

Early Years Policy

Intent

The framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage

Why do we teach what we teach?

1. Our children will become happy, confident and independent learners who know they are valued at their new school.
2. They experience meaningful and magical moments which will support a lifelong love of learning.
3. They can communicate effectively with adults and peers using language, play and performance.
4. They develop early literacy and mathematical skills which will enable them to succeed throughout their time at school.
5. They see their, and their families, experiences reflected in the curriculum, as well as being exposed to new ideas.

Implementation

The means of translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative within our school

What do we teach and when?

What do we teach?

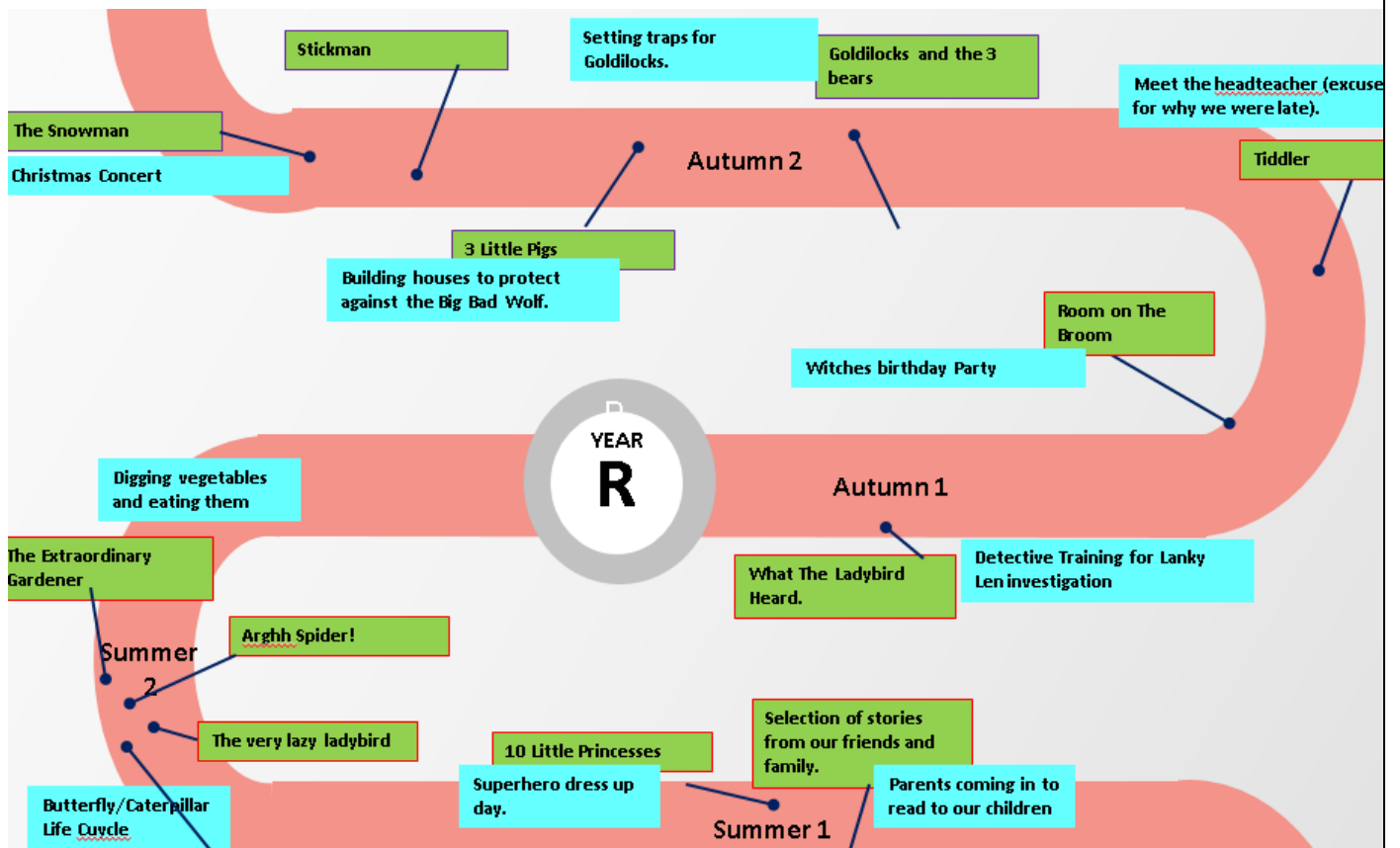
We believe children learn best when they are excited, curious and happy. Therefore, we have designed an engaging play-based curriculum which is centred around themes, stories and events. Our half-termly topic is delivered through a key weekly or fortnightly story with a key event (image 1) that captures the imagination of the children. These stories have been carefully sequenced so that the children have stimulating opportunities to succeed in the seven statutory areas of learning which we have subdivided into 18 areas that make up the Walnut Tree Walk EYFS curriculum (image 2).

