



The Brook Understanding The World Policy

In the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, effective from September 2014, it states that,

'Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things'

The Framework sets out the following early learning goals. These cover three aspects of learning within the specific area of **Understanding the World**, and these are:

- **People and communities:** children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions
- **The world:** children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes
- **Technology:** children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes

Aims

- To help children make sense of the world around them
- To provide an early framework for future exploration and discovery
- To promote learning through direct experience
- To enable learning to be developmentally appropriate and interesting



- To develop a sense of self and the effect they have on the environment
- To provide opportunities to develop investigative skills such as touching, looking and experimenting
- To promote attitudes of curiosity, excitement, confidence and anticipation
- To enable children where possible to try out new ideas in a safe and secure environment
- To build connections with why things happen and how things work

Approaches to Teaching

Understanding the World is taught as one of the specific areas of learning and development within the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One of the Brook. It is linked closely to all the other areas of learning and development within the Early Years Foundation Stage, so it is not seen as an isolated lesson or subject.

The **Understanding The World** curriculum consists of a range of schemes of work, which are planned as part of a four year pre-defined cycle.

The topics covered are:

- Year A All about me and my senses; Colours – Light, Dark and the Space around us; Seasons, Weather and Elements
- Year B My Important People; Food and Festivals; Traditional Stories and Fairy Tales
- Year C All about me and My Community; Transport, Movement and Forces; Animals, Growth and Change
- Year D Journeys; London; The Natural World

This coverage aims to ensure that the pupils can use experience, knowledge, skills and understanding in increasingly sophisticated ways, while a breadth of study is achieved for all.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

A minority of our pupils may be operating within the National levels of attainment and it is essential that such children are sufficiently challenged by our teaching and can achieve their potential.

Class teachers create their own class Schemes of Work based on the Bank Scheme of Work for each termly topic. These consist of appropriate differentiated activities for their class as well as learning outcomes for each individual child. Teachers set individual termly targets for each pupil around the Understanding The World topic. These targets are closely monitored by the phase leaders, in terms of their content, their evaluations and how the pupils are progressing.



Class teachers make their assessments of their pupil's progress through written observations, photos, videos and the quality of the work produced. Pupil's work is then annotated and collated in to their special books, which are always available for parents and various professionals to view.

Every pupil has an Annual Review when an annual report is written, and all such material is available for parents to see and discuss with the head teacher, class teacher and other professionals.

Understanding the World is a key part of **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural** development. Pupils have opportunities to develop an awareness of each area:

Spiritual

By exploring beliefs and experiences; respecting faiths, feelings and values; learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world

Moral

By recognising right and wrong; respecting the law; and investigating moral and ethical issues

Social

By appreciating diverse viewpoints; cooperating; resolving conflict

Cultural

By appreciating cultural influences; participating in cultural opportunities; understanding, accepting, respecting and celebrating diversity