



Teaching and Learning

Overarching Principles

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

This policy covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Learning and Development Requirements

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise of:

- The seven areas of learning and development that shape education programmes in early years' settings.
- The early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year.
- The assessment requirements, including when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers.

Our Aims

At our nursery, we aim to provide every child with high-quality learning experiences that support their individual development, interests and needs.

Developing **independence is very important** throughout a child's time at nursery.

We encourage children to develop confidence in doing things for themselves, making choices, solving problems, managing their own belongings and developing age-appropriate self-help skills.

Toddler Room

In our Toddler Room, our aim is to develop the foundations of independence and prepare children for their next stage of learning in the Preschool Room.

Practitioners support children to become increasingly confident in managing everyday routines, making choices, communicating their needs, building relationships and trying things for themselves. Children are encouraged to have a go, make choices and develop their self-help skills at a level appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Preschool Room

In our Preschool Room, our aim is to ensure that each child is **fully school ready** when they leave nursery.

We support children to develop the confidence, independence, communication, social, emotional and learning skills they need to make a successful transition to school. Children are encouraged to become confident and capable learners who can listen, follow instructions, manage routines, communicate their needs, form positive relationships, solve problems and take increasing responsibility for themselves and their learning.

Our approach is child-centred and play-based, while providing appropriate opportunities for children to develop the skills and knowledge they will need for the next stage of their education.

The Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.



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 – known as the prime areas – are:

- Communication and language.
- Physical development.
- Personal, social and emotional development.

There are also four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

The nursery will develop programmes of activities and experiences for children, focusing on the seven areas of learning and development, through:

Communication and Language Development

This 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.

Physical Development

This involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This involves helping children to 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.

The nursery places particular importance on developing children's independence. Children are supported to develop self-confidence, self-help skills, decision-making skills and the ability to manage appropriate everyday tasks for themselves.

Literacy Development

This involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials, including books, poems and other written materials, to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

This involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems, and describing shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding the World

This involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design

This involves enabling 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.

The nursery will consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.



If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, the nursery will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. The nursery will consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. The nursery will then link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

For children whose home language is not English, the nursery takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. The nursery also ensures that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.

When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, the nursery assesses children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, we explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others.

Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. The nursery responds to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning and to develop the skills they will need when they start school.

In the Toddler Room, children are supported to develop the foundations of independence and prepare for their transition to Preschool.

In the Preschool Room, children are supported to develop the independence, confidence and skills needed to be fully school ready.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

In planning and guiding children's activities, the nursery considers the different ways that children learn and ensures that this is reflected in its practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- **Active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Practitioners encourage children to have a go for themselves and provide appropriate support when children need it. This helps children to develop confidence, resilience, independence and a positive attitude towards learning.

Key Worker

Each child is assigned a Key Worker, which is also a safeguarding and welfare requirement.

The nursery will inform parents and/or carers of the name of the Key Worker and explain their role when a child starts attending the setting.

The Key Worker helps ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The Key Worker seeks to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home.

They also help families engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and plan activities and support.



Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves EYFS staff observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

In interactions with children, the nursery responds to day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

Assessment does not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor take the form of excessive paperwork. Paperwork is limited to that which is absolutely necessary to promote children's successful learning and development.

Parents and/or carers are kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. The nursery addresses any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers and any relevant professionals.

Our staff plan according to children's interests and take into consideration their next steps and in-the-moment planning.

Assessment is also used to help practitioners identify children's individual strengths, areas for development and next steps, including the skills children need to develop their independence and prepare for future transitions.

Additionally, we conduct a **Welcomm assessment every three months** to assess each child's understanding and learning progress.

Upon entry, all children undergo a **baseline assessment** to determine their starting point and identify areas for development.

We liaise with parents throughout their child's learning journey at nursery, documenting next steps on **Tapestry** and providing guidance on how they can support their child's learning at home.

Role of Parents and Caregivers

- Parents are recognised as key partners in children's learning and development.
- Regular workshops, meetings and home-learning activities are provided to encourage parental involvement.
- Feedback from parents is valued and used to enhance the nursery's teaching and learning practices.

Parents and carers are encouraged to work alongside the nursery to support their child's development and independence at home.

Communication between nursery and home is particularly important when children are preparing for transitions, including the move from the Toddler Room to the Preschool Room and the transition from Preschool to school.

Professional Development

- Nursery staff engage in continuous professional development to stay updated with best practices in early childhood education.
- Regular training sessions, workshops and collaboration with early years specialists are encouraged.

Staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and use observations, assessments and children's progress to inform future planning and teaching.

Conclusion

This policy ensures that all nursery children receive high-quality education in a safe and nurturing environment.

Through play-based, child-centred approaches, we aim to develop confident, capable, independent and happy learners who are ready for the next stage of their educational journey.

Our aim is to support children throughout their nursery journey, from developing the foundations of independence in the **Toddler Room**, to building on these skills in the **Preschool Room**.

In the Toddler Room, we focus on helping children become increasingly independent and confident, preparing them for their move into Preschool.



In the Preschool Room, our aim is to get each child **fully school ready for school**, supporting them to develop the independence, confidence, communication, social, emotional and learning skills they need for a successful transition into school.

We recognise that every child develops at their own pace and that school readiness will look different for every child. We therefore provide individualised support based on each child's needs, interests and stage of development, working closely with parents and carers throughout their learning journey.

Updated: September 2026