

Curriculum Policy

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas; the prime areas are: -

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These specific areas are: -

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We also promote Montessori methodology. (See prospectus)

We provide a child orientated environment where the children learn through discovery.

Children are free to choose their activities and learn to make predictions and decisions.

The teacher’s role is to;

- Understand the children’s abilities and observe the children
- Plan the curriculum to meet the needs and abilities of the children
- Introduce language and support positive learning and to initiate new ideas and concepts

Aims of the nursery curriculum

1. To provide quality learning experiences for all the children. Learning which is structured, balanced, relevant to the child and related to the real world.
2. To provide a curriculum that takes account of and responds to, the children’s developmental needs and allows them to make progress related to their differing abilities. “What the child can do” will be our starting point.
3. To ensure the children have positive experiences of success at their own level now, in order to give them motivation and confidence for learning in the future.
4. To provide a curriculum that promotes the Foundation stage as identified in the “Statutory Framework”.
5. To provide a curriculum this provides equal learning and development opportunities for all children within the school.
6. To create a partnership with all parents to support and enhance the development of the children.

Curriculum Policy for Communication and Language

Aim

To develop, extend and enrich the skills of communication that the child has, in order to enable the child to function effectively as a member of society.

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Communication and language permeate all areas of the nursery. The nursery as a whole is organised in order to promote and enhance development in communicating, speaking and listening and to promote positive images and role models for the children. Learning will be achieved via a mixture of adult directed and structured free play activities, delivered through cross-curricular activities and topic based themes.

Objectives

To provide a stimulating environment in which communication and language skills can be nurtured and developed. To provide visual, auditory and tactile experiences which will provide stimuli for all children.

Talking:

The programme of activities will provide opportunity for the children to use, explore, and develop skills in verbal communication.

The activities will support the children in forming relationships with both peers and adults in their ability to interact with others, and in the expression of thoughts and feelings. The children will experience the spoken word as a means of conveying information, sharing and receiving of ideas, and as a means of gaining insight into the world of imagination.

Listening:

To provide the children with opportunities to develop skills in listening in order to be able to process information, interact with others and begin to share in other's feelings and thoughts.

The activities will help the children to develop imagination and aesthetic awareness, and to develop the ability to respond to their own experiences and those of others.

Operating Policy

The nursery will be organised in order to facilitate the development of the following areas of language:

- Talking
- Listening

A programme of activities based upon structured free play and staff directed work will be implemented and there will be opportunity for the children to communicate with peers, nursery staff, other adults and visitors to the nursery.

The children will also experience the use of gesture and expression as a means of conveying information. Where appropriate, the nursery staff will support children in developing alternative strategies (such as Makaton signing) as a means of communication.

For children whose first language is not English, the nursery will offer support and show respect for the home

language and culture of the child through the use of labels, books, pictures and other equipment which reflects and values their home language and culture. If possible parents will be encouraged to come into the nursery to share their knowledge with children and staff, and offer support to the bilingual learner.

Where there are already significant delays in the development of language when a child starts nursery (as noted by parents, health visitor, doctor, etc.) or where a child does not appear to be making progress (as noted by staff and parents) then the nursery will consult with outside agencies such as speech therapists or the educational psychologist in order to ensure that the child receives the support that he/she needs.

Equipment will be carefully selected to represent the nursery's commitment to equal opportunity and will provide positive images for all the children.

Curriculum Policy for Physical Development

Aim

To provide opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. They must be enabled to develop an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food.

Objectives

To provide a balanced programme of activities to support the physical development and well-being of the children.

To provide sufficient space (indoors and outdoors), time and resources to allow effective physical development.

To provide time, opportunity and support for children with motor impairments or physical disabilities to develop their physical skills. If appropriate this will include working with outside agencies such as physiotherapists.

Operating Policy

The activities will include such areas as hygiene, healthy eating and exercise. These activities will permeate all areas of the nursery curriculum.

Confidence, self-responsibility, enjoyment and enthusiasm will be developed through structured free play and adult directed activities with the emphasis on supporting individual progression.

Provision will be made for the children to manipulate large and small pieces of equipment in order to develop both fine and gross motor control.

They will be encouraged to respond physically to verbal, auditory and visual stimuli such as music, stories, pictures, etc.

The equipment will be organised in order to develop an awareness of issues of health and safety and the children will be encouraged to think about and discuss such aspects.

Skills of co-operation turn taking and team building will be developed throughout the curriculum with adult support provided where appropriate.

Programme of Work

Programmes of work will be based upon a mixture of general and topic activities. The children may participate in such activities as an individual or as part of a group and in free play or adult directed situations.

Curriculum Policy for Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Aim

To promote and develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Objectives

To provide the children with opportunities to observe, interact and learn about each other's lives through a balanced programme of activities.

Operating Policy

When the child starts nursery, staff will work in partnership with parents in order to find out about the child's experiences, culture and home background. A profile of each child will be built up, using information supplied by parents as the starting point.

The child will be supported in developing self-esteem, through shared experiences and by being given opportunities to learn about the lives of others around them.

There will be opportunity to participate in local and wider community visits, thus developing individual and communal responsibility.

Awareness of the national and global environment will be developed through the use of visitors to the nursery (parents, grandparents, workers, etc.), artefacts, books, photographs and information technology.

