



Early Years Policy

2022-2023

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Early Years at Knavesmire Primary School

Intent

During children's journey through Early Years at Knavesmire Primary school we ensure that ALL children succeed today, and set the foundations for tomorrow. We provide a **safe and secure** setting where children's emotional **wellbeing** is at the forefront of all other aspects. Children are encouraged to enjoy the **wonder and awe** of childhood and to **care for each other**. We understand that building a **parent-teacher-child partnership** is key to providing a successful learning experience for children throughout Early Years. We aim to develop **critical thinking skills** and to **spark curiosity**. We promote **independence, positivity** and **confidence** in a wholesome way and each and every child is valued as an individual. We aim to ignite the children's **love of learning** and create enthusiastic, **positive** learners full of **Knavesmire Character**, that want to learn and are excited to **know more**.



Substantive and Disciplinary Knowledge

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, substantive knowledge is the understanding and use of knowledge across the seven areas of learning. In the prime areas, this is building a broad and varied vocabulary and develop focus, listening and attention skills. We ensure that all children secure the gross and fine motor skills that they need to move forwards with their learning. Personal, social and emotional development is a key aspect in our curriculum and every unique child is celebrated; helping to develop confidence as well as knowledge on how to make and maintain relationships, manage feelings and behaviour and build self-esteem. In the specific areas, substantive knowledge is the area specific understanding and use of key concepts which are taught sequentially through adult-led teaching and those which also naturally arise through child-initiated learning. Development of the substantive knowledge is achieved through deliberate practice so that children develop fluency in their knowledge and understanding.

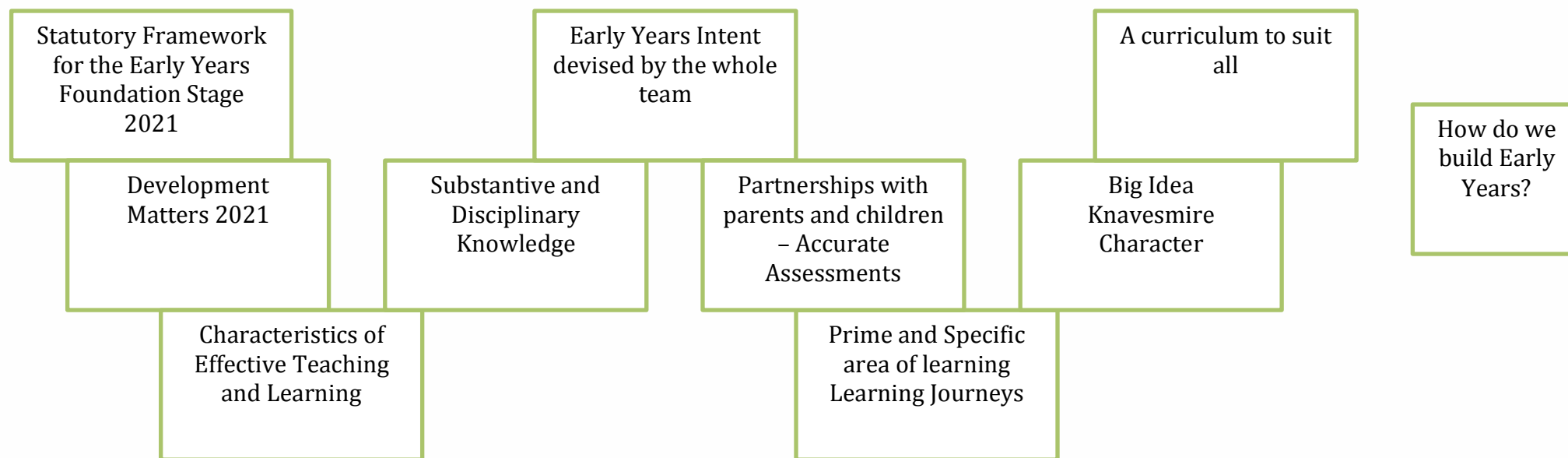
Throughout Early Years, disciplinary knowledge is the interpretation and independent use of learnt knowledge and skills. Learning is embedded from the start through accurate assessments that show what a child can do independently and consistently in everyday situations. Disciplinary knowledge is secure when children apply their knowledge to a range of situations, use it to solve problems or back up their own theory or tests with facts; this may be independently mixing colours to achieve the desired colour or applying their phonic knowledge to read for a purpose.

