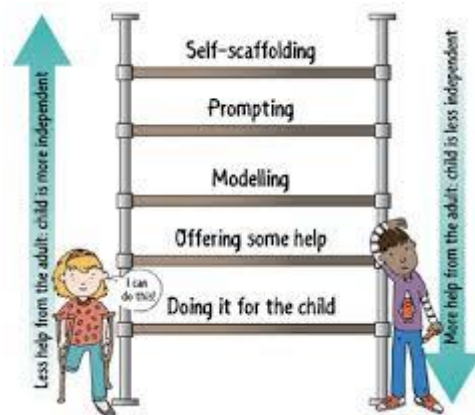


Little Explorer's Curriculum Policy.



Here at Little Explorers, we believe, as written in the Reggio Emilia approach, which was founded by Loris Malaguzzi in 1963, that children should be in the driver's seat of their learning, and we should see them as curious individuals with the power and potential to develop and learn from their environment and the relationships they build with others. Children should be viewed as strong and intelligent individuals who should be given every opportunity to reach their potential, and in fact, have unlimited potential, and as a result are eager to interact with and contribute to the world. We are guided by our environment and personalities and have a strong sense of community. These factors can be flexible and can change, and as a result, so can our curriculum.

At Little Explorers we use the children as our starting point for any learning and draw on their interests to organise activities that promote learning through play. Our skilled practitioners observe the children throughout the day while scaffolding their learning, to help build resilience and independence, and skilfully draw on these observations to carefully plan children's next steps. This ensures our children are building on their knowledge at each stage of their early year's education.



We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum and use Development Matters as guidance for our practitioners to draw on when observing and monitoring children's development progress. The EYFS covers the following areas:

The Prime Areas:

Personal, Social, Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

The Specific Areas:

Literacy

Mathematics

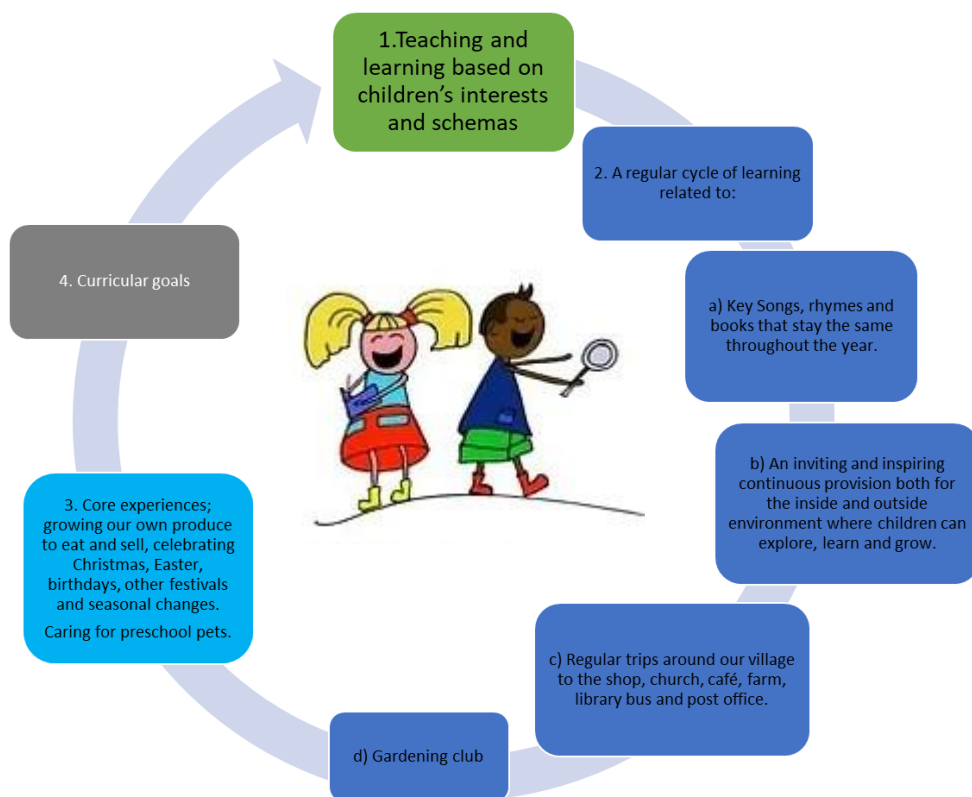
Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Throughout all these areas of learning and at the heart of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum are the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'. These are:
Playing and Exploring - Engagement
Active Learning - Motivation
Creating and Thinking Critically - Thinking

