

Understanding The World

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 – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, 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. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

How Understanding the World can be observed in our setting:

We place great value on the use of open-ended materials, natural and reclaimed, to encourage children to investigate, developing their curiosity, imagination and creativity, encouraging them to build on their previous experiences of the world and how it works.

We are very aware of the importance of building on the children's interests and fascinations and take time to listen attentively to what the children have to say about their discoveries and they challenge children to reflect on, and explain, their ideas to encourage the development of higher-level thinking skills, we provide activities, experiences and resources which will develop science skills and knowledge of how things work, how things and people move, materials and how they behave.

We encourage children to express feelings about a significant personal event and to describe significant events for family or friends i.e., birthday, new baby, new pets etc. Children enjoy imaginative play with peers, and we encourage them to show an interest in different occupations and ways of life through role play.

We have an 'outdoors in all weathers' policy which applies to children and the positive attitude of the staff towards exploring outside fosters a sense of pleasure in the children. The outside is seen as an environment for curiosity and children are supported by the provision of a wide range of resources which enable them to further their knowledge about living things and their natural habitats.

We encourage wildlife into the garden with bird boxes, butterfly house and wildflower garden, a wormery, a bug house and composter. Children also grow and look after a variety of flowers and vegetables (some of which we eat).

Although we have an outdoor area, we regularly take the children out for walks around the village and to the Woodland area on the Downs Link, where they look closely at the trees and plants throughout the year, helping them to develop an understanding of how things change over time.

We have cameras, keyboards, phones and torches to support technology along with regular visits from TechnoTots to learn about computer programs and how to control a mouse.