

Brookfields Pre Phonics Policy

September 2022

Intent

Brookfields prides itself on delivering a personalised curriculum to all our children through carefully tailored learning pathways. These allow pupils to flourish through a positive learning ethos modelled by exceptional practitioners. The curriculum learning pathways reflect pupils' complex learning needs, including in the areas of sensory processing, emotional and behaviour regulation, attention and motivation, physical and movement along with social skills. Personal development in these areas is fundamental for pupils to achieve before progressing to more advanced higher order semi-formal and formal subject specific skills.

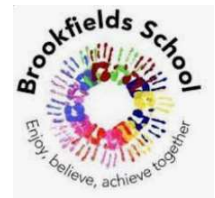
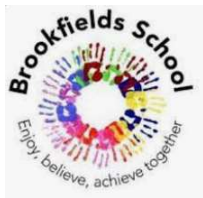
At Brookfields we believe that early language acquisition is paramount to the overall development of the child thus enabling them to access the curriculum in all its aspects. We acknowledge that a total communication approach to teaching and learning which encompasses the development of expressive and receptive language, together with the skills of reading and writing, is central to every child's individual intellectual, social and emotional development. Our pre-phonics, early communication and reading sessions equip pupils with the skills necessary to participate as a successful member of a diverse and cultural society, embedding communication skills for life long purposes.

At Brookfields pre-phonics teaching and learning skills are used to support and enhance a child's development in understanding all forms of communication including spoken language, gestural language, facial expressions, body language and social conventions related to conversational turn taking methods of communication. The acquisition of Expressive and Receptive language with a focus on listening skills is central to all pre-phonics learning sessions. This allows sessions to focus on attention skills which are a fundamental part of speaking and listening in order to develop comprehension and understanding. The pre-phonics 'foundation stones' allow our learners to develop the skills required to discriminate between wide ranges of sounds; instrumental, environmental and auditory, which will enhance and support their knowledge and understanding of phoneme/grapheme correspondence when they become "phonics ready".

Implementation

Developing phonological awareness is a crucial part of our pre-phonics learning, allowing children to demonstrate awareness to their individual sensitivity and understanding of the sound structures of oral language. We strive to support pupils in developing their awareness of sound rhythm and intonation, body language, written form and identification of phonemes and words.

At Brookfields we aim to provide all pupils with an irresistible invitation to learn through creating curriculum pathways centred on active exploration, investigation, observation modelling and building meaningful connections to their lives. Children develop positive communication skills when they are



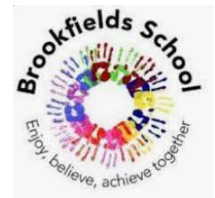
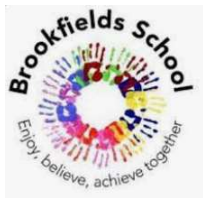
exposed to and regularly engaged in sessions where adults model good speaking and listening skills. Therefore we use a wide range of developed teaching and learning skills to explore aspects of sounds and support all pupils in developing their personalised modes of communication and language.

Our pupils have complex needs that are inter-related and influence each other; communication affects behaviour; physical skills affect motivation; motivation influences communication and flexibility affects curiosity. Pupils on all learning pathways experience a “Curriculum for Life” which is supported by pre-phonological awareness teaching and learning strategies.



At Brookfields we take into account the entire pupil’s needs and during pre-phonics input we aim to build on developing their phonological awareness through teaching a range of aspects of sounds which meet our curriculum learning expectations including:

- Joint Attention Skills
- Environmental Sounds Discrimination
- Instrumental Sounds Discrimination
- Voice Sounds
- Body Percussion
- Rhythm and Rhyme
- Alliteration
- Oral blending and segmenting
- Alphabet Awareness



Following a pupil centred approach is paramount and focuses on engagement for all based around the following learning principles;



Learning sessions are carefully planned and differentiated based on each pupil's EHCP, IEP, LRT Behaviour Plan and Communication Passport. Teachers and support staff are skilled in using a range of learning opportunities to provide and support pupils with opportunities to embark on their pre-phonics learning journey. The following strategies and approaches are used to embed phonological awareness and pre-phonics learning:

- **Attention Autism-** developing pupil's curiosity and share attention skills using highly motivating activities, creating irresistible opportunities to learn.
- **Intensive Interaction-** developing early interaction skills with a focus on the enjoyment of interaction.
- **SCERTS Model-** developing skills in relation to social communication, emotional regulation and transactional support.



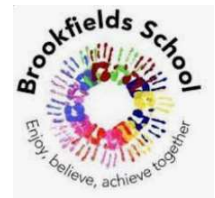
- **TEACCH Approach**- responding to individual pupils need by teaching, expanding, appreciating, collaborating, cooperating and nurturing personalised learning preferences.
- **See and Learn**- developing speech sound systems through hearing, listening and speaking.
- **Colourful Semantics**- developing children's understanding of words and structure through social communication using colour coded vocabulary and sentences.
- **Alternative, Augmentative Communication (AAC)** - using a wide range of tools that support and teach communication expanding phonological awareness.
- **Sensory Stories**- providing opportunities for pupils to access stories in a way that is bespoke to their learning pathway and supports sensory processing and turn taking.
- **Functional Language**- developing and using language in every day situation and in context.
- **Sound Board**- developing exposure of sounds by making, experiencing, feeling and hearing rhythm, repetition, vibration and interactive sounds.
- **Play and Outdoor Learning**- developing social interaction, critical thinking, cognitive skills, confidence, creativity, fine and gross motor skills. Providing pupils with access to a range of play provision that is both structured and un-structured incorporating messy, sensory, exploratory play alongside make believe, imaginative, expressive and constructive play.

Within school we have outside agencies who work alongside school staff to help raise our pupil's phonological awareness including Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists.

Our Pre-Phonics teaching and learning approach allows for pupils to be fully immersed in on-going, daily multi-sensory experiences to develop the prerequisite skills required before embarking on a formal and structured Phonics approach using Read Write Inc.

Impact

Through the delivery of a personalised pre-phonics approach, pupils at Brookfields grow in self-confidence and knowledge with their Communication, Speech and Language skills and are enabled to move onwards to phonics teaching through our scheme. Assessment for learning is used daily by all adults delivering and supporting the implementation of our pre-phonics policy. This supports a dynamic approach that meets the individual need to ensure children continually progress within their phonological awareness learning journey. Children following our EYFS or Explorer Curriculum Pathway are continually assessed and monitored using B Squared connecting steps. Explorer children follow the Engagement Model for learning where phonological awareness and pre-phonics is monitored through four strands of learning encompassing Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Sensory and Physical. This allows for staff to assess progress, identify gaps in areas of learning that need to be addressed and to identify children



who may need further support and adaptations within their pre-phonics learning. Senior Leaders review assessment trackers, undertake pupil progress meetings and learning walks to support in narrowing attainment gaps and provide any additional support for teacher to put into place.