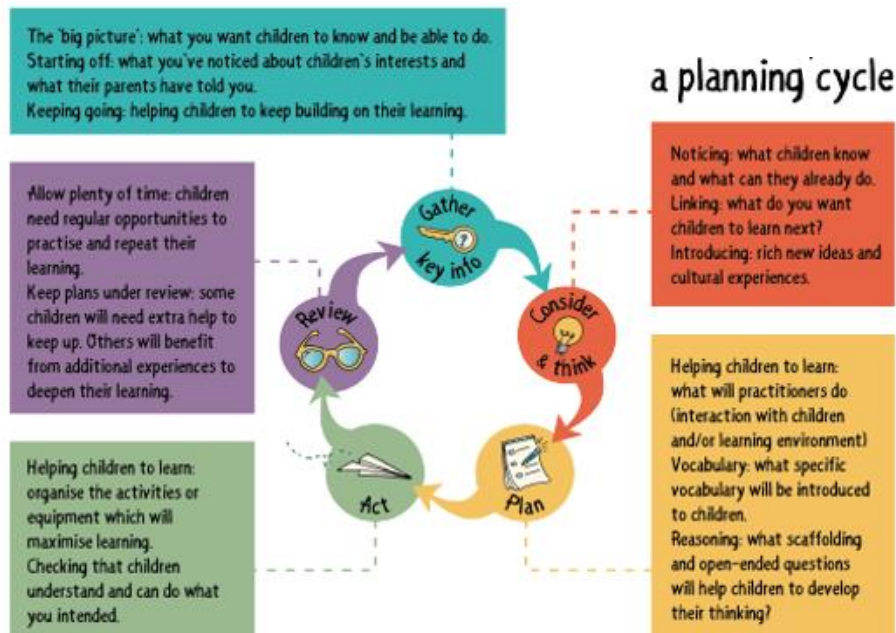
By using these 7 areas of learning and monitoring the way that children learn through the characteristics of effective learning we can design a structured and well sequenced curriculum of our own that can grow with our children and help them reach their full potential.

Our Curriculum Overview.



Teaching and learning based on children's interests and schemas.

- Adults structure learning on children's interests and next steps.
- Staff regularly discuss the implementation of learning, whether children are learning what we intend and what the impact of that learning is. This planning cycle works alongside our themes and/or with planning done "in the moment".



- When a child starts with us parents are asked to fill in an "All about me form" and then also asked to complete termly reviews on their child's interests and any areas of concern that can be used in reviewing the child's next steps.
- Adults provide high quality interactions using meaningful conversations to introduce new vocabulary, model language and encourage curiosity by asking questions and showing an interest in everything our children do.
- Adults guide children's play towards the skills, concepts and vocabulary that will enrich their play and lead them to meeting our 8 curricular goals.

Key songs, rhymes and books

- A selection of "core books" are used for the children to learn well. These books can be revisited again and again, on different levels to support language development and increase vocabulary. The books are sequenced from picture books to short stories and then increasing to more descriptive/longer books to support the development of our children from when they start with us at a young age to when they leave at 4 years. These books become very familiar with the children so that they can be used in more interactive story telling sessions and they can remember and re tell them.
- *"Experts in literacy and child development have discovered that if children know eight nursery rhymes by heart by the time they're four years old, they're usually among the best readers by the time they're eight. -Mem Fox, Reading Magic."*
- Nursery Rhymes are a powerful learning source and teach children early literacy skills as well as enabling children to become interested in rhyme and rhythm.
- Both books and nursery rhymes support the practice of listening, speaking and the art of storytelling.

An exciting and inspiring continuous provision both for the inside and outside environment where the children can explore, learn and grow.

