Oakwood School
"Working Together"

Investigators (Informal)



Investigators Pathway

Informal

'Learning to be and experiment'

Overview

- Children working at an **Informal** level are beginning to show an understanding of how their actions can impact on the people and environment around them.
- **Exploration and a play based opportunities** (structured and unstructured).
- Regular **sensory input**- sensory diets/breaks/ circuits.
- Lots of repetition and a slower pace to embed learning.
- Learning is processed based rather than outcome driven.
- Starting to use more formal and representative systems for language-based concepts, which may include symbols, photographs and signing as well as single verbal words.

Rationale

The Investigators Pathway is designed to motivate children to develop engagement skills and facilitate progress in the early stages of our four key areas of learning. In this pathway learning is processed based rather than outcome driven. We are driven to develop a thirst to learning by creating a learning environment that is meaningful, engaging and motivating.

Learning to understand themselves, the world around them and building confidence is a key goal of this pathway. We aim to develop children that are equipped to process and find joy and security in their world.

Elements of the *Equals Curriculum* are channelled into our four key learning areas to ensure a broad and balanced approach that is personalised for each child.

Communication and Language Development

The aim of communication and language development in our Investigators Pathway is to encourage children to recognise communication as a two-way, meaningful process. We want our children to experience and understand the purpose of communication with a communication partner. Part of this is ensuring communication opportunities during the day are personalised and meaningful.

Communication is the core of everything that we do. It is important that our children can express their needs and wants. Children will have opportunity to develop their preferred communication strategy, or strategies, throughout their day.

Problem Solving

This area supports our children to investigate and be persistent in solving problems and overcoming barriers they may face during the day. Problem Solving spans the whole

school day and incorporates very early maths and real-life problem solving that will support greater independence over time, e.g. hanging their coat up, finding their drink, operating toys/devices, etc.

Creative and Physical Development
Creative and Physical development incorporates development of our seven senses (sight, touch, hearing, taste, smell, vestibular, proprioception) as well as fine and gross motor skills. This also includes self-regulation skills and creative outlets such as early drama, music and art. Children are encouraged to investigate and discover what it means to be them in this area of the curriculum.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development
This area includes supporting our children to develop strategies for wellbeing and emotional regulation.

Our children engage in celebrations across a range of cultures and religions. Developing independence helps to build self-esteem and supports confidence for future learning.

Organisation of Learning

Pupils working in the Investigators Pathway are taught through cross curricular learning. This is framed through our termly themes and supported through a range of texts chosen by the class teacher to reflect the interests and motivators of the class. This provides a context in which to explore the world around them and provides opportunity for some structured sessions, often 1:1 or in very small groups to make progress in their personal learning targets.

Play based learning is a key aspect of our Investigators Pathway. This ensures learning is meaningful and child driven. Within this tier, learning can look like:

- Structured and unstructured play-based opportunities. Adults may demonstrate an option but will follow the child's lead in exploration and build on their own approach to the materials.
- Regular sensory input through sensory diets, sensory circuits/breaks and in class activities designed to help develop connections in the brain and explore the feelings associated with each sense.
- Regular and embedded opportunities to develop a communication system that works for each individual child. This may be using verbal communication, photographs, symbols, aided language displays, object of reference or a combination of two or more strategies.
- Individualised teaching approaches to suit the needs and targets of each child.
- Specialist approaches such as Intensive Interaction, MOVE, Sherborne, Rebound Therapy Attention Autism or Curiosity approach, including targeted therapies and interventions.
- Lots of repetition and routine to embed and develop learning.

Pupils' awareness of religious and cultural themes is promoted through themed weeks, covering an element of one of the six main religions and recognising the cultural diversity of the pupils in each individual class.

Success Indicators

Through the Investigators Pathway we will see children;

- Develop secure attachments within school.
- Demonstrate a growing understanding of what is happening in their bodies, their minds and their surroundings and be able to communicate this.
- Increasing engagement with opportunities developing their social communication, emotional regulation and shared attention, as a result of which they will be happy and settled members of the school and home community.
- Show a growing development of cooperation with others and gaining friendships.
- Further increase their independence in daily personal routines.
- Use of a familiar, and personal communication system to share wants, and beginning to share needs.
- With reduced behaviours which may challenge because of a better understanding of themselves, and an improved communication system.
- Be increasingly able to self-advocate through clearly demonstrating their likes and dislikes; towards managing personal safety.
- Make progress in a very individual way; this may be lateral as well as linear. Progress will be seen against their personal learning targets (home and school), EHCP targets, occupational/physiotherapy and speech and language targets.

Success and hard work are celebrated directly with parents through regular contact, more formal termly parent meetings and class blogs. They are shared with the school during our weekly celebration assemblies and are shared 1:1 with children themselves in a personalised way.