



Early Years Curriculum Understanding the World

An Overview of 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.

Understanding the World in context at The Downley School (TDS):

The context of TDS has changed considerably over the past ten years and we are extremely proud of the diverse community that we have become. Approximately half our children come from another country or have family from another country and we feel that it is vital that all pupils are able to develop and understanding of themselves and different cultures in order to prepare for the future.

In order for children to develop a knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, we offer a child centred approach and learning is dependent upon children's interests. However, we are aware that some children have limited experiences outside their home and classroom and therefore include topics to broaden their knowledge. Carefully planned enrichment activities ensure that children have access to meaningful experiences that deepen this knowledge. Furthermore, we have carefully selected non-fiction texts to help children learn about the wider world and encourage all children to engage with books as a resource to further curiosity and aid knowledge.

Skills	Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 from the one in which they live • understand the effect of changing seasons on the natural world around them ❖ Use a range of technologies to aid learning about the world e.g.- iPads / Internet / IWB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Be able to find England on a map of the world. ❖ Recall some of the stories shared during Black History Month. ❖ Talk about the events people participate in for Guy Fawkes Night and Remembrance Day ❖ Recognise the fact that families can be different to one another ❖ Understand the need to treat everyone with respect. ❖ Know that some places in the world are hot and some are cold. ❖ Be aware that our world is round i.e.-a 'globe

- Development Matters Statement
- ❖ TDS Statement

Understanding the World - Early Learning Goals

ELG: Past and Present

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling

ELG: People, Cultures and Communities

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and – when appropriate – maps

ELG: The Natural World

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.

Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

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Opportunities to support Understanding the World in EYFS

- Share photographs of children's homes, families, friends, pets or favourite people.
- Use props such as puppets to tell stories about diverse experiences.
- Provide opportunities for children to share experiences and knowledge from different parts of their lives.
- Share a range of non-fiction books which present realistic representations of places around the world.
- Share stories that help children to make sense of different environments e.g. - We're going on a Lion Hunt / Lost and Found.
- Invite children and families with experiences of living in other countries to bring in photographs and objects representative of experiences.
- Display a globe and 'world map'. Highlight family connections and use books to look at similarities and differences in the world.
- Aid children in developing positive attitudes towards all – Challenge stereotypes through books, displays, visitors etc.
- Visit different parts of the local community, including areas where some children may be very knowledgeable, e.g. local church
- Celebrate and find out about festivals and special occasions as a class.
- Provide role-play areas with a variety of resources reflecting diversity.
- Display photos showing all the people who make up the community of the setting.
- Share stories that reflect the diversity of children's experiences and backgrounds.
- Provide plenty of opportunities to explore and observe the natural world.
- Provide opportunities to observe things closely through a variety of means, including magnifiers and photographs.
- Provide play maps and small world equipment for children to create their own environments.
- Ensure there are opportunities for looking at local maps, aerial view photographs Google Maps.
- Plan and implement practical activities that develop skills and knowledge e.g. learning about the characteristics of liquids and solids by involving children in melting ice cubes / exploring how to keep a teddy bear dry, investigating waterproofing.
- Use the local area for exploring both the man-made and natural environment.
- Provide opportunities to record findings by e.g. drawing, writing, making a model or photographing.
- Provide stimuli and resources for children to create simple maps, paintings and models of observations of known and imaginary landscapes.
- Provide enrichment opportunities for pupils to experience a farm, grow vegetables, to experience animals, to meet 'People Who Help Us', to hatch Butterflies / Chicks, to explore the local area.
- Provide regular opportunities for nature walks and forest school.
- Encourage pupils to upkeep environments, e.g.- taking care of the growing areas outdoors.
- Provide a range of materials and objects to play with that work in different ways for different purposes e.g.- whisk, torch, pulleys, construction kits.
- Support children to use technologies which support learning e.g.-IPads, internet, IWB

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