


Castle @ The Fields Centre

In July 2022 we were delighted to extend our Early Years and Key Stage 1 provision to our new site based at the Fields Centre, Galfrid Road. We have 2 thriving classes, Wrens and Robins. In Wrens and Robins classes, we are excited and honoured to be at the start of our pupils' educational journeys. We ensure that this is an exciting adventure which will lead to all our pupils becoming independent learners, confident communicators, and resilient explorers.





Intent: for adults to support children in an enabling environment through sensitive interaction; to provide an exciting communicative rich environment where children are ready to learn and be successful in life.

Innovation: constantly striving for new and exciting innovations and strategies to reinvigorate the curriculum.

Impact:
Happy
successful
learners

Implementation:
through luring
children into the fun
and magic of
learning through
play.

Inquiry: to promote a desire for life long learning and use their knowledge skills and understanding in a wide range of contexts outside of the school environment

We provide a therapeutic environment for learning. This means that children are helped to take the next steps in their development in a spirit of hope and excitement, in an environment characterised by a sense of safety, trust, collaboration, empowerment and a love of life.





We ensure that activities are appropriate to each child: in Early Years and Key stage 1, play is an important tool for learning. We find that our children flourish with a mix of discrete learning time and child-led activities, and we use these to promote the needs of the whole child, placing importance on every aspect of their growth.



Our curriculum

Our curriculum focuses on the prime areas of learning: Personal and Social Development, Communication and Language, and Physical Development. Children apply and strengthen these prime areas through the specific areas of the curriculum: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. While these subjects are important, we use them as a vehicle for helping every child meet their own personal outcomes and targets, whether these are to do with their cognition, their social, emotional or mental health needs, their sensory, physical or life skills, or their communication.

Our curriculum

To help us set these outcomes and targets and ensure the children meet them, we complete a baseline assessment within the first 6 weeks of admissions, in conjunction with the multidisciplinary team. This will ensure that all of the pupil's needs are met as they enter school and help us to plan a personalised learning plan for each child .

Our outdoor environment is integral and vital to children's development. We have a range of outdoor areas where activities are child-led, but where adults sensitively support and guide children to enhance learning.



Communication



Communication is at the core of our curriculum. Our pupils use Augmentative communication aids, Makaton, PECS, gesture, eye pointing, verbal and behavioural methods to communicate their thoughts, feelings and desires. When pupils enter the school they are assessed by SALT and class teams to the most appropriate communication method, in consultation with parents.

Communication is embedded in every aspect of the school day. Our SALT team support us in making sure every minute counts.

Reading opportunities are everywhere, whether it is the child's photo on their peg or the displays supported by writing for symbols. Our approaches to learning to read is multi faceted. At the very early stages of learning, pupils start with Intensive Interaction and Attention Autism (the famous 'bucket').

As the pupils move into more formalised approaches they access sensory stories, targeted reading, story time phonics teaching, whole word reading approaches, Colourful Semantics, and letters and sounds. These diverse approaches help us unlock the magic of reading.


Reading



Enhanced opportunities

Our learning is for life and much of it takes place outside of the 4 walls of the school. We enjoy using local community play parks, shops, explore seasonal places (eg pumpkin patch), local swimming pools and many more places. This is vital to ensure that the pupils learning is generalized and maintained in a variety of opportunities.



A photograph of a classroom interaction. A man in a dark blue shirt and glasses is leaning over a table, looking at something. A woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue patterned sleeveless top and a lanyard, is smiling and looking towards the man. Two children are standing between them, looking at the same point of interest on the table. The child on the left is a girl with dark hair in a bun, wearing a grey patterned dress. The child on the right is a boy with curly brown hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt. The background shows a bright green wall and a window with white frames.

Partnership with parents

From when families first arrive at Castle, we strive to make them feel welcome and part of our community. It is a huge step of trust for parents to give us their child and we appreciate that this is not always easy. We greatly value the wealth of information that parents, and families provide.

The class team ensures that each family has daily communication via Evidence for Learning or a paper communication book. These celebrate the pupils daily progress and are further supported by regular phone calls, parents' evenings, open days, EHCP meetings and families joining us for exciting activities, eg swimming.

Watch out for our Friday tweet on your child's Evidence for Learning feed with fun activities to do at home.

If you can think of new ways for us to further our relationships with parents, please let us know.

Partnership with parents



What our new parents think

“My child is happier than before, he is very excited to come to school. Previous nursery he was separated from other children. Now he sees he is part of it. When my child starts new places he has high level of anxiety and trying to find out all around him – this has really improved now he has settled into Castle and therefore been able to access learning.”

Couldn't have asked for a better transition – shocked how well and easy, even the taxi.

“His eye contact has increased. He is more willing to communicate with Mum at home. He has started playing more simple games eg hide and seek, he loves music and dancing.”

“Calmer when he comes home”

“Very excited to see the bus for school.”

“More relaxed”

“Happy to go to school”





We provide a challenging curriculum for all children and have high expectations. Learning follows a book themed approach for each half term. The children are very carefully assessed as part of a formative process, and this is constantly communicated and celebrated with parents.

With strong foundations and excitement to learn, the children are well prepared for their Key stage 2 transition to Castle main site.

Topics sequence cycle



Class teachers choose storybooks related to these themes across the year. The topics are designed to expose students to a rich variety of stimuli and provide opportunities for lateral progress and over-learning, so that learning from EYFS can be developed and deepened in KS1.