

Westfield Community School



EYFS

Practice and Provision in Understanding the World

At Westfield we value the importance of teaching the concept of 'Understanding the World' to enable children to make sense of and celebrate our world and our communities. We believe developing understanding of the world through high quality teaching and planning of first-hand experiences and opportunities will be a building block to children's success. We aim to instil a love of learning about our world, ensuring children celebrate and respect differences within cultures and communities, and show an understanding and care for our natural world and changes that occur within it. Our outstanding practice at Westfield aims to create rich, authentic experiences through visits, books and high-quality teaching to ensure children have an exceptional knowledge and understanding of our diverse world.

We aim to meet the requirement of the EYFS (2021) curriculum and believe that:

- *Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community.*
- *The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them*
- By 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; helps them to make sense of the world around them.
- By building important knowledge and extending their familiarity with words we believe we will support understanding across the strands and make important links with other areas of the curriculum.
- Understanding of the world will enrich and widen children's vocabulary and support later reading comprehension.

We aim that 3 – 4 year olds will be able to:

- ✓ Use all their senses in hands on exploration of natural materials. Explore collections of materials with similar and/or different properties. Talk about what they see, using a wide vocabulary.
- ✓ Begin to make sense of their own life-story and family's history.
- ✓ Show interest in different occupations.
- ✓ Explore how things work.

- ✓ Plant seeds and care for growing plants. Understand the key features of the life cycle of a plant and an animal. Begin to understand the need to respect and care for the natural environment and all living things.
- ✓ Explore and talk about different forces they can feel.
- ✓ Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice.
- ✓ Continue developing positive attitudes about the differences between people.
- ✓ Know that there are different countries in the world and talk about the differences they have experienced or seen in photos.

We aim that children in reception will be able to:

- ✓ Talk about members of their immediate family and community.
- ✓ Name and describe people who are familiar to them.
- ✓ Comment on images of familiar situations in the past.
- ✓ Compare and contrast characters from stories, including figures from the past.
- ✓ Draw information from a simple map.
- ✓ Understand that some places are special to members of their community.
- ✓ Recognise that people have different beliefs and celebrate special times in different ways.
- ✓ Recognise some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries.
- ✓ Explore the natural world around them.
- ✓ Describe what they see, hear and feel whilst outside.
- ✓ Recognise some environments that are different to the one in which they live.
- ✓ Understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them.

IMPLEMENTATION

Provision for Understanding the world is catered for daily in our classroom across three main areas of daily practice:

Continuous Provision:

- Access to a wide range of resources that build knowledge and create an awe and wonder about the world. Open ended resources ready to be explored which allow children to observe, investigate and ask questions about the world and our communities.
- Quality role play areas, to build on first-hand experiences and represent our world and community.

Adult Focuses:

- Carefully planned activities to learn and extend specific knowledge linked to the Understanding the World curriculum.
- Visits to the local community, creating rich experiences and deepening understanding of our local environment.
- Visits from local community workers – highlighting the importance of different roles in the community.
- Reading – exposure to a wide range of Fiction and Non-fiction texts, broadening understanding of the world, cultures and our past and present community.

Individual 1-1 support:

- Identifying gaps in knowledge and supporting and catering for children and their needs.

Parental Involvement:

- At Westfield we encourage parents to support Understanding the World with their child at home by –
 - o Providing a range of different fiction and non-fiction reading books to share and enjoy with their child.
 - o Encouraging parents to discuss and share their own thoughts and ideas about the topics we are teaching, encouraging consistency between school and home.
 - o Sensitively exploring cultural heritage and celebrating children’s diversity and family history.

IMPACT

At Westfield we audit our provision of ‘Understanding the World’ resources on a regular basis, to ensure that we are providing the correct exposure to all areas of the curriculum, and to ensure that we are properly celebrating and discussing current events and traditions. This additionally extends to ensuring a clear focus on our natural world and both our close and wider community and history.

Children’s attainment and progress are tracked formatively using the Target Tracker tool and children’s learning journeys are reviewed regularly to ensure children have exposure to all strands in the Understanding the World curriculum.

Westfield Foundation Phase Team