

Early Years – The Vision



At Fox Wood school we believe that 'Together We Shine' and this ethos is reflected within our Early Years Foundation Stage setting, Fox Cubs. Fox Cubs is a purpose-built satellite site for our Early Years and Year 1 pupils. Fox Cubs consists of a team of specialist teachers and dedicated support staff who are committed to providing the best possible education for your child. The setting comprises of three classrooms, a multi-sensory room, a sensory circuit/therapy room and a purpose-built playground.

Rationale

At Fox Cubs, we aim to provide a firm foundation for learning for all pupils. Our focus is to equip your child with a wide range of skills that will help them be 'Ready to Learn.' In September, many pupils are not used to doing whole days in school, having had morning or afternoon sessions in nursery, or to sit and attend to activities for a more sustained period of time. Staff skilfully promote learning through play-based activities, gradually increasing the time that pupils can spend engaging with a shared or an independent activity.

All our pupils are immersed in a total communication environment which fosters and develops their own communication skills. Staff are trained in a wide variety of teaching approaches that can support and develop your child's skill acquisition. Within Fox Cubs, staff are trained in Intensive Interaction, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System), AAC (Augmentative Alternative Communication), Makaton, TEACCH, on-body signing, OOR (Objects of Reference) and use symbols and photographs to support communication. All pupils will have their own individual Speech and Language Plan which staff adhere to.

ASSESSMENT

Baselining

When pupils start at Fox Cubs in Reception, assessments are conducted throughout the first half term (which is usually Autumn 1). The assessments are unobtrusive and part of the school day, with staff working with individual children and making notes and/or taking videos and uploading to Evidence for Learning. All of this

evidence is collated to ensure that there is the best possible picture for all children across the 7 areas of the Early Years curriculum. These assessments are cross referenced with PACE materials to ensure a robust baseline is obtained. By the end of Autumn Term, pupils are baselined on Early Steps, which is the Early Years section of B-Squared (the assessment package used at Fox Wood).

EYFS Baseline Assessment – most pupils at Fox Cubs are disapplied from this as they cannot access the assessment even with access arrangements. If pupils can access this, staff will work with the pupils in a quiet area in order to obtain the most accurate assessment data.

At the end of the reception year, an Early Years profile will be completed.

In July, current Early Years teachers will transfer current assessment data and baseline the pupils on 'Engagement Steps' on B Squared, which follows on from Early Steps. Year one pupils, will be assessed using 'Engagement Steps.'

Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

All pupils at Fox Wood School have an EHCP. The targets contained within this are broken down into smaller, more manageable steps to inform the pupils IEP targets. These targets cover all four areas – Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; Sensory and/or physical need – and are updated every half term.

Ready to Learn

All pupils access appropriate Ready to Learn activities twice a day. Ready to Learn ensures that our pupils are in a calm and alert state and are 'Ready to Learn.' Some pupils benefit from relaxing opportunities at the beginning of the day, such as Sensology, while others benefit from more alerting activities, such as sensory circuits.

Other Professional Involvement

Many pupils at Fox Wood School have multiple needs including existing Speech and Language Therapy Plans, Occupational Therapy Plans, Physiotherapy Plans and Positional Management Plans. Some pupils may have nursing requirements, such as gastrostomy feeding. Teaching staff work in collaboration with many external agencies ensuring that activities are designed around these plans and targets are met.

Fox Cubs has a Therapy Room which professionals can use when they are visiting pupils at Fox Cubs to carry out 1-1 work.

The transition package for pupils ensures that information about individual pupils is shared speedily so training for staff, advice and support can be put in place for September. Individual training is generally needed for each pupil and for each member of staff.

We are fortunate to have a school nurse available within school who works closely with parents on health-related issues such as diet, tube feeding, tracheotomy care and medication. Kristin Carey is the Children's Community Nurse for Fox Wood School. Kristin is the link for the children with nursing needs, such as gastrostomy feeds, oral suction, enteral medication, and seizures requiring rescue medications.

Kelly Sheen is the link for children aged 4-19 who do not have nursing needs. Support is available for parents, schools and partner agencies, Monday to Friday 9am-4.30pm by email on bchft.0-19@nhs.net or by telephone 01925 946803.

Transition

Transition begins in the Summer Term - below is an example of the transition process, however this may change slightly, to reflect the cohort each year.

Visit current nursery provisions	Summer 1
New starter packs posted home. Expected transition timetable shared	Summer 1
Parent Meetings with current nursery settings at Fox Cubs	Summer 2
Parent information meeting Tour of Fox Wood School (for parents that wish to have a tour after the meeting) Please return new starter pack forms	Summer 2
VISIT 1 Parent/Carers bring pupils into school 1 at a time, parent stays. ½ an hour	Summer 2
VISIT 2 - 2 children, 45 minutes	Summer 2
VISIT 3 - 4 children, 2 hours	Summer 2
SCHOOL OPENS – FIRST DAY	Summer 2

FACILITIES

Fox Cubs are extremely fortunate to have an amazing Multi-sensory room (MSR) and therapy room. The classrooms are designed to facilitate pupils needing a movement break or somewhere quieter and classes are encouraged to use the shared hall or the therapy room for movement breaks when appropriate. Fox Cubs are able to use the facilities at Fox Wood School and visit school for sessions in Sensory Kingdom and for some whole school events. Fox Cubs access the hydrotherapy pool on a rota.

Outdoor Facilities

Pupils benefit from an easy access play area with a wooden climbing frame, gazebo, sensory circuit, a sand tray, a water tray and bike track. There is a separate play area for our PMLD cohort, Lion Cubs, with sensory spinners, a sensory arbour and a maze on the floor. Pupils are welcome to use both play areas.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is designed to develop the foundations for learning and treats each learner as an individual, fostering their interests and building on their strengths. Our youngest pupils join Fox Cubs (Lion Cubs or Tiger Cubs) where they are taught through the prime and specific areas of learning.