Implementation

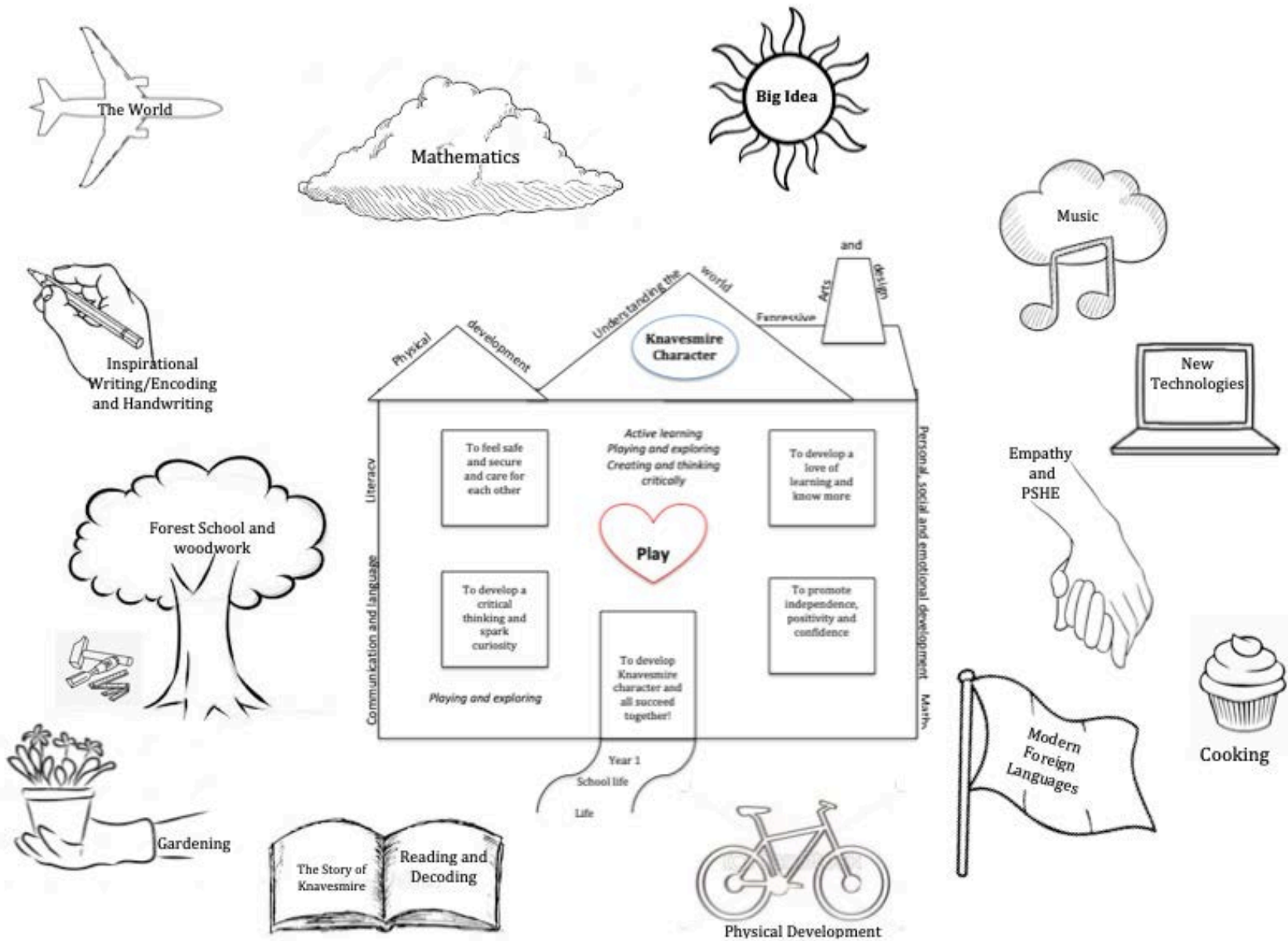
Throughout Early Years we are proud to introduce children to the Knavesmire Big Idea. The Big Idea offers children learning with a purpose, a guiding purpose with meaning and value. It allows children to work in partnership with teachers and take part in planning their own learning. Children help to guide the Big Idea a way that interests them and excites them. They are keen to learn and develop a love of learning because they learn skills for a purpose and they know why they are doing it. The Big Idea allows creativity from the start and offers the children to learn through exciting experiences, trips, visits and enriching activities that build on cultural capital.

