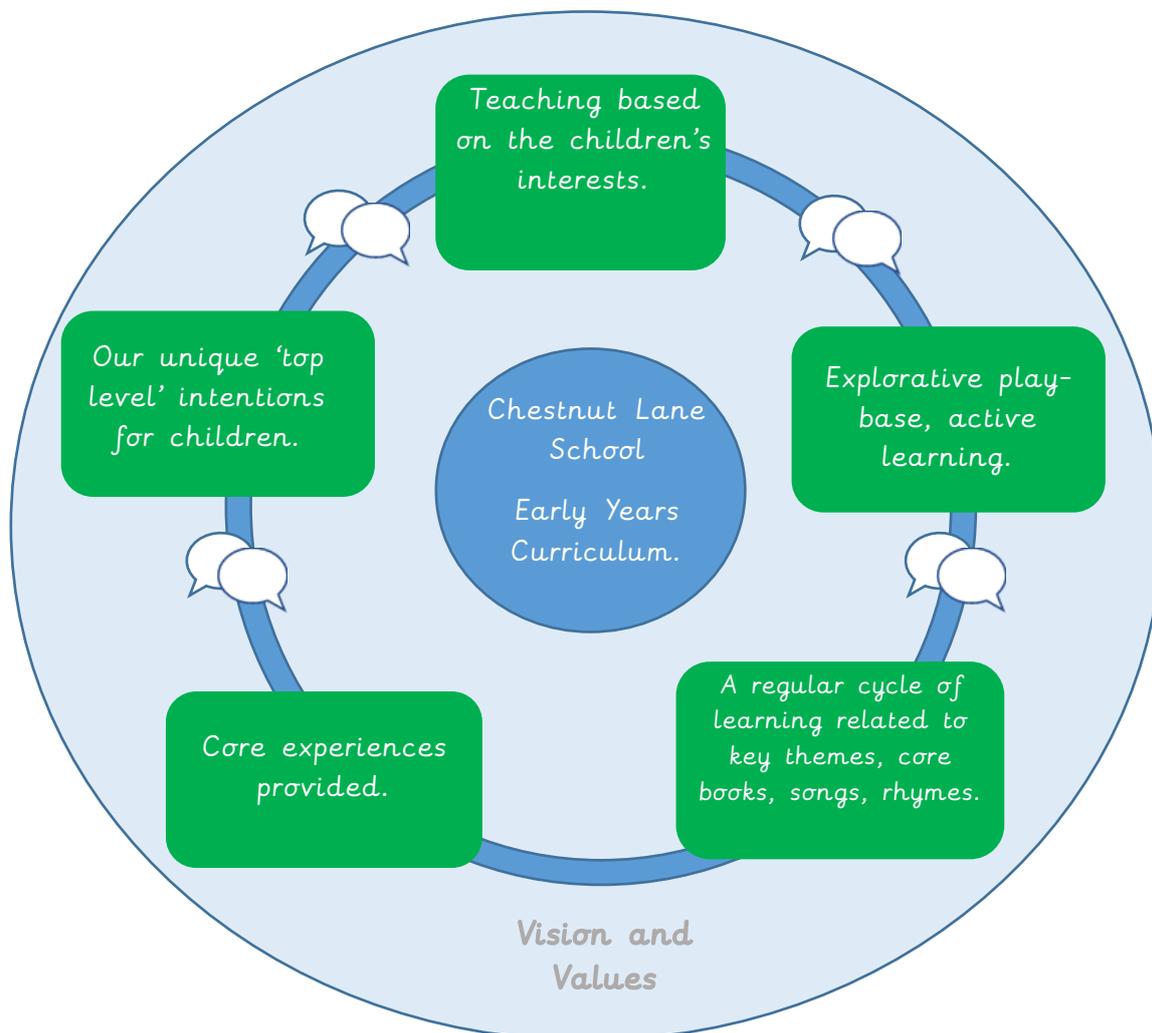
'Curriculum' at CLS means all the things that we want children to know, experience and be able to do as a result of their time at in our setting. The top priority in our curriculum is communication and vocabulary. Through teaching and enhanced provision we provide support for all seven areas of learning equally. Three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Everything is underpinned by support for children's confidence and emotional wellbeing.

