

ALMUÑÉCAR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



Early Years
Curriculum
2017 - 18

Early Years Planning

September 2017

We are currently working on changing the way we do our Long Term Planning. Our aim is to make our planning unique for our particular cohort of children in order to get maximum engagement and therefore maximum potential for learning. Usually Long Term Planning is a rolling two year programme of topics which repeat at the end of each cycle but, through our own observations, training and research we have realised that this does not always reflect the needs of a particular cohort of children and that the topics are not always relevant to what the children are interested in.

We know where we want children to be by the time they finish Early Years but the path we take to get there will not be the same year after year. We start by looking at the objectives in the Development Matters document. This is the document produced by the English government which was designed to help practitioners to support children's learning and development, by closely matching what they provide to a child's current needs. These statements are the same statement that are in our Online Learning Journals.

[Development Matters](#) (BAECE, 2012)

And as we get to know the children we assess where they are using these statements and what the next objectives should be. At the same time we have a chart in each classroom and over the first couple of weeks we make a note of what the children are interested in and what kinds of activities they prefer. We then use this information to plan activities which cover the required objectives but wherever possible takes into account the children's interests in order to make the learning more motivating for them. This might be a simple thing like adding Paw Patrol pencils and writing paper to encourage a particular child or group of children to take part in a writing activity or might be a week or more's worth of activities about pirates as a big group of children show they are interested in this. The objectives are always closely monitored even and recorded so we always know what is next for each child.

An Example of one Aspect of our Objective Led Planning - Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are a really important aspect of our practice. Fine motor skills are those that involve a refined use of the small muscles which control the hand, fingers and thumb. With the development of these skills, a child is able to complete important tasks such as writing, feeding oneself, buttoning and zippering. These abilities gradually develop through experience and exposure to a variety of toys, materials and even foods.

Children's hands need to develop dexterity and strength. We can help this process by encouraging children to play, explore and interact with a variety of items. Toys, clothing

fasteners, safe scissors and play dough are all tactile examples of practices that facilitate fine motor development. These types of “play” activities and manipulation skills will actually help prepare a child to hold and use a crayon. The ability to do so is the first step in learning to color, draw and ultimately write.

For this reason as children are playing during the first weeks we will observe how they hold a pencil or use tools and scissors and then make a decision about what stage they are at and this then helps us to decide what kind of activities to plan.

We have a number of children at 4 so they need small pincer movement activities to refine their skills so for example threading with very small beads or picking things up with tweezers. Other children are around 2 or 3 and we will provide playdough etc. As there is a free choice of activity we try to guide children to the activity we want them to do and then observe or assist them as necessary.

An Example of Tailoring the Learning to the Children's interests

An adult is working at the table doing a maths activity with the children. The objective is counting objects to 10. A number of children choose to come and take part in the activity, some children will come happily if asked if they are not too involved in what they are doing. Some children are so involved in their own choice of activity that if you take them away from this they will find it hard to concentrate and worry about getting back to their play who is taking their toy etc and you don't get full engagement. So another way to do this would be that the adult goes over to where the children are playing and look for a way to join in and where possible could counting be introduced into the activity. How many cups do we need for your table so each toy can have a cup? How many bricks did you use for your tower. In this way we are achieving the same objective but in a way if still not possible make a note to catch up with them later in the day. Of course there are times where they have to come and join but this builds up slowly through the year and often we find that children are keen to come and take part in the adult led activity.

Structured Learning

Children will still have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through EYFS. This will encompass daily phonics, Literacy and Maths sessions which follow a set programme but can be adapted to suit the abilities and interests of the children. For instance, if we have identified pirates as a topic that the children are interested in we might add pirate themed resources to our Phonics or maths session. There are also a number of different experiences that we plan for the children such as our trip to the Science Park or the Farm

School or growing plants or cooking as we know this will have a positive effect on the them and this will influence our planning at these times.

Another important aspect of our planning is the environment itself.

Early Years 1

In Early Years 1 the children are new to school and so we are not yet aware of their interests or abilities but we do know they need time to settle in and get used to the routines and to feel safe and secure in their classroom and this will influence the way we organise the environment to ensure children feel safe and confident to explore and play independently.

Close to the entrance to the classroom children have their own cubbyhole and pegs so they have a place for their coats, bags and other personal things. These are labelled with names and photographs to help them take care of their belongings independently.

The classroom also has a comfortable reading area with a sofa where children can rest or read a book. The area also has a selection of soft toys to cuddle or play with and is set up for children to feel safe, comfortable and relaxed.



Wherever possible resources are stored so that children can access them independently or are visible so children can ask for them and some tables are left empty for this reason. Boxes for resources are clearly labelled with words and pictures so children can tidy away as independently as possible.

Early Years 2

In Early Years 2 we generally already know the children a little better- this year for example we knew they really enjoyed dressing up and role play and so this was an important area of the classroom to consider. We provided dressing up clothes and a suitcase and travel brochures and they have really enjoyed role playing going on holiday, travelling on an aeroplane etc and lots of opportunities for modelling writing have come up, for example making tickets, reading the brochures, making passports. Children have been able to write in a way that is meaningful for them.

The children still need to feel safe and secure in the classroom and be working on their independence so, again, we have their own cubbyhole space near the door to keep their personal belongings. As in Early Years 1, we have a number of areas where children can be responsible for the resources themselves, They have free access to writing materials and in the book corner and they also have a choice of equipment in the construction area. I am currently working on making the creative area more child centred too rather than adult led activities as this encourages children to be more creative.

All these decisions about the environment form an important part of our long term planning and layout and resources will change throughout the year based on the interests and needs of the children.

Rough Plan of our Planned Experiences

| Time of the year | Topic |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Autumn 1 (Week 1-4) | All about me: Me, My Family and My home. |
| Autumn 2 (Week 5-7) | |
| Autumn 3 (Week 8) | Halloween |
| Half term Holidays (Week 9) | Half term Holidays (Week 9) |

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| Winter 1 (Week 10-11) | |
| Winter 2 (Week 12-14) | |
| Winter 3 (Week 15-16) | Christmas |
| Christmas holidays (Weeks 17-18) | Christmas holidays (Weeks 17-18) |
| Winter 4 (Week 19- 21) | |
| Winter 5 (Week 22- 24) | Valentine's day or Love day |
| Winter 6 (Week 24- 25) | |
| Half term holidays (Week 26) | Half term holidays (Week 26) |
| Spring 1 (Week 27-28) | |
| Spring 2(Week 29) | Easter bunny |
| Easter holidays (Week 30) | Easter holidays (Week 30) |
| Spring 3 (Week 31-33) | Farm animals and farm environment. |
| Summer 1 (Week 34-36) | |
| Summer 2 (Week 37- 39) | |
| Summer 3 (Week 40-42) | |