



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) CURRICULUM

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the period of education from birth to 5 years. Within our setting, we have a Pre-school Class [called Ladybirds] and one Reception Class.

What we teach

At Bishop's Itchington Primary School, we create opportunities to provide all children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to become effective, independent learners across all areas of the EYFS Framework.

We provide a balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning in a continuous provision environment - both indoors and outside – so every child's needs and interests can be accommodated, no matter how unique. We promote positive attitudes to learning and behaviour through the valuable inputs of our Key Person and play-buddy approach.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school to reach their full potential from their various starting points. Parental involvement is encouraged through stay-and-play sessions through the year, parents evenings and informal feedback.

Children's speech and language progress is screened on entry at Ladybirds, so development gaps are identified early on. Phonics teaching starts in Ladybirds, giving children an early start with their love of reading. Other vital skills such as mark-making and counting start in Ladybirds to give a strong foundation before starting Reception.

Ladybirds and Reception class have many routines and structures in common, making transition smooth the following academic year. Parents are included in transition activities such as the teddy bears' picnic.

Children are well supported to make good levels of development through achieving their Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage to support their transitions into Key Stage 1. Interventions are used to ensure no child gets left behind.

Every child – regardless of their start in life or their vulnerabilities – is included and supported to make progress. Children with special educational needs are identified early on in Ladybirds, so support can be put in place as early as possible. This is achieved by engaging with Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologist and IDS. Appropriate children are referred for an EHCP while at Ladybirds.

We believe that first experiences of school should be happy and positive, enabling them to develop a lifelong love of learning.

How we teach

Our curriculum is child-centred and flexible so children's interests are incorporated into their learning – both inside and outside the classroom. The children learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding through the three prime and four specific areas in the EYFS curriculum:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The teaching reflects on the different ways that children learn and supports the Characteristics of Effective Learning to ensure learning opportunities take place.

These are:

- playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements;
- creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Reading is a vital skill to all other areas of learning. We read aloud to our children so they develop listening skills. They practice their oracy skills through telling stories and rhymes. We ensure high-quality phonic sessions are taught daily using the whole school approach of Monster Phonics. Children's reading books are matched with each child's phonic ability to reinforce and build upon their prior learning. We encourage parents to read with their child and to recognise the

importance of doing this daily to promote an enjoyment and love of reading. We also teach a vast range of vocabulary so help our children succeed in life.

Continuous formative assessment takes place, and evidence is collected in each child's learning journal, which helps to build an overall picture of the child's level of understanding and development and informs their next steps for learning. This also identifies any child requiring additional support and those that need further challenge to move their development on further. This can be achieved by targeted interventions to support and stretch understanding. Summative assessments of the children's learning are made using our development bands throughout the year.

To maintain high standards of quality teaching, as a school, we invest in our staff training, ensuring there is specialist understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The leadership of EYFS is the responsibility of the EYFS leader and the Headteacher. The EYFS leader has a clear role and has the responsibility of overseeing the progress of all children and the development of the curriculum to ensure good progress is achieved by all children.

Impact

In the Summer of 2026, 84% of our children leaving EYFS achieved a 'Good Level of Development', compared to the national average of 68%.

Our children start their phonics at the beginning of EYFS providing an excellent grounding for the transition to Year One. This is favourably reflected in the phonics screen results at the end of Year One:

Year One Phonics Screen 2026 = 94% met the standard compared to the national average of 81%.

Our Reception class has been over-subscribed for the last three years.