

Making choices during Child Initiated Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)



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Why are we focusing on this element?

"develop further the new and successful leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage so that staff are more confident in encouraging children's free choice activities."

- Ofsted (2010)

How we are fulfilling this expectation

Our Intent in EYFS:

Why do we do what we do?

We believe that every child, regardless of ability or advantage is a strong, confident and capable learner, who is able to fulfil his or her potential by connecting with their unique talents to “find their element” [1] to live their life well and thrive.

We want our children to be happy, friendly and respectful members of the Bledlow Ridge School learning community and beyond, with a passion for life-long learning. We want to develop our children into confident risk takers throughout all learning opportunities across the curriculum. We want our children to develop a strong foundation in all areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), be curious and inquisitive learners and challenge and be challenged to become the best version of themselves.

[1] “The things [children] love to do and the things they are good at coming together,” in Robinson, K & Aronica, L (2009:xiii), *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*, Penguin (London.)

How we implement what we believe:

In order to fulfil our belief, we follow a '**planning in the moment**' curriculum.

What is 'Planning in the Moment'?

Our Reception class is organised and managed by adults, but led by the children by building on their natural and innate desire to learn.

The core principle to our practice is that **children follow their own interests within a well organised and stimulating environment**. Practitioners observe, support and extend children's learning by identifying the teachable moment during children's play and plan for and support their next steps to enable them to make progress.[\[2\]](#)

[\[2\]](#) Ephgrave, A (2013:2), *The Reception Year in Action: A month-by-month guide to success in the classroom*, Routledge (London.)

Examples of Planning in the Moment (PITM:)

Individual Planned Focus:

Observation:

Child showed T a model made from Kid K'Nex construction and explained, "It's a twister, so I can move it."

Teachable Moment:

T. modelled questioning, "What does your model do?"

Outcome:

"It's a curler. You put things into here (pointing to spiralled ends) and wrap them round and they go curly."

Identify with rotational schema – provide ribbons and music/movement on IWB to facilitate this schema.

Continue to support child in familiarising herself with the Reception Class environment.

Personalised Planning Folders

Our Planning in the Moment focus is further supported with Personalised Planning. This supports the unique child and focuses on a particular skill or knowledge that is developed throughout Child Initiated Learning (CIL.)

Each child will have a specific skills focus dependent on their stage of learning and development.

Each week, four children are selected for an in-depth focus. We will make contact the week before to enable you to provide information and support through our Focus Child Sheet and the Tapestry Learning Journal.

This will begin on 1st November 2022.



Examples of Planning in the Moment (PITM:)

Class Provision Focus:

Observation:

Children working in the play dough area cutting out their biscuits and talking about where they would put them.

Teachable Moment:

*T. **suggested** putting plates into the area.*

Outcome:

Children agreed and also asked for a tray.

4/10 (pm) Place plates and trays onto Play Dough shelves.

Examples of Planning in the Moment (PITM:)

Whole Class Focus:

Observation:

During Carpet Time, a child shared items he had found during an Autumn walk with his family.

Teachable Moment:

*T. **introduced** vocabulary – conkers, pine cones, acorns, oak, horse chestnut, fir, deciduous, evergreen, needles*

Outcome:

30/9 Take class out for an Autumn leaf and stick hunt to develop nature table. Focus on vocabulary introduced during outdoor learning session.

The impact of Planning in the Moment (PITM:)

Children:

- Feel safe, valued and important.
- Are the focus of the learning because practitioners react to the child's interests immediately.
- Through spontaneous interactions, are provided with the most beneficial experiences, thus opening up a wider range of learning opportunities and possibilities.
- Show high levels of involvement, leading to deeper thinking and creating stronger connections in their learning.
- Complete the planning cycle in the actual moment, several times daily, assuming progress at a quicker rate.

Practitioners:

- Demonstrate an excellent understanding of child development by considering each child's individual needs.
- Become facilitators and partners in the children's learning by continually reflecting and building upon any insights gathered from the session, leading to a coherent curriculum.
- Spend more time focusing on and working with the children because planning documentation is significantly reduced.

Through an Enabling Environment:

- Children experience a sense of belonging, through meaningful engagement with resources and activities.
- The learning provision is organised to reflect the children's interests to engender exploration, curiosity and critical thinking.
- Everything that a child requires to learn freely, is available and accessible.

Next Steps:

- Speak with the school office to organise a DBS Certificate.
- If you are interested in seeing PITM in action, please sign up for a Stay & Play session. These will begin after half term and continue throughout the year.
- Once you have signed up for a session, we will let your child know by writing the information on our calendar. This will enable your child to engage with the countdown to when you visit in class.
- Do keep asking questions to develop your understanding – we want everyone around the child to be involved in his/her learning.
- Ask your child about their learning experiences in class by focusing on one element of their day (E.g. Visiting a favourite area in the classroom; what s/he has been learning in Maths and T4W and other whole class activities.)
- Engage with the Reception Class Learning Blog on a weekly basis.

Thank you for your continuing support.

We look forward to developing our working in partnership relationship with you.