- We have developed areas both inside and outside that invite children to explore, interact with, and learn from. They are always accessible to children and enable the children to learn while promoting independence and allowing them to choose independently what they want to do. For example, Art area with self-access paints and paper. Mark making area. Maths area. Loose parts area. Role play area. Play doh station. Sand and water play.

Regular trips around our village.

- We regularly take the children to all the local amenities in the village. The shop, post office, church, café, farm, library bus. Using and visiting these places give the children a strong sense of belonging to the community.
- Letters and cards - The children deliver cards to all these places including posting them to the care home where it is too far to walk. These cards range from Christmas cards to "Thank you cards" after fundraising events.
- Visiting the café lets them join in with conversations with people and develops manners and patience to sit in similar environments without screens. On the way we talk about the seasons and changes in the environment and road safety.
- On some trips we collect litter using litter pickers so that the children learn to look after their environment and see the impact litter can have on the environment and community.

Gardening club

- Teaches the children to understand and notice the change in the seasons and the life cycle of nature.
- Lets the children be part of what they chose to grow and ultimately, eat.
- Promotes healthy food choices.
- Helps foster a love of the outdoors and an understanding of weather.

Core Experiences - These experiences build on children's curiosity and develop their wider understanding of the world and build cultural capital.

- We look at and take part in a range of celebrations including Halloween, Christmas, Diwali, The Lunar New Year and Easter. National days like St David's, St George, St Patrick and St Andrew's day allows us to look at the different countries in our United Kingdom.
- Strong links with the primary school means children become familiar with the setting by going over for lunches and attending weekly taster afternoons in the summer term. Being able to watch the school's Christmas and summer performances and take part in the school's sports day gives the children a sense of familiarity and belonging before they start the school, meaning the transition to school is much easier for them.
- The children grow their own fruit and vegetables and sell them to the public. They also put together "growing kits" for parents and the locals to buy. They understand the value of money when they count what they have made and have a part in choosing what we buy with the money.
- Having pets encourages children to have shared ownership over the care and attention given to another living creature, which teaches them how to respect and treat animals and in turn this passes over to interactions with humans. It engages them to respond to something other than their own their needs as the creature is dependent upon them for food, warmth, exercise, safety etc. This is

often something the children may have not been exposed to thinking about before.

Our 8 curriculum goals.

Through our planning cycle we plan for all children to work towards these 8 goals during their time with us. These 8 goals are designed to help the children reach the stage of being ready for school. Some children will need more support and need each goal breaking down into much smaller steps to ensure they keep progressing towards the end goal. For our 2 year olds we have some goals which are slightly different and are designed to be met by the time they turn 3yrs. This supports them on their journey to the end goal. In some circumstances children with complex needs may need a curriculum planned to suit their more individual needs.

1. To settle in and become a happy, confident and curious learner.

2. To recognise my emotions and understand the different ways to support them.

3. To respect myself and others. To respect and look after my things, my preschool, our community and the wider world around me.

4. To be independent in my selfcare, including getting dressed and undressed to go outside.

2year old goal: To recognise and indicate if I have a dirty nappy and begin to understand the need to go to the toilet. To attempt to put on my own shoes.

5. To become a resilient learner and feel like I can take measured risks in my learning and play.

6. To make up my own stories

2year old goal: To enjoy short stories and introduce a narrative in my play.

7. To recognise and attempt to write my own name where some letters are formed correctly.

2year old goal: To recognise my reflective image and picture so that I can use the self registration. To explore and experience the mark making opportunities available to me during play.

8. To solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to 5 and recite numbers past 5.

2year old goal: To use random numbers during play and to begin to put them in order. understand things like claps or jumps can be counted as well as objects.

Our Curriculum

Our intent is for children to:

1. Settle in and become a happy, confident and curious learner.

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

Provide each child with a Key Person who will build bonds with the child and provide a support system whilst settling in. The key person works closely with their key children, and their parents to ensure a smooth transition into preschool.