The children are taught about the wider world and learn through first hand experiences and open-ended areas of provision. Our curriculum is carefully designed to offer a balance of preparing the children for Future transitions, while at the same time, ensuring that children are learning at a pace and in a manner that is suitable to their developmental stage. We place huge importance on the development of children's vocabulary, to enable children to communicate their needs, thoughts, and understanding. This is implemented through a language rich environment, embedded through exciting texts and appropriately planned and modelled communication and language skills. We pride ourselves on giving the children time to speak, time to develop opinions, time to listen and time to develop as an individual.

The chart below shows how we formulate our curriculum in Early Years



Implementation Continued



Intent	To feel safe and secure and to care for each other.	To develop a love of learning and to know more .	To develop critical thinking skills and spark curiosity .	To promote independence, positivity and confidence .	To develop Knavesmire Character and all succeed together
Implementation	<p>The children's emotional wellbeing comes before anything else.</p> <p>Staff have positive relationships and good communication with the children and the parents.</p> <p>The staff offer a nurturing and caring approach. They are welcoming, always smiling and always ready to take a hand or give a cuddle.</p> <p>Positive relationships are built on trust and communication with parents so that</p> <p>The environment is safe and secure and designed for the children's needs.</p> <p>The children are encouraged to become caring and accepting individuals through general day-to-day tasks and focused PSHE sessions.</p> <p>The children take part in designing the rules and discuss the reasoning behind the rules that we implement.</p> <p>The children take part in Early Years and whole school Pupil Action Groups to improve and develop different aspects around school.</p> <p>The different backgrounds of the children and families are explored and celebrated through Big Ideas.</p>	<p>Play is at the heart of our curriculum</p> <p>We learn through exciting Big Ideas that capture the children's key interests.</p> <p>We do regular Forest School sessions taught by ourselves and also a Forest School expert.</p> <p>Our curriculum offers the opportunity for lots of physical learning; through PE sessions to free flow climbing equipment and bikes!</p> <p>The children make independent choices over how and where they learn and learn key skills through things that interest them.</p> <p>We focus on depth of learning and understanding.</p> <p>The children can build on their skills at a pace that suits them.</p> <p>We offer a challenging and open-ended environment.</p> <p>Children can leave a project and come back to it as they please.</p> <p>Each day a daily reflection helps to embed positive experiences.</p> <p>Assessments are shared with children so that they know how to expand their learning.</p>	<p>Areas of provision are planned carefully to offer open-ended play that appeals to all.</p> <p>Our curriculum is flexible and is adapted to suit the children's interests.</p> <p>Children learn through concrete experiences such as Forest School, theatre workshops, trips and visits.</p> <p>Our Big Idea allows the children to ask the questions and to work out ways to answer them.</p> <p>Children are not directed to certain areas, each area offers the resources necessary for the children to develop skills based on their own interests.</p> <p>Teaching is immersed with the Knavesmire Character and contains exciting books, creative teaching and interesting activities.</p> <p>Vocabulary development is a key focus so that the children can understand and further their learning.</p> <p>Staff support and scaffold children in their play and focus learning so that children learn new skills, ask more questions and become critical thinkers.</p>	<p>The children drive the Big Idea and the path that it takes.</p> <p>The children are allowed to learn at a pace that suits them and encourages confidence in their abilities.</p> <p>Our environment offers every child the opportunity to learn through play that interests them.</p> <p>The children in Nursery and Reception make choices about snack and Reception make their own lunch choices.</p> <p>Children make choices about where they play and learn, inside or out.</p> <p>Children are encouraged to take care of their own belongings.</p> <p>Staff in Early Years are positive people and this transfers to the children.</p> <p>Children's work is celebrated and some is displayed in the classrooms.</p> <p>The children's achievements are shared with them.</p> <p>The children's unique qualities are celebrated and each child is valued.</p>	<p>We offer an ambitious, quality and broad curriculum; rich in cultural capital.