The three prime areas of learning are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

The four specific areas of learning are:

- Mathematics
- Literacy
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design
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Physical Education is part of our Prime area of learning: Physical Development.

Religious Education is incorporated into the area of Understanding the World through the aspect of People and Communities and is also delivered through assemblies.

Year 1

Our Year 1 pupils continue to access continuous provision opportunities alongside pre-formal learning. The pre-formal tier is split into two curriculums - a curriculum for pupils with PMLD and a separate curriculum offer for pupils with complex ASD using the following areas:

- Communication
- Cognition
- Physical
- Self-care and Independence

Activities at this level for pupils with PMLD will include multi-sensory learning activities, outdoor education, Rebound Therapy, hydrotherapy, Eye Gaze, Sherborne and sensory cookery.

Activities at this level for pupils with complex ASD will include Attention Autism, multi-sensory learning activities, outdoor education, social skills and work baskets following the TEACCH approach.

Alongside the curriculum, each pupil has individual targets relating to their EHCP and these are taught through individual focussed sessions, small group and whole class teaching opportunities.

Our curriculum takes a holistic approach, delivered through termly topics and engaging, play-based activities. These are designed to help learners achieve their learning outcomes and make progress (cognitive, social, physical, and emotional). However, we recognise that each pupil has individual learning needs. To support their engagement and development, we have a personalised learning approach.

We believe that a strong partnership between school and home is key to helping our students succeed. Our approach to home learning is designed to ensure that pupils can generalise their skills and knowledge across different environments. To support this, we provide various resources and opportunities for parents and carers to actively engage in their child's learning journey for example, through workshops and training, parent's evenings, meet and greet sessions, within the first term of joining us and much more. By working together, we can help ensure that the skills your child is developing at school are effectively applied at home, strengthening their overall growth and learning experience. We are here to support you every step of the way.

Reading

Reading has been a focus at Fox Wood School for a number of years and during this time, pupils have made excellent progress in reading and in fostering a love of reading. This progress begins at Fox Cubs; The reading spine for Fox Cubs is a carefully curated list of books, which ensures pupils are exposed to a wide range of engaging, quality texts that align with curriculum objectives and topics fostering a love of reading. The rationale behind this is to provide a structured and balanced approach to reading, ensuring students develop diverse reading skills and knowledge from their own starting points. Pupils have individual reading time 4 times a week with class staff, alongside carefully designed activities which provide enrichment to covered texts. Reading books are sent home weekly and parents are encouraged to read/ share a book with their child at home.

Educational Trips

Fox Cubs take part in educational visits which link to the half termly topic or are a place of interest to the pupils. We welcome parental support for these trips.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is integral to all children's learning. Communication through gesture, eye contact, vocalisation, speech, symbol exchange and the use of Objects of Reference is encouraged and built upon. It is vital that children become confident communicators for academic, social and emotional reasons. The development of communication skills is at the heart of our practice, and we use a wide variety of

strategies and programmes alongside our structured teaching to encourage effective communication between all pupils and staff. Within the classrooms pupils are immersed in rich language experiences, modelled continually by understanding and empathic adults. Carefully structured direct teaching also ensures that pupils progress in language comprehension. All pupils at Fox Cubs will have a SaLT plan and Speech and Language Therapists visit Fox Cubs to assess the pupils, write new plans and work closely with the staff team to ensure that the pupils and staff are supported in the delivery of these plans in school.

PASTORAL SUPPORT

At Fox Wood School, we ensure that every child has a right to retain their dignity. Some pupils may struggle to manage their own behaviour and cannot keep themselves or others safe; They may need adults to support them and this requires confidence, skill and training. All staff complete Team Teach training which equips them with a range of strategies to deal with challenging behaviour. Whenever possible de-escalation and distraction techniques are used to prevent the need for positive handling. However, some pupils do require further support. If a pupil's conduct requires physical intervention, then a Positive Handling Plan will be drawn up in consultation with a member of the leadership team. The Positive Handling Plan details the nature of the challenging conduct, the protocol and language to be used and any appropriate positive handling. This plan will be accompanied by a Risk Assessment to ensure the safety of pupils and staff is maintained at all times. This will be developed alongside parents.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Every pupil at Fox Wood School is provided with a Home-School Diary that is used as a daily point of contact. Parents may use this to note any experiences they would like us to know about, any concerns they have or any up-and-coming appointments for the child, any changes to eating/sleeping patterns etc. School will write in the Home-School Diary at least 3 times a week, there may be times when the Home-School Diary is not written in daily; however, we will do our utmost to keep you informed about things that have happened in school. If parents would like to discuss any issue at length, they may telephone to arrange a convenient discussion time. Most teachers are available after school.

We have a PTA - 'Fantastic Fox Wood PTA', which parents are encouraged to join. We hold coffee mornings, training and information sharing events.

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Pupils take part in numerous exciting cross-curricular events which parents will be notified about as the year progresses. Recent events have included a whole school celebration of World Book Day, Community Arts Week, the Shine Together Summer

Extravaganza, Sports Day. We also have an Enterprise Week where pupils in all classes make and sell products. To celebrate weekly successes, we hold a 'Shine Time' with Lucinda once a week where pupils receive stickers for progress and achievement.

MOVING ON

Transition to Fox Wood School starts as soon as the pupils start at school. Fox Cubs visit school frequently, using the facilities and becoming exposed to 'big school.'

At the end of the Summer term, Fox Cubs take part in Transition Week and spend time with their new class team and peers.