Before a child starts, we will work with parents to gain as much knowledge as possible about the child's interests and likes from an initial visit, settling in sessions and ask parents to fill out an "All about me" document stating their likes, dislikes and where they are in their learning and development. We will use this information to plan activities around their interests making sure the child and parent are happy at each stage of their settling in.

Provide parents and family with a Baseline assessment so that they can see how their child's first few days have gone and share with them the child's "next steps".

Offer a well planned learning environment both inside and out for children to thrive in, offering irresistible learning opportunities. We involve the children in designing this, considering their own interests and using their ideas.

Provide the child's parents with a settling in report within their first 6 weeks to update the parents on the child's development, activities they have enjoyed, their next steps and how they can support those at home.

Be in the moment - All staff strive to ensure each interaction with each child is a positive one where they can scaffold their learning and enrich their learning experiences. Children are curious learners, and we encourage children to be confident in trying new things. We offer lots of open ended play opportunities and watch how children choose to learn (The characteristics of effective learning).

Continually observe each child to determine their next steps, plan activities to further their development whilst using our knowledge of their interests and needs, to offer new experiences and introduce them to new ideas and concepts.

Offer an inclusive practice for all children so that they feel part of our preschool family, teaching them to respect each other's feelings and beliefs and helping them to make their own choices- feeling heard and respected.

Understand that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and that when we work together it has a positive impact on a child's learning and development. Building strong relationships with the child's family by sharing daily experiences and having an "open door" policy so that parents can always come and talk to us for support only enhances positive outcomes for all children.

Invite parents and family members in at different opportunities for a shared story time, stay and play sessions, mother's or father's day breakfasts, sports days and Christmas celebrations.

Promote self-confidence. We want children to love themselves and be proud of who they are and what they achieve. We like to share their achievements both from home and preschool in group time and encourage the children to speak daily about what they like about each other.

Our intent is for children to:

- 2. Recognise their emotions and understand the different ways to support them.**

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

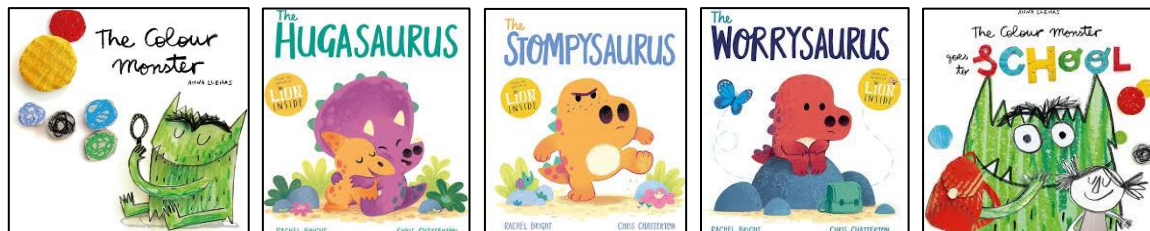
Gain a knowledge at morning registration time about how children are feeling. We use emotion picture cards where needed so that children can identify how they are feeling at the beginning of their preschool day.

Encourage children to identify their emotions, working together to come to a positive outcome.

Use social stories with our puppet Sally to talk about our feelings and why we might be feeling them.

Understand that all emotions are okay and that they are the result of many different factors that can be discussed and talked through to find a positive outcome.

Read stories to support emotions and help understand how we can self regulate and support our feelings. Some of our favourites are:



Talk about the feelings of characters in stories, "how do you think they are feeling?", "Why are they feeling like this?", "How would you feel if this happened to you?", "what do you think they could do to feel better?".

Promote the use of our "worry tin", where children add pictures of their favourite things or things that cheer them up when they are feeling sad.

Explore the use of our child safe mirrors. Children can look at themselves , exploring how they look when expressing different emotions.

Provide a calm and cosy area for children to be able to self-regulate in, with blankets, cushions and soft toys.

Encourage children to take a deep breath in and out and concentrate on "calming our breathing" and "relaxing our minds".

Encourage the children to listen to one another and respond appropriately, helping them to understand they have choices and also that they must respond to other children's wishes too.