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1.

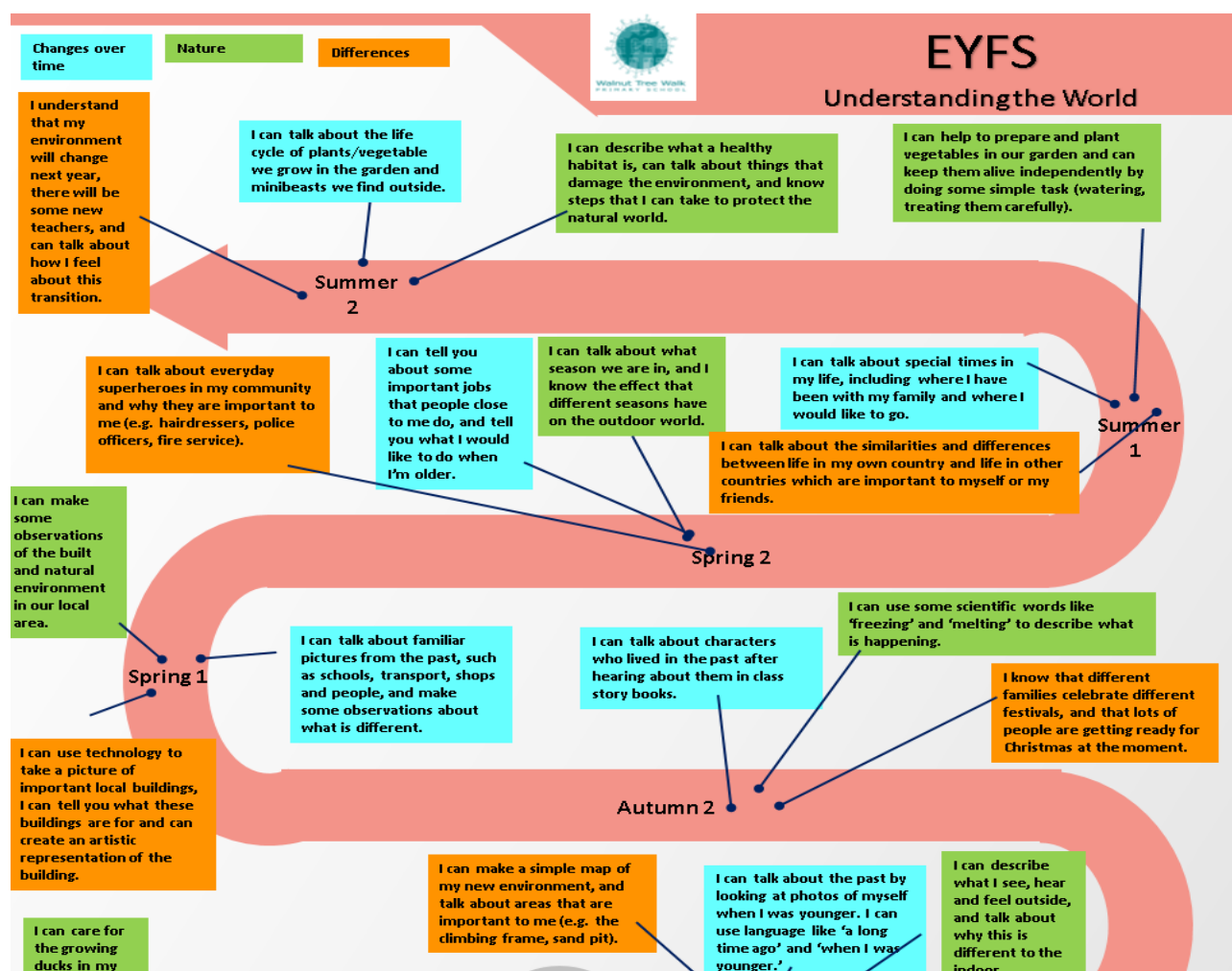


2.



When do we teach it?

Children develop at different rates across different areas of learning in the Early Years. While they experience the same key stories, experiences and vocabulary, our planning is differentiated so that children working towards or above the expected standard are sufficiently challenged. Our skills maps (example of *Understanding the World* below) ensure our EYFS teachers and support staff have a shared understanding of what children need to be able to do each half term to reach the expected standard by the end of Reception. We expect our children to demonstrate these skills in a variety of contexts, and our curriculum leaves room for teachers to plan activities and experiences that match the emerging interests of each class.



How do we teach it?

We believe that young children learn best when they experience a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences. We provide children with opportunities for whole class learning, small group work, 1:1 interventions and child initiated activity across the EYFS. Children experience a daily maths, literacy, topic and phonics (for young Nursery children, this would be based on listening and attention) lesson with the rest of their classmates. Over the course of the week, the children will have the opportunity to work with the teacher in a small group session to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts being taught. This enables the teacher to deepen understanding and address misconceptions.

EYFS Specific Information

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. In line with our whole school ethos, we ensure that staff form good relationships with both children and their families.

We give plenty of opportunities to communicate with the school before their children join in Nursery or Reception. Before they join Nursery, families are invited for a tour of the setting with their child. They will then get a personalised start date so that their child can have the attention they need as they settle in.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through regular contact and Tapestry (online assessment) updates. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