</p> <p>Our curriculum is designed to leave no child behind.</p> <p>We offer children a breadth of experiences, offering learning to suit all.</p> <p>The learning that is taking place is carefully analysed and observed by staff who then design the environment to suit the children's needs.</p> <p>Assessments are shared with children.</p> <p>Children's achievements are celebrated through Honey House Points, Star of the Week and daily reflections.</p> <p>Progress is measured on each individual child.</p> <p>Staff work as a unit throughout Early Years to plan an enriching environment, exciting focus sessions, appropriate interventions and accurate assessments.</p> <p>Children's achievements are celebrated daily through reflections, displays and school rewards.</p>
Impact	<p>The children feel comfortable and respected, they feel safe and secure to learn in a nurturing and caring environment.</p> <p>Children demonstrate British Values. Children exercise democracy. They have freedom of expression and all have a say in what happens and why. The children respect the 'rules' because they have helped to create them and they understand them; they have respect for authority. All children have a voice and different opinions are discussed, respected and appreciated. The children know that they have the freedom to make choices and they are able to reflect on their own decisions. The children are considerate role models, ready to get through life showing mutual respect for each other. They are good listeners and feel comfortable to share their opinions and views. They respect the views of others and become accepting of differences.</p>	<p>The children are passionate and enthusiastic about their learning. They have a strong desire to learn and they feel interested, eager and compelled to know more. They take ownership of their learning and they feel confident to make choices and learn in a way that suits them. Children are spirited; each in their own individual way. They show energy, enthusiasm and determination in daily life. They take pleasure in coming to school and see that learning is fun.</p> <p>The children are arty and creative learners. They understand that it is the process that matters and the end product is not the only achievement. They know that it is OK to be different and feel confident to use their imagination.</p> <p>The children understand the need for a healthy lifestyle and realise the benefits that this can have. They are sporty and energetic and they enjoy taking part in teamwork; they are team players!</p>	<p>Children see the purpose in learning. They have a fixed intention and they show determination in achieving their goals. The children have built the confidence and resilience needed to tackle problems and spring back when things don't go their way. They are aware that things are not always easy but they have developed the skills needed to tackle everyday life challenges.</p> <p>They ask questions and know that it is ok to take learning risks to work out strategies to achieve. They are independent, critical thinkers who will challenge concepts and question why things happen in certain ways. The children know that the world extends past their own individual lives and they are keen to find out more!</p>	<p>The children are able to tackle daily living tasks on their own. They use resources to help them to learn in an independent manner. They do not rely on others to guide their learning but instead they take learning risks to work things out for themselves. They have a positive outlook on learning and they are keen to learn more. The children are exuberant, they are full of excitement and energy and they channel this into their daily learning.</p> <p>The children have respect for differences and similarities between individuals. They know that there is no single entity and that everybody has their own unique qualities. The children are confident to be themselves. They know that 'differences' in attitude, experiences, habits, creativity and perspective are what makes us who we are. They are accepting of other cultures, communities and religions.</p>	<p>The children have high expectations for their learning. They want the best out of school and also out of life. They have the ambition and desire to achieve and they have aspirational goals. They have the energy, diligence and focus to be hard working.</p> <p>Children and staff work as a team to succeed together. We are creative, arty and have fun. We take risks in learning and we are enthusiastic and passionate. We are hard working and resilient as well as being exuberant and spirited. We have aspirations and are determined whilst having high expectations. We celebrate being unique and individual. We are sporty and healthy. We embrace British Values of democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect and individual liberty.</p>

