Education Select Committee Responses: Inquiry into The Foundation Years- Sure Start


Appendix 1

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum News Summer Term

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to a new term with lots of exciting new learning to be had.

The topic this term is about journeys and modes of transport used in undertaking them. Our "Travellers Café" is already a popular role play option where children are exploring preparation of menus, ordering and acting out customer and shopkeeper. We are planning a visit to a real café where the children will learn about where our food comes from, how it is delivered, prepared and served. Watching our gardens produce fruits and vegetables will also add to our understanding of sustainable worlds.

We invite any visitors in who might be able to tell a good tale of travels, share a slideshow or interesting artefacts from other lands. Please let us know if you can think of a willing volunteer. Also, we are asking for photographs or postcards from the children's own holidays that they can talk about and share their experiences themselves. After half term, the children will plan and design their own role play area to any mode of travelling they might suggest. You will see this emerge over time but please lend us any accompaniments that might enhance our play such as baggage labels, luggage of any shape or size, (we will return these to you) or glossy travel brochures. The children will study a range of texts on the theme of journeys on different types of transport. These will be the basis for drama, music and dance as well as practicing our reading and writing skills.

We will be working on our exciting maths project looking at lots of real life problems that the children have to solve. We will cover calculation, data handling and space, shapes and measures. We will looking at traffic surveys and will be using Thomas the tank engine and friends to help them with calculations. They will also solve some tricky fraction problems for The Fat Controller!

Appendix 2

Dear Early Years Foundation Stage Parents,

In conjunction with our Travellers' Café Role Play and studies on Transport we are taking a trip out on Tuesday May 14th. The children are going to xxxxxxxxxx to look at the journey that food takes
from delivery to table. We will leave as soon after 9 am as possible, have a tour of the shop, see the preparation of foods such as bread-making, and cheese and be taken to the restaurant to see how these foods are made into meals. We would like the children to dress up as we have booked the conservatory for a very special morning tea.

The children have formulated their own questions:
1. How do you bake?
2. What can you cook?
3. How do you put the chairs nicely?
4. Why is there a Food Centre?
5. Where do you send things from the Cafe that you don’t want?
6. Do you have machines or a special door for deliveries?
7. Who comes to your cafe?
8. Can we come twice?

Appendix 3

Dear Parents of Early Years Foundation Stage Children,

One of the best ways young children learn is by having the opportunity to talk through their ideas with interested adults. They consolidate these ideas through having time to change and modify them, to take things apart and build them back together, to imagine stories in role with friends, to use talk, to listen and to engage their whole bodies whilst they do this.

These behaviours are often seen in purposeful play. Eminent neuroscientist, Dr Stuart Brown (2009) reminds us how critical this is in healthy brain development, “Nothing fires up the brain better than play.” In the Foundation Stage there is a balance of children initiating their own explorations and adults teaching the children directly.

In our Foundation Stage Class we would like to include you when your child is making plans for their play. Research indicates learning outcomes improve when children take charge in this way. Every Monday morning from 9 am parents are invited to sit and discuss their children’s play intentions in the Foundation Stage classroom. Please, set aside ten minutes for this if you can. If you have an extra few minutes, please feel welcome to settle your child into their first plan, feel free to “play” with them.

If you are unable to come due to other commitments we ask that you talk through what your child wants to do at school the previous Sunday evening and allow them to “write this up” in their planning books at home so staff can get them started first thing on Monday. The quality of the “writing” is not the main priority; this could be and will most likely be, scribble like marks to begin with. What we really wish to capture is the children’s spoken words which should be scribed below their marks. (See example attached.) Over time, their mark making will emerge into recognisable letters, then words and sentences but this will take time, (expected at the end of the Reception Year.) It is the discussion which is most important at this stage. At school the children will review how well they have
gotten along with their plans, then together adults and children will build and extend ideas, giving the children extra challenges to consider on their own or in a small group.

Having had six weeks to settle into school, understand and work within this structure we anticipate the children will be fluent in telling you about the areas they can work in and have several avenues to hand as to the possibilities for their play. Please ask us if there is anything you are uncertain about.

Thank you for your help and support in promoting learning within your child alongside us.

Appendix:
Examples of planning at different stages.
Letter formation.
Numberline.

Appendix 4: Photographs for documentation:

Examples of images used for documentation, to track children’s individual and group responses through experiences. Children’s learning spirals as they encounter their real life explorations again through these images, through role play opportunities, through cookery for their own cafe and through planned provocations. One provocation from this project was to ask the children to sequence their day and then their cookery recipe to decide what was first, next or at the same time. See final photograph.
Appendix 5

Children in this photograph 1 are responding to the story as described below, “Andrew’s Bath”. They have made their own crate “baths” and are retelling the story giving it a new twist. See photograph 3.