Our intent is for children to:

- 3. Respect themselves and others. To respect and look after their things, their preschool, our community and the wider world around them.**

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

Provide a home from home, nurturing environment where each child feels heard and safe. We teach children to have respect for each other's beliefs, values and wishes whilst ensuring they feel respected too.

Promote the 4 British values: Democracy, Rule of law, Individual liberty, Mutual respect and tolerance. We do this daily through our daily routine and in the way we work and play.

Ensure each child feels listened to. At our circle times each child has a turn to speak and we encourage others to listen with the opportunity to respond, building on friendships and an understanding of their differences.

Include turn taking activities daily and supporting children when they find this difficult.

Modelling positive behaviour, language and relationships. Giving examples of how to speak to each other and treating each other as we would like to be treated ourselves.

Encourage children to look after their own belongings- Putting their coats on a peg when they arrive and when they come back in from outside. Putting their shoes neatly when they are taken off, pushing their chair in when they leave the table.

Encourage children to treat toys and resources with respect, taking care of them for others to use and tidying up together at tidy up time.

Use real crockery at mealtimes, teaching children that if they mishandle or throw their plate or cup then it breaks. When they have finished their snack they wash their own plate up and leave it to dry.

Use our kindness jar. Each day we write kindness tokens for children who have shown exceptional kindness. At the end of each week we empty the kindness jar and read the tokens out to all children at group time explain the act of kindness and discussing it.

Visit the local community. We visit the church, the shop, the post office, the café and the local farm. We enjoy creating Easter or Christmas cards to deliver to our local businesses and to our local Doctors surgery. Our children build a sense of community spirit and belonging.

Look after our local community. We go litter picking around our preschool grounds and surrounding streets. We share with parents how much litter we have collected and give families the opportunity to take litter pickers home to use with their child in their own surrounding areas.

Allow the children to help look after our preschool pets. They take turns to feed the chickens, collect eggs, feed the fish, look after our snails and stick insects. They are taught to use kindness and use great care with all pets as well as any wildlife they find in the garden, making houses for snails or ladybirds found outside and make water drinking stations for bees.

Support the children's knowledge of recycling and how to look after our planet. Each lunchtime children are encouraged to wash their own yoghurt pots to add to our recycling box and put fruit or banana peels into our compost caddy. We later put this into our compost bin in our vegetable garden. Our children also love to catch rainwater in trays and buckets to measure the rainfall and then play with this in water play.

Our intent is for children to:

- 4. To be independent their selfcare, including getting dressed and undressed to go outside.**

2year old goal: To recognise and indicate if I have a dirty nappy and begin to understand the need to go to the toilet. To attempt to put on my own shoes.

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

Encourage children to take of their own coats when arriving, hanging them up on a peg along with their bag and putting away their lunch box on our lunch trolley. Take their water bottle through to the classroom and find their own name to hang on our self-registration tree.

Encourage children to find their own coats or puddle suits before going outside and supporting them to put them on independently.

Promote the use of wellies outside helping children to be well practiced in taking shoes off and putting them back on again.

Promote good hygiene- including independent handwashing before snack or lunch time.

Encourage independence whilst using the toilet and independent hand washing afterwards.

Talk about safety in various weathers and encourage dressing for each weather for example: Sun hats and sun cream for summer, Warm hats and gloves for winter.

Providing the opportunity of using dressing up in our role play area/multicultural dressing up area.

Our intent is for children to:

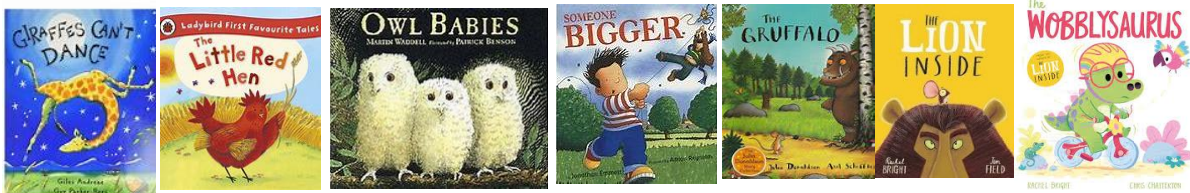
- 5. To become a resilient learner and feel like they can take measured risks in their learning and play.**

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

Reassure children that if they first don't succeed- to try again!