Classroom Organisation

Early Years at Knavesmire consists of a large Nursery consisting of 2 large indoor rooms and a large outdoor area that is shared with Reception. Reception has 2 classes, usually with 30 children per class. Reception has 2 large classrooms that are open plan and enjoys the shared outdoor space with Nursery. Nursery has 1 teacher and 3 teaching assistants. Reception have 2 teachers and 2 teaching assistants.

Throughout the EYFS we pride ourselves on providing a language rich environment. Our areas of provision reflect the schools Knavesmire Character and are **fun** and **creative**. We offer open-ended provision that is child centered and follows the children's interests. Our areas offer opportunities for the children to **play and explore**, learn through **active learning** and to **create and think critically**. Our areas promote independence through challenge and problem solving. The children have access to a range of quality resources that enables them to enhance their own play and to take **ownership** of their experiences.

Throughout Nursery and Reception the children have access to the following continuous provision areas to encourage **motivation, engagement** and **thinking** skills.

Indoor

Home Corner – The home corners in Nursery and Reception offer the children a familiar environment where they can act out real life experiences, helping them make sense of the world. This area encourages communication and language skills and further challenge and progression can be introduced through enhancing the area with literacy activities, cultural and seasonal events and things such as counting for maths. As children leave Nursery and make the move into Reception they will find themselves with more homely goods to take responsibility of, later in the year, when the children are ready, pets and babies are introduced. They sometimes acquire more rooms as they progress through Early Years!

Construction – Large and small construction allows children to play, explore, actively learn, create and think critically which are all vital in early learning. The children can create and explore concepts which an adult may never even consider. The structures and skills progress as the children are ready but as children move into Reception they begin to be inspired to use books to aid their thinking and will write and plan for their models as the year goes on.

DT/Create – In this area children can plan, draw, make and develop transferable skills. This is key for encouraging children's creative imaginations and allows them to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas. In Nursery the children are encouraged to mark make and begin cutting and sticking independently. As they move through Reception we revisit these skills but encourage independence of skills and of ideas.

Small World – The children can act out/create experiences through small world play. This helps children with personal, social and emotional development as well as communication and language skills. Progression through Early Years gives the children a wide range of scenarios and vocabulary to explore and develop.

Maths – The maths areas offer progression of skills throughout Early Years. The children are offered a range of provision to encourage skills in number and shape and space and measure. Reception also take into consideration the Y1 curriculum and offer appropriate resources when/if the children are ready.

Classroom Organisation

Mark Making/Writing – We pride ourselves on offering a language rich environment where the children are able to consolidate/explore their reading and writing skills. Our writing areas offer open-ended resources for the children to practice skills and develop a passion for literacy. Children in Nursery spend a lot of time developing muscles through activities related to writing such as Doh Disco and mark making to practice pencil grip. When they move to reception we build on gross and fine motor skills and when the children are confident to hold a pencil and write, they do.

Fine Motor – Physical development is key throughout early years. Carefully selected provision is provided to encourage the development of the children's gross and fine motor skills to enable them to succeed in writing, cutting and accuracy.

Malleable – Playing in the malleable area can be supportive of many different areas of the curriculum. It supports physical development as well as consideration for shape, space and the environment. This area is important in supporting communication and language and allows the children a sensory approach to learning. As children move through Early Years, challenge is added and precision is a focus.

Sand – Wet and dry sand play promotes physical development through large movements when pouring, digging, sifting and brushing. The sand area can become anything that the child imagines! As the children move through Early Years they develop their vocabulary and skills linked to sand play such as measuring and weighing.

