



Welcome to Reception

Welcome to West Jesmond Primary School Early Years.

We are delighted that your child will be joining our school and look forward to working with you throughout our Reception year to help your child have a happy, secure and purposeful start to their lifelong journey of learning. We are always excited to meet our new children and to see each and every one of our children flourish and shine as they discover and explore the world around them.

Our Curriculum

In Reception we ensure that all children are given a curriculum which is broad and balanced, promoting their emotional, social, physical and intellectual needs. We create a stimulating and inviting learning environment where all children's interests and learning are built upon. We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The curriculum covers 7 areas that underpin all future learning. We believe that children learn best by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. We approach all elements of our curriculum through play-based experiences, engaging children in fun and exciting opportunities for learning, carefully supported by our specialised EYFS staff.

Our aims and intent for our Reception year -

- To ensure that all of our children love coming to school – that they thrive and flourish in an environment where they can learn through creative, purposeful and thought-provoking play-based activities embedded in a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To encourage our children to become excited and curious learners; who aren't afraid to ask questions, who are interested in the world around them and are actively engaged in their learning journey.
- A determination that through outstanding teaching all of our children leave us as successful learners, making the best progress they can.
- That children feel safe and secure in a warm, nurturing and inclusive environment which promotes their self-confidence, independence, resilience and self-esteem.
- To work in partnership with families and parents, promoting the very best relationships to promote learning; helping parents feel actively involved in life at school and well informed about how to best support their child.
- To build a strong foundation for curriculum subjects so that our children have the vocabulary, understanding, skills and above all, enthusiasm for the national curriculum subjects from Year 1.

The EYFS curriculum is divided into 3 Prime Areas of learning, and 4 Specific Areas of learning;

The prime areas are:

Personal, Social and Emotional development: this involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and those of others; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. Children are helped to understand how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and managing personal needs independently.

Communication and Language: this involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment and by engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems to provide them with the opportunities to use and embed words in a range of contexts. Children are helped to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations; through conversation, storytelling and role play. Through support, modelling and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Physical Development: this involves providing opportunities for our children to be active and interactive. Children are provided with opportunities to play both indoors and outdoors; to create games to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination and children are provided with opportunities to explore with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools to develop proficiency, control and confidence.



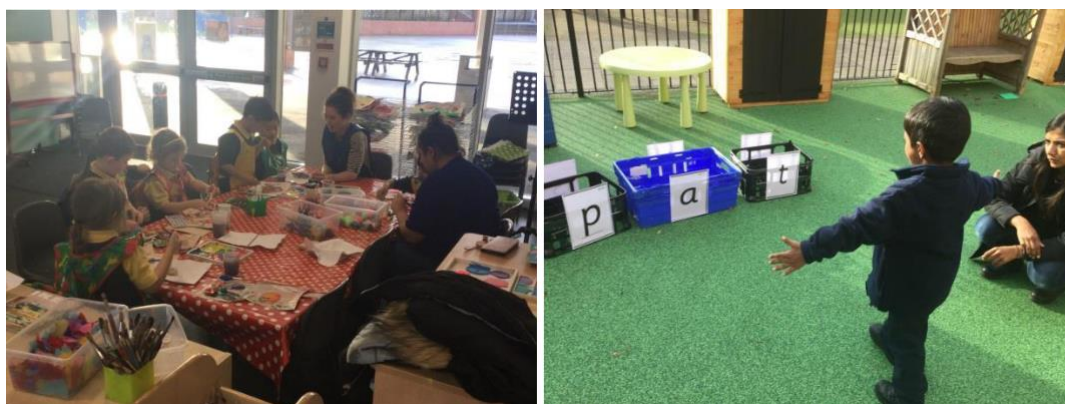
The specific areas are:

Literacy: this involves encouraging children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions, language comprehension and word reading. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. Skilled word reading involves decoding words and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. We develop children's early reading and writing using Floppy's Phonics, as synthetic systematic phonics program.

Mathematics: this involves providing our children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, developing a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationship between them and the patterns within those numbers. Children will be provided with opportunities to build and apply this understanding – such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting. Children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which the mastery of mathematics is built. Rich opportunities will be provided for the children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measure; looking for patterns, relationships and spot connections about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World; this involves guiding our children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and increase their knowledge and sense of the world around them including visits to parks, libraries and museums and meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. Listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Art and Design; this involves enabling our children to develop their artistic and cultural awareness to support their imagination and creativity. They will explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as being provided with opportunities and encouragement for self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate throughout the arts through what they hear, respond to and observe.



Our Learning Environment

Here at West Jesmond, we aim to create an engaging and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. Play based learning is paramount to us and we believe very strongly in allowing our children to direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff play alongside the children, observing, modelling and extending their play to provide challenge and constant learning opportunities. Our environments are organised well to allow the children to choose equipment for themselves and children are very much encouraged to make decisions as to what they would like to learn about and finding the answers to their own questions.