Always have the patience to allow children to try first for themselves, allowing them to think of ways they may be more successful if they fail the first time and together helping them reach their target.

Read stories about resilience - here are some of our favourites:



Provide resources and activities where children feel they are beginning to take a measured risk- for example building assault courses in the garden along with balance beams, saws and structures to climb on.

Give the children scissors and tools to use independently, teaching them about the dangers of not using them correctly and supporting them in doing so.

Give children the time and space to try, and the opportunity to fail. Supporting and encouraging them to try again and again before achieving what they set out to do.

Celebrate children's success whether big or small. There are so many ways and words which we can use!

Tremendous! Remarkable! Outstanding!
Excellent! Amazing! Fantastic!
Brilliant! Extraordinary! Terrific!
Mind-blowing! Astonishing!
Spectacular! Incredible!
Out of this world! Superb!
Fabulous! Unbelievable!
Marvellous! Wonderful! Super!

Our intent is for children to:

6. To make up their own stories.

2year old goal: To enjoy short stories and introduce a narrative in my play.

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

Read a wealth of stories to children every day, allowing children to ask questions and discuss the story further.

Encourage children to speak aloud in sharing times about something they may have done "what did you do over the weekend?", encouraging retelling their own story.

Allow children to vote on which story they would like to hear- allowing them a preference and an opinion on the stories they like.

Ask questions throughout the story... "what do you think will happen next"...

Retell stories without a book for children to recall parts of the story from memory, allowing them to choose another ending for the characters if they wish.

Provide puppets for children to tell their own stories.

Provide small world toys and encourage or introduce a narrative to the children's play- asking open ended questions.

Provide dressing up clothing and role play opportunities to tell stories or recreate real life experiences through their play.

Invite visitors such as "Reach Out Arts" who engage our Little Explorers in story telling sessions bringing stories to life.

Provide opportunities for the whole class to make up a story together line by line and then retelling it.

Helicopter Story sessions.

Our intent is for children to:

7. To recognise and attempt to write their own name where some letters are formed correctly.

2year old goal: To recognise my reflective image and picture so that I can use the self registration. To explore and experience the mark making opportunities available to me during play.

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

Encourage children to join in with self-registration each morning- recognising their own name.

Write children's names on pictures they have drawn, encouraging them to hang it on their own peg.

Recognise names on their own water bottles.

Encourage mark making through play where they may form shapes and lines leading to forming letters. They might then choose to practice these letters independently.

Provide mark making resources throughout the day: Self access arts area, mark making area, clip boards and pens.

Practice forming letters with various materials: sand, flour, foam, white boards, paper, paint etc...

Look at how their names are formed, arranging the letters used and practice writing some of them, maybe beginning with using an outline or guide.

Include mark making role play opportunities where possible for example: A Post Office, A doctor's prescription pad, Santa's workshop, A classroom and many others.

Our intent is for children to:

8. Solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to 5 and recite numbers past 5.

2year old goal: To use random numbers during play and to begin to put them in order. understand things like claps or jumps can be counted as well as objects.

Implementation - To support each child to meet this curriculum goal we will:

Help children develop fast recognition of up to 3 objects, without having to count them individually ('subitising').

Say one number for each item in order: 1,2,3,4,5.

Know that the last number reached when counting a small set of objects tells you how many there are in total ('cardinal principle').

Show 'finger numbers' up to 5 during nursery rhymes, play and while counting objects. Link numerals and amounts: for example, showing the right number of objects to match the numeral, up to 5.

Ensure numbers are all around in the preschool classrooms and are visible for all children.

Use number language throughout the day in various ways: counting pieces of snack, number rhymes and songs, counting children, counting eggs, playing number games, seeing numbers in our surroundings and so much more.

Take walks around our local village taking part in a number hunt where children can spot numbers on doors, floors, signs and wherever else they may spot them.

Ensure numbers are used in play where possible for example providing telephones, remote controls, computers and other technology.

Provide number lines for the children to count with both inside and outside.