Water – The water area allows opportunities for exploration and experimentation in a sensory and calming way. Many skills such as measuring and cause and effect can be gained from water play. Again, as the children move through Early Years they become more confident with measurements, capacity and many motor skills. The resources become more precision based in Reception and the children extend their vocabulary as the year moves on.

Outdoor

Sand – The large outdoor sand area supports physical development as the indoor one does, but with the added bonus of space to explore sand vehicles and a larger building space.

Bikes – We have a range of bikes/scooters/cars to support physical development and offer challenge in the outdoor area. This area is key for communication and language as well as physical development. As children progress through Reception, we introduce more challenge with two wheeled bikes and scooters.

The Garden – The open ended outdoor writing hut gives the children a space where they can explore mark making/writing skills in a different environment. The outdoor space provides inspiration for children to become independent gardeners who know how things grow and can help this to happen.

Reading Shed – Reading is a key focus throughout Early Years. The children are provided with books to familiarise themselves with the layout/pictures and eventually reading and narratives of books. The books are popular books from Nursery and Reception that children are familiar with.

Classroom Organisation

Construction – The children have a large construction area outside where they can let their imaginations run wild and build on team skills to build large structures. Progression is offered through varying resources for Nursery and Reception. .

Stage Area – The stage area promotes confidence and communication through expressive arts.

Music Area – The children can explore the sounds of musical instruments, create beats and work together to become a band!

Enriching/changeable activities – We follow the children's interests and offer a range of enriching activities such as footballs, fancy dress, car slides, small world and teddy bears picnics among many more.

The children's work is celebrated and they are aware that they can leave a project and come back to further their play later in the day. The areas are not restricted to one area of learning. Writing/literacy and mark making are encouraged through all areas of provision. Areas can be added or adapted to suit the children's interests or the Big Idea.

Induction/transition

Nursery Transition

Knavesmire Nursery has 3 intakes during the year – In September January and April. Under usual circumstances we host open days for parents to come and explore the space and get to know the staff. Children are then invited for settling in sessions where the parent can bring and leave their child to settle for a short space of time. This allows the child to gain trust in the staff and to feel safe and comfortable with the environment and the routine. Due to the current COVID situation, we are having to do things more carefully, however, we are ensuring that parents and children feel comfortable with transitions and we are working closely with the families to ensure that everybody is ready and happy with transitions. We are keeping things as visual as possible with regular contact and videos for the children to watch.

On entry to Nursery children are allocated a designated Key Person who will be their main point of contact. Staff in Nursery are always on hand to talk to parent and parents will be guided through the transition period by experienced practitioners. The Key Person in Reception is the class teacher, however, Teaching assistants are always on hand for communication and also build positive relationships with children from day 1.

Reception Transition

Children starting in Reception are supported through the transition process in the following way. Some children may need an enhanced transition and each individual child is taken into account when planning for transition;

- The child will be visited by a Reception teacher in their current setting where the teacher will meet the child, find out their interests, chat to them about starting school and also talk to the child's Key Person.
- The parents will be invited to attend a New Starters meeting where they will be informed on the curriculum, expectations, daily routines, uniform, things the children need and they will be given the opportunity to chat to staff about any questions or concerns that they may have. The parents and children will receive a pack which gives them all of the key information that they will need.
- Their parents will be invited to attend a Library Story Session where the teacher will read a story and chat to the children and parents. This will be when the child finds out which class they will be in.
- The child is invited to a Stay and Play session at the school. This gives them a chance to meet their new teachers/TA's, explore their environment and meet some of the children that will be in their class.
- If parents or children have any specific concerns they are invited into school to discuss these and put any further strategies in place that may be needed.

When children start school, they start full time from day 1. This allows children to become instantly familiar with the routine of school life. Reception has 2 teachers and 2 teaching assistants but at this delicate time we have lots of extra staff members on hand to support children but also parents. Lots of these extra members of staff are from Nursery so they know the children well and this helps the children to settle quickly.