The children will be provided with experiences which:

- promote the development of independence, confidence and self-respect
- promote the development of responsibility for their own learning
- enable them to concentrate and persevere in their learning and seek help when necessary
- support them in making decisions
- enable them to resolve conflict through negotiation
- help them to form effective social relationships with other children and adults
- help them to take turns and share
- help them express their feelings
- provide opportunities to express their opinions, and to consider and respect those of others
- help them develop an understanding of right and wrong
- promote the development of equal opportunities and respect for people of other cultures and beliefs
- enable them to succeed

In providing such experiences the adults in the nursery will:

- be aware of the role models which they themselves provide for the children
- value the home lifestyle, culture and circumstances pertaining to the individual child
- share an agreed view about the nursery ethos
- encourage parents and other community members to share in the life of the nursery

Curriculum Policy for Literacy

Aim

We aim to promote and develop children's ability to link sounds to letters and begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials including books, poems and other written materials to ignite their interest.

Objectives

Reading:

To foster an enjoyment of books within the children.

The activities will enable the children to develop skills in using books as a means of gathering information, and as a means of gaining and sharing pleasure.

Writing:

To provide opportunity for children to explore and develop skills in using writing as a means of communication.

The children will experience the use of writing as a means of conveying information, expressing their thoughts, ideas and feelings, and as a means of recording and ordering facts and information.

The programme of activities will help the children to develop an awareness of how language is constructed and the children will be encouraged to listen to and form sounds and letters.

Curriculum Policy for Mathematics

Aim

To foster enthusiasm, confidence and the development of knowledge in exploring, using and applying a broad range of mathematical concepts. To provide opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Objectives

To provide all children with broad and varied experience in which problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills and concepts can be created, supported and nurtured.

Operating Policy

The children will have an opportunity to observe peers and adults using and applying mathematical skills and concepts in everyday situations and in nursery based activities. Math's is not seen as a separate area but rather as part of the whole curriculum and potential for developing mathematical awareness is built into all the activities provided by the nursery.

The children will have the opportunity to explore the properties of a wide range of materials in a range of contexts which will include much free play experience with and without adult input, and experience of real life situations such as shopping, cooking, sharing etc.

Confidence and enthusiasm will be supported through sensitive adult input which will provide for open ended questioning and the development of mathematical thinking and language.

Programme of Work

Learning will be achieved via a mixture of subject, cross-curricular and topic based activities. The curriculum will be delivered through both adult led and structured free play activities.

The activities will include opportunity for topic based and general activities these will encourage the children to explore, investigate and question.

Activities will involve the use of both natural and made material, selected to support the children's learning. The activities will be of a free play or teacher directed nature, and will be based upon structured play.

Where play is properly structured, and there is sensitive intervention and language input from adults, the child can gain knowledge of mathematical concepts and language in an incidental manner.

The children need many experiences of sorting, matching and comparing a wide variety of objects and materials in order that they can begin to count systematically and understand the true meaning of number. There are certain concepts that the child needs to understand, and in planning nursery activities we aim to provide the children with practical experience to enable the development of this understanding.

In planning these activities, we are very much aware that each child is an individual and that not all children will grasp concepts and ideas at the same rate or level. It is of utmost importance that the child is allowed to explore and experiment before being given more structured activities - ideally there will be four stages of development in the mathematical experience of the children: -

- Children should be allowed to play with as many activities and materials as possible without adult intervention.
- Children play with materials that have been deliberately provided by the adult in order to encourage the acquisition of certain concepts, but still without adult intervention.
- Children play with materials of their own choice with the active involvement with materials selected, guided and led by the adult.

Curriculum Policy for Understanding the World

Aim

To enable the children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to make sense of their physical world and their communities through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Objectives

To provide the children with first-hand experiences that encourages observation, exploration, prediction, problem solving, critical thinking, decision making and discussion.

To provide a range of indoor and outdoor activities that stimulates children's curiosity and interest.

To provide opportunities for children to become aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and other people and to understand that all people deserve to be treated with respect.

To provide support in helping children communicate and record their observations and predictions orally and in other ways (e.g. drawings or models).

To find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use programmable toys to support their learning.

Operating Policy

The curriculum will be implemented in order that the children have opportunity for practical investigation with a wide range of equipment and tools, in structured free play, individual, group and adult directed situations.

The children will be encouraged to question, hypothesis, predict and observe, and to form opinions based upon their experiences.

Programme of Work

The programme of work will take the form of a mixture of topic based and general activities. The children will be able to explore properties of materials and tools in an open-ended manner. Parental and community links will be developed to further support learning and to allow them to begin to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

Curriculum Policy for Expressive Arts and Design

Aim

To enable the children to express their ideas and feelings and to promote the development of the imagination, curiosity, exploration and play. To enable children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play and design and technology.

Objectives

To provide a stimulating environment and to value originality, creativity and expressiveness.
To provide a wide range of activities that children can respond to by using their senses, developing ideas and expressing those ideas in a wide variety of way.
To use resources from a variety of cultures to stimulate different ways of thinking.
To accommodate children's cultural or religious beliefs relating to forms of art or methods of representation.
To provide children with sensory impairment with opportunities to experience and respond to different stimuli (e.g. sounds, objects) in a variety of ways.
The children will have opportunity to explore a wide range of materials and media which will enable them to begin to appreciate and understand the many different forms and purposes that creative activity covers.

Operating Policy

Programme of work will be planned for each area of creative development, including exploration of colour, texture, shape, form and space in two or three dimensions.

The children will have access to, and opportunity to handle, equipment covering a variety of techniques and interpretations.

They will be encouraged to explore freely by themselves, with peers, and with sensitive adult input, in order to extend the knowledge and skills required to make informed choices and develop personal interpretation. They will be encouraged to use their imagination in art and design, music, imaginative play and role-play and stories.

Programme of Work

The programmes of work will be based upon a mixture of general and topic activities. These will be planned to ensure a broad and varied experience is provided for the children.

The children will have opportunity to explore in an open-ended manner the properties of a wide range of materials/media. The staff will bear in mind that it is the process, and not the end product, which aids creative development.