The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Outdoor learning forms a large part of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. We optimise our outdoor learning spaces to encourage creative exploration and learning in a safe and secure area. By giving the children the opportunity to explore the great outdoors, we provide them with the freedom to move and find out about the world around them.



Assessing and Tracking children's Learning;

Assessment plays an important part in helping both of us as teachers, and you as families to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Alongside staff monitoring how children work in small group activities, we also assess the children's learning by making observations of children throughout their day to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations take the form of photographs, videos, written notes and collecting pieces of the children's independent work. Looking at these observations allows us to identify the level of development which the children are working at. We can then use this to help us shape new learning experiences for each child, helping them to move forward in their learning.



At West Jesmond, our observations are collected electronically onto an online Learning Journal called Tapestry. The Ipad's allow us to make observations of the children on-the-go and collect pictures and notes about each child from all members of staff, allowing for a wider range of evidence to show how the children are learning. The program then allows us to share these pictures and observations with you as a parent, via emails. You can then respond to these, helping us to develop a greater picture of your child, and keeping you up to date with your child's progress and development. You can also send your own videos, notes and photographs to let us know any key successes your child had at home.

At the end of the year, all these observations and assessments, as well as information shared by you as a parent, are compiled and the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities and their progress against expected levels in each of the seven areas. The profile aims to give a clear picture of the level each child is working at and their readiness for Year 1.

In each area of learning, the children will be assessed as being emerging (working towards a level appropriate for their age) or expected (working at a level appropriate for their age). This information will be shared with you on your child's end of year report and will be the basis for a discussion with the Year 1 teachers. However, you will be kept regularly up to date throughout the year on how your child is progressing and be part of discussions on how to help and support their learning at home.

Communicating with Parents and Carers:

Communicating with you as parents and families is especially important to us, as discussions between home and school promote children's successful learning and development. Here at West Jesmond Primary, we communicate with our parents in lots of ways to keep you up to date:

Learning Journals

The teachers and staff will regularly send you photos and videos showing you special learning moments for your child. These observations may be of something new they have tried and enjoyed, show a piece of work or creation they are especially proud of, or to show a real move forward in their learning (for example, writing their name by themselves for the first time). You can also contribute your own observations and add to our understanding of your child's learning. You will be able to download your child's Learning Journal at the end of the year.

Workshops and in-class sessions

Throughout the Year in Reception, we run workshops for parents to help give support and advice on how best you can practise key skills with your child at home. These include;

1. A reading workshop which outlines how we teach early reading skills and how to bring reading to life for your child. This workshop for adults is then followed with an in-class session where you can watch staff teaching the children, then work alongside your child in class trying out lots of fun reading activities.
2. A writing workshop which outlines the principles of Floppy's Phonics, early writing skills and how to promote mark-making and writing for all children. This workshop for adults is then followed with an in-class session where you can watch staff teaching the children, then work alongside your child in class trying out lots of different writing activities.
3. A maths workshop which outlines how to promote maths through fun, practical activities and what expectations we have for our Reception children regarding their mathematical skills. This workshop for adults is then followed with an in-class session where you can watch staff teaching the children, then work alongside your child in class using the different mathematical equipment.



Weduc– Weduc is our online communication system between school and home. All communication between school and home will come via Weduc. Please make sure you have an active account before starting school with us in September. We will let you know what

we will be learning about in school, as well as the stories we will be reading, and ideas for things you can practise at home with your child. This is always extremely helpful when we cover topics, where you can then follow that up with family trips to a museum or reading books at home. They will be shared using the Weduc app.

Stay and Play Afternoons – each term we open our Reception doors to parents and carers to come and enjoy an afternoon playing alongside their child in our environment. During these afternoons, it is your opportunity to see how your child is developing in their environment, how they are working alongside their peers and allows you to watch staff interact with the children and extend and challenge their learning through play.

Home School Reading Record Book - is an extremely useful tool for communication between parents and staff regarding your child's reading progress. The Reception team will make a comment each time we read with your child. Please could you also make a comment to tell us how well your child has read. If you have any queries about your child's reading you can add them here and we will respond.

Email Queries - The email address for your child's teacher will be in their Home School Reading Record book. If there is anything you feel we need to know or you have any questions, you can contact us by email.

Home Learning - each week the children will receive a home learning task for you all to enjoy as a family. We make sure these activities are mostly practical and a way for you to support your child's learning at home with fun, hands-on experiences. You can then let us know how they got on in each task. Homework will be set on a Wednesday via Tapestry, and shared together as a class the week after.

Homework - Each week your child will be given homework linked to the phonics sounds we have learnt in class that week. This will come home on a Wednesday and we ask that the book is returned to school by the following Monday. The homework will be based on practising letter sounds and applying the sounds to read words.