Please be assured that if we are unable to follow usual transition processes, that we will implement everything that we can to ensure that your child has a smooth transition into school life. This year's 'Parents Questionnaire' has assured us that transition has been smooth.

Induction/transition

Transition into Year 1

We aim to support a smooth transition into year 1 in the following ways.

- As always, our parent – teacher – child partnership is key. Communication around arrangements is strong and everybody is well informed.
- Knowledge throughout school is planned in a sequential way so that there is a clear and smooth transition between the Reception Curriculum and that of Year 1.
- Expectations are clear and information on progress is shared with the teams and the parents.
- End of Reception data (GLD) is shared with the Year 1 team to ensure that they are aware of any areas of learning the children may still need help with, even if these areas are not part of the Year 1 National Curriculum.
- Towards the end of Reception, children begin to take part in longer focus sessions with a follow up task (if they are ready) to prepare them for Year 1. Year 1 work equally to ensure that their classrooms are ready for children finishing Reception. The Year 1 team work with the Early Years Lead to ensure areas are open ended and well resourced to ensure consistency.
- Year 1 boast a large team, inviting environment and have their own outside space that is essential in a transition from Reception!
- The start of Y1 is pitched at the right level - Learning continues to be play based, fun and enriching as well as broad and balanced with our Big Idea curriculum
- Access to outdoor area with AOP!
- Joint moderation throughout the year - through AUT term to understand what children are like on point of entry.
- Children enter school in the same way as they do in REC
- Children use toilets in the same way - not far from classroom
- Children use same hall, dinner hall and facilities
- Developmentally appropriate environment and curriculum
- Children take part in many transition days to get to know their new teachers and environment. All children have access to an enhanced transition.

Parent-child-teacher Partnership

We realise that at this young age, that parent communication is key. We find that good communication between parents and teachers allows a smooth transition into school life and throughout school life. Nursery and Reception have communication boards at pick up points, this allows teachers to communicate and messages or dates ect. A weekly school newsletter is also sent out to all parents to inform of our weekly learning/activities as well as a half termly detailed newsletter. We host 2 Open Evenings where the children's learning and next steps are shared with parent's. This year, we have the added addition of cohort email addresses, parents are free to email teachers to ask questions, make requests. Communication is in no way limited to that as we are always open to discussing the children's progress.

We share daily observations via the online learning journey Tapestry. This allows parents to share in their children's learning. Parents are also encouraged to share children's achievements from home in this way. Parents can also use Tapestry as a communication method if they would like to. We also have Learning Journeys each classroom which parents are always welcome to view. These show what we have been learning that day/week/term.

We are always keen to have the children's and parent's opinions on what we do. A half termly Big Idea evaluation gives children the chance to discuss with their parents what they have enjoyed/would like to develop further on. Parents will also be invited to take part in feedback questionnaires. Under 'normal' circumstances, parents are regularly invited in to share in their children's learning. Through Nursery and Reception, parents are invited to art exhibitions, teddy bears picnics and many more exciting days. Parents are also invited to volunteer to read with children on a weekly basis or help out with other enriching activities such as baking or trips. This year we will be encouraging parental involvement in a more virtual way, sharing videos and photographs and inviting parents to do talks virtually where this fits in with our Big Ideas.

Language and Literacy

At Knavesmire, both in Early years and throughout school, We place huge importance on the development of children's vocabulary, to enable children to communicate their needs, thoughts, and understanding. This is implemented through a language rich environment, embedded through exciting texts and appropriately planned and modelled communication and language skills. Reading is promoted throughout school and children at Knavesmire quickly come to realise the magic that reading offers. Throughout Early years children will take part in daily phonics session, these help the children to learn to read and write in fun and exciting manner.

