

# Effective Teaching and Learning Policy

Little Hayes and Speedwell Nursery  
Schools Federation



February 2020

## Rationale

Young children learn best when they are actively engaged with the world around them, enabled by supportive adults who know them well and have a good knowledge about child development. Children learn effectively when they are encouraged to be inquisitive, take risks and where their opinions, thoughts and ideas about their world are valued.

Play is essential for children; through play they are able to develop the positive dispositions and attitudes which underpin all future learning.

*"Once children are helped to perceive themselves as authors or inventors, once they are helped to discover the pleasure of inquiry, their motivation and interest explode."* Loris Malaguzzi (Reggio Emilia)

Adults need to be aware of the impact that every experience can have on children, they learn everywhere and all of the time; they try out their learning in different contexts practising, repeating, experimenting, making sense of their world.

Relationships with other children and significant adults become crucially important. All children are included and have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum based on play.

## The learning environment

To be active learners, children need to have access to materials and resources, they need to try things out, create, deconstruct and recreate. They need to be able to sort, order, classify materials by one or more attribute. They need space to be able to dance, sing, shout, run and climb. They need places to be quiet, still and to listen and watch what is going on in the world around them.

The learning environment both inside and outside is organised in such a way that children are able to find, use and return equipment, decide what is best for the purpose they have in mind and make connections. The learning environments are spacious, well equipped and contain real things- materials and equipment. There are opportunities to play alone, in pairs or in groups and children learn to share and take turns. (This policy should be read in conjunction with the staff and

parent handbooks where details can be found about details of daily routines and the EYFS curriculum.

## **Daily Routines**

The day is carefully planned for all our children so that they receive a range of experiences in a variety of ways because children are all individuals and learn in different ways. The routine of the day is sequential and predictable enabling children to know what is happening next. A large part of each session includes the opportunity for free flow play, where children choose their own learning opportunities, either inside or outside supported by adults.

## **The role of the adult**

*"Each child has a spark in him or her; it is the responsibility of the people and institutions around each child to find what would ignite that spark."* **Howard Gardner**

Every child and family has a key person who supports the children's social and emotional development by building a strong warm relationship and by providing a firm base for children to return to. The key person gets to know the child's interests and needs very well and provides relevant experiences to support each child in their group.

Adults will work together to promote strong, confident attitudes to learning by:

- Establishing relationships built on respect, empathy
- Building and sustaining a learning culture
- Ensuring every child adult interaction is a learning and teaching opportunity
- Observing, listening and understanding children's learning
- Identifying children's individual learning styles, strengths and interests
- Planning and delivering a broad based curriculum through large, small and independent experiences
- Ensuring a balance between adult led and child initiated experiences.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers and valuing their expertise

## The EYFS Curriculum

The children will be covering the EYFS which supports learning and development from birth to 5 years old. There are 7 areas of learning:

### **Prime areas**

Communication and Language

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

### **Specific Areas**

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

## **Characteristics of Effective Learning**

This part of the curriculum describes **how** young children learn best through:

Playing and Exploring

Active Learning

Creating and Thinking Critically

We have an information sheet that explains what these areas are about enclosed in this pack. We also run sessions for parents/carers to experience how we deliver the curriculum and what it looks like in practice



A creative approach to learning is intrinsic to the way we offer learning experiences to children and families. We believe that creativity is not just about exploring the "arts" although we think this is an extremely important part of what we offer. It is also about how we think, how we solve problems and how we make connections between what we know or have experienced and something new. The staff support children and families by encouraging creative behaviours:

- Asking questions
- Making connections
- Imagining what might be
- Exploring options
- Reflecting critically

## **Working with artists**

We believe that working in partnership with artists supports children and families to develop creative behaviours through exploring a range of different materials and ideas. Working with artists helps to enrich the learning experiences of children and supports them to become creative thinkers and problem solvers as well as developing skills and artistic techniques. Research has shown us that working in creative ways has a powerful influence on the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth and encourages collaborative skills and positive relationships.



## **Eco- Friendly Schools**

We believe in taking care of the environment and follow green principles. Learning experiences for children provide an opportunity for parents/careers to get involved in activities such as recycling, walking to school, litter awareness, gardening and eco fun days.



Children, staff and parents/carers continue to develop our allotment plots on site and off site on Whitefield Rd at Speedwell Nursery School which gives children the opportunity to plant, grow and eat fruit and vegetables. At Little Hayes Nursery School, we are renovating our vegetable patches and creating a kitchen garden. At both schools we are taking part in a Food project this year where children are exploring and preparing seasonal foods from our weekly food boxes provided through fair share.

### **Forest School and learning in the natural environment**

We are very proud of our outdoor areas which children learn and play in freely whilst they are at Nursery. Children who attend our nursery classes have the opportunity to take part in our Forest School experiences. We have a trained Forest School leader who runs Forest school experiences within our own



grounds

### **Special Educational Needs**

Both schools offer a broad and balanced curriculum to all pupils and is



committed to the principle of the development of each child's potential. Where a special educational need is identified the school will address this, in consultation with parents/carers according to our Inclusion Policy and SEND offer. This may involve liaising with other agencies that can provide expert advice in planning appropriate facilities, access and strategies for meeting the needs of children with special educational needs.

### **Inclusion**

Our schools are diverse and at both schools we have many children who are bi or multi-lingual. An inclusive environment is created to ensure that all children are able to access the curriculum and learn effectively. Groups who may be at risk of not achieving are identified through our assessment data. These children become a focus of our development plans so that strategies are put in place to ensure they reach a good level of attainment. We run highly successful small, nurturing groups led by a specialist nursery nurse which support children's confidence and communication and language skills. We also employ a play therapist to support children with personal, social and emotional needs.

### **Planning**

We have developed curriculum maps which ensures a systematic and logical progression in learning for all children allowing for different starting points. Termly overviews draw on these maps and also take into account children's previous learning, developmental needs and current interests.

### **Assessment for Learning**

Observations and assessments feed into planning to ensure that the learning opportunities provided will build on strengths and interests and be relevant and meaningful to ensure that children see themselves as competent and strong learners.

Information is used to:

- Identify progress across the 7 areas of the curriculum
- Inform future planning on an individual, small and large group level

Evidence of children's learning is gathered and uploaded onto online learning journals. Parents are also able to look at their child's journal whenever they wish and also upload photographs and observations of learning in the home.

### **Monitoring of teaching and learning**

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers formally observe the quality of teaching and learning of all staff three times a year as per the monitoring and evaluation framework.

Staff are also encouraged to engage in peer observations throughout the year to support and challenge each other's practice.

The quality of planning, the learning environment and learning journals are also monitored at regular intervals during the year (See monitoring and evaluation framework).

The system of supervision, mentoring and coaching ensure that there is continual dialogue with all staff that identifies areas for development and sustains improvements in teaching and learning.

Reviewed: Lindsey Fuller Feb 2020