The three **prime** areas; Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The **specific** areas are; Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design.

Chestnut Lane School Unique Curriculum Overview

At Chestnut Lane School, we offer a unique high-quality broad and balanced curriculum which has five main elements:



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1. Teaching based on the children's interests.	All aspects of our curriculum require practitioners to be flexible and take account of children's interests. When we build on children's interests, we plan to broaden or deepen those interests.
2. Explorative play-based, active learning	Enhanced provision to support and encourage all 16 Types of Play. <i>Outlined in our EYFS Policy</i>
3. A regular cycle of learning related to key themes, core books, songs, rhymes.	Our cycle of 'Core Books' begins with very simple, repetitive texts. Over time, children progress onto texts with more complex vocabulary and structures. The books also reflect the key themes which are covered and in turn link to the core experiences. For example; the hungry caterpillar is used to discuss the theme of change and the experience provided is looking after real caterpillars and watching the transformation. The rhymes and songs which increase from short traditional rhymes, to number rhymes and 'verses'. Key themes covered include; People Who Help Us, Minibeasts, Traditional Tales, Transport and All About Me. <i>Outlined in our EYFS Policy</i>
4. Core experiences provided.	Core experiences such as planting and growing, nature mornings, cooking, balance bikes are provided to build on skills. The experiences reflect our cultural capital and needs of our current cohort of children. <i>Outlined in our EYFS Policy</i>
5. Our unique 'top level' intentions for children	All aspects of our curriculum have a 'progress model'. The goals reflect our cultural capital and are ambitious but can be accessed by all learners. <i>Outlined in our EYFS Policy</i>

We regularly review our curriculum and the resources we use. We want a curriculum that includes 'meaningful and culturally diverse material' and which 'usualises and commemorates diversity' (Bennie Kara, 2020).

Chestnut Lane School 'Top Level' Intentions

We designed our curriculum and 'top level' intentions with the particular strengths and needs of the children at CLS in mind, using our data trends and knowledge about our school context. For example, many children in our Early Years are multilingual, with 41% of children in Reception learning English as an additional language and 49% of children from ethnic minority backgrounds (based on our September 2022 cohort data). We offer lots of learning outdoors to build children's confidence, communication skills and develop language, for example through nature mornings.

The 'top level' intentions are ambitious and reflect the culture of our school. They are not the only thing the children will work towards, but they aim to provide an overview of many of the different things we would like the children to know and be able to do. They were developed in partnership with parents, children and the staffing team to ensure they accurately reflect the needs and wants of children at CLS.

The goals are adaptable to the particular children on roll. We offer scaffolding and extra support to help every child access the curriculum and to ensure they make progress through it. Practitioners sensitively reduce their support so that children become more independent in their learning. It's important that a child's learning is secure before moving onto new concepts or skills. Secure learning is more important than covering lots of things superficially. We have adopted the definition of progress as 'knowing more and remembering more' to ensure they can retrieve what they have learnt.

Children learn to...

Share	Share what makes them special and make links to celebrate everyone.
Explore	Explore the environment and investigate by asking purposeful questions.
Imagine	Demonstrate imaginative thinking through storytelling and role play.
Adapt	Understand boundaries and adapt behaviour to meet the situation.
Challenge	Have the confidence to embrace new challenges independently.
Engage	Develop relationships and engage in meaningful two-way communication.
Apply	Apply physical skills and phonics knowledge to record their ideas.

The 'top level' intentions build up through milestones. These progress from the beginning of Nursery to the end of Reception and outline key steps to support development towards the goal. They can be viewed in our [EYFS Policy](#).