At Knavesmire Primary School we follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds program. This supports the learning on phonics from Nursery through to Year 2 and further if beyond

Throughout Nursery, your child will be exposed to the foundations for phonics. The children are encouraged to be secure in;

- General sound discrimination – environmental
- General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds
- General sound discrimination – body percussion
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting

Reception will ensure that all children are secure on the foundations for phonics while teaching phase 2 phonics. This begins in the first half term and the children begin to learn phonemes that they can apply their oral blending and segmenting skills to. The children are soon ready for reading books but just before we launch these, we host a **Phonics Evening (virtually this year)** for parents to help them to support their children at home. As many parents did not learn through phonics this is key to helping their children to excel in phonics.

Throughout Reception the children will become secure in Phase 1 phonics followed by learning Phase 2, 3 and 4.

We send home 2 books a week, 1 that matches your child's phonic stage so that they can show off their skills without having the pressure of learning new skills and one book that they have chosen for pleasure that we would encourage you to read to them. The challenge and learning aspect of reading happens in school home reading is for consolidation of skills. The children will also take part in guided reading twice a week where they will read and discuss books that are also matching their stage in phonics. The children who are struggling will be read with at least 4 times a week individually and will also take part in a daily Secret Phonics intervention to boost their confidence. The children are also lucky enough to have plenty of parent readers who come in and read with them. We also have Reading Buddies (Year 5) who come once a week to read with the children. The children and parents have access to our fantastic resources library where the children can browse and build confidence in choice making, again to encourage independence

Impact of our curriculum

Children in Early Years are confident, independent learners who want to learn more. They have the substantive knowledge that they need to succeed in future transitions and they are able to apply this knowledge in practical, everyday situations.

Children are articulate, confident individuals who are respected and show respect. Mutual respect is demonstrated by children and adults alike. Children demonstrate an understanding of the 'rules' because they have helped to create them. All children have a voice and different opinions are discussed, respected and appreciated. The children know that they have the freedom to make choices and they are able to reflect on their own decisions. Children leave Early Years with a solid understanding of how to share their views but to respect those of others.

The children are passionate and enthusiastic about their learning. They have a strong desire to learn and they feel interested, eager and compelled to know more. They take ownership of their learning and they feel confident to make choices and learn in a way that suits them. Children are spirited; each in their own individual way. They show energy, enthusiasm and determination in daily life. They take pleasure in coming to school and see that learning is fun. The children are arty and creative learners. They understand that it is the process that matters and the end product is not the only achievement. They know that it is OK to be different and feel confident to use their imagination. The children understand the need for a healthy lifestyle and realise the benefits that this can have. They are sporty and energetic and they enjoy taking part in teamwork; they are team players! Children see the purpose in learning. They have a fixed intention and they show determination in achieving their goals. The children have built the confidence and resilience needed to tackle problems and spring back when things don't go their way. They are aware that things are not always easy but they have developed the skills needed to tackle everyday life challenges. They ask questions and know that it is ok to take learning risks to work out strategies to achieve. They are independent, critical thinkers who will challenge concepts and question why things happen in certain ways. The children know that the world extends past their own individual lives and they are keen to find out more!

The children are able to tackle daily living tasks on their own. They use resources to help them to learn in an independent manner. They do not rely on others to guide their learning but instead they take learning risks to work things out for themselves. They have a positive outlook on learning and they are keen to learn more. The children are exuberant, they are full of excitement and energy and they channel this into their daily learning. The children have respect for differences and similarities between individuals. They know that there is no single entity and that everybody has their own unique qualities. The children are confident to be themselves. They know that 'differences' in attitude, experiences, habits, creativity and perspective are what makes us who we are. They are accepting of other cultures, communities and religions. The children have high expectations for their learning. They want the best out of school and also out of life. They have the ambition and desire to achieve and they have aspirational goals. They have the energy, diligence and focus to be hard working. Children and staff work as a team to succeed together. We are creative, arty and have fun. We take risks in learning and we are enthusiastic and passionate. We are hard working and resilient as well as being exuberant and spirited. We have aspirations and are determined whilst having high expectations. We celebrate being unique and individual. We are sporty and healthy. We embrace British Values of democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect and individual liberty.