We invite parents in to the classroom once a half term to have a reading morning with their child. This promotes an early love of reading as well as encouraging dialogue between families and the school. As well as this, we host phonics workshops for families to attend which enables them to support their child's reading.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years by, for example, talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our whole school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

Applying to join our EYFS

We offer 15 hour and 30-hour places at our Nursery (available when children reach 3 years of age). They can join in the first 3 weeks of any term, as we want to ensure families are able to have as much flexibility as possible.

All 3 and 4-year-old children are entitled to a minimum of 15 hours free Nursery provision. The following places are available at Walnut Tree Walk:

- a. 15-hour places;
- b. 30 hours places subject to eligibility of the child, and number of places determined by the school;
- c. 15-hour places plus additional hours where parents enter into a private agreement to pay for these additional hours. The school may request a deposit. Please enquire at the school for up to date costings;

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d. Some free 30-hour places may be available subject to school's discretion if children meet the following criteria:

1. Children who are looked after, or who have an allocated social worker who has written support of the need for a full-time place as part of the Child's Plan at that school.
2. Children who are recommended a full-time place by a Team Around the Child (TAC), Locality or Disability Panel.
3. Children in circumstances where the Headteacher considers a full-time place should be provided. To ensure quality across the borough the following criteria must be met first:
 - (a) children who are eligible for free school meals
 - (b) evidence to demonstrate that home circumstances could significantly affect a child's well being

To apply to join our Reception class, applications must be made through the local authority that the child is resident in. Applications must be made by 15th January.

Date of policy:	January 23
Date of next review:	January 26
Subject Leader responsible for Early Years:	Connor Brown