![Photograph 1]

05-Feb-2013

Notes:
Reception children have Dramatised Andrew’s Bath and all took roles. A story map displaying the main episodes was jointly constructed as a model for children to follow. All could recall the story and could use story language. Emily used Lucy’s model and they discussed what words were inside the speech bubbles. Emily showed concern to get the letters correct. Jake and Fin decide which part of the story comes next. Emily: I did the beach bubble and that says too hot too cold and then all the beach bubbles made all the water go on the floor and then it all goes out. Then he was happy because he was dry. Hannah: Andrew too hot too cold just right and I said Andrew’s bath pointing to marks that’s the crocodile that’s the ball that’s the Teddy bear. Lucy: it’s too hot and it’s too cold and it’s too shallow and it’s too deep. Andrew’s mum thought Andrew could have a bath by himself and then the animals came. Mummy and daddy said WHAT’S GOING ON UP THERE? The croc is pulling the flannel and Andrew falls over head first and it looks like he says Geronimo. He gets out of the bath and he dries himself on a piece of fabric. Noah: Andrew’s in his bath and he is only saying its too hot and there is a ghorious ball and there’s a little teddy and just a sandwich. Fin: He says I’m too deep I’ll drown and then he says goodnight to mummy and daddy. He goes to an animal bed. His flannel got bitten. Jake: He said too
05-Feb-2013

Notes:
Too hot I'm boiling can you turn the tap off. Lucy this is the flying bath this is the magic elephant. Children extend the Andrew's Bath story. When we shine in the dark it even glows... Noah. Now glow glow glow... Noah Get in come on let's go... Lucy The bath is going to fly and we can glow Noah Bath bath bath glow glow glow bath bath bath your boat Lucy Were flying we're floating Noah.

Observed by:
R Pugh

Photograph 3.


Examples of the how of the learning process and the way in which it is reported.
Active Learning—being involved and concentrating—keeping on trying-enjoying meeting challenges:

Ella is continuously on the move, continuously looking for learning experiences. Ella doesn’t hesitate to make decisions about where she wants to be and what she wants to do. She shapes her own learning very effectively in this way. Ella enjoys being in role and sharing story making with other children. She takes turns well. Ella is equally at home, playing on her own.

Creative and Critical Thinking—having own ideas—making links—choosing ways to do things:

Ella brings to every learning opportunity her own ideas and experiences. She articulates and able to explain her thinking. Ella is fascinated by finding owl pellets, she enjoys the variations and changes in the landscape and the weather. Snow and ice offered Ella opportunities to explore melting and freezing, this continued over several weeks. Using the interactive whiteboard and computer has demonstrated Ella’s ability to persevere and to concentrate for long periods of time.

Playing and Exploring—finding out-playing with what they know—having a go:

Ella is active in play and exploration. She returns to objects and ideas so sequences build up. The story ‘Andrew’s Bath’ provided her with many opportunities to role-play variations to a storyline she knew well.

Next Steps:

To continue to support self-selected learning enthusiasms whilst extending her capacity to work with adult guidance and to listen and concentrate on adult-led teaching sessions.

Active Learning—being involved and concentrating—keeping on trying-enjoying meeting challenges:

Despite Lewis having a shy and sometimes under confident start to the day his learning shows a great deal of enthusiasm where he is consistently involved in the shaping of his own play. Lewis has a great sense of humour and adventure and he enjoys being active particularly outdoors.

Creative and Critical Thinking—having own ideas—making links—choosing ways to do things:

Lewis will challenge the ideas of others giving another point of view. His confidence to speak in front of the group is growing. He recently enjoyed a game where he deliberately confuses his play partners by making a mixed up Mr Potato Head face then proceeded to build an upside down world.

Playing and Exploring—finding out-playing with what they know—having a go:

Lewis plays responsibly: he makes good decisions and resources these well. He really enjoys it opportunities to explore outdoors. Changes in the weather provided him with lots to investigate. He was fascinated by changing snow and ice into water.

Next Steps:

For Lewis to continue to gain confidence in speech and language. To be able to share his ideas using a rich vocabulary.
Appendix 7

Foundation Stage Planning: Continuous Provision

An excerpt showing how questioning lends itself to a pedagogy of listening.

Looking at child’s self knowledge, scribe ideas they have about themselves.
Ask questions:
How did you do that?
How else could you have done that?
Who did that in a different way?
What was hard about doing that?
What could you do when you are stuck on that?
How could you help someone else do that?
What would have made that easier for you?
How could I have taught that better?
How could you make that harder for yourself?

Developing a sense of mystery, awe and wonder
Discussing questions related to art and farming.

Develop a sense of wonder about the development and birth of creatures. Unfolding Autumn season and passage of time. Talking about changing light:
Asking questions:
Elaborating on children’s own ideas.
• Through observation- visit to a farm.
• Painting outdoors and in the forest in dappled light.
• Through questioning- what does it really look like? How do you know? One view many paintings?
• Through drawing- Children do line drawings to explain their ideas on landscapes and scenes.
• Through annotation- children’s ideas will be taped and scribed to enlighten drawings
• Look at the work of Monet as an artist).IWB

Appendix 8
The learning environment as the “Third Teacher” in an English setting.