

## EYFS: The Learning and Development Requirements

### 2.1

#### The Learning and Development Requirements

##### 1.1 Curriculum

###### Policy Statement

At Auden Place Community Nursery, we truly believe in the innate creative abilities of all children. As Pablo Picasso famously said “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up”.

It is our responsibility as caregivers and educators to cultivate an environment that nurtures this creativity. We recognise the importance of two fundamental conditions: psychological safety and psychological freedom. These are interlinked and essential for enabling children to explore creativity without fear.

###### Psychological safety:

Accepting each child is valued unconditionally and believing in their potential regardless of their current abilities.

Avoiding external evaluation and encouraging self-evaluation, empowering children to establish their own values.

We strive to understand each child’s perspective, empathising with the child, trying to see the world from their point of view, offering understanding and acceptance.

###### Psychological Freedom:

Children flourish when they are encouraged to try new experiences, and take risks. We provide a safe environment that promotes self-confidence and where new experiences are welcomed. A safe, healthy and supportive environment is not just a physical space but a place for sharing and learning. We prioritise helping children develop and to have an awareness of others, understanding diverse needs, values and beliefs. This fosters a strong sense of community among our young learners and ourselves.

###### Guidance

Our nursery adheres to the statutory framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and we continually update our practices to align with the guidance outlined in “Birth to Five Matters”.

This framework helps us recognise developmental milestones that children typically achieve on their journey to meeting the early learning goals.

Our curriculum encompasses holistic development in all seven areas of learning, with emphasis on the characteristics of effective learning. We ensure each child has the opportunity to explore all areas of the curriculum through their play themes and individual interpretation. It is our role as educators to celebrate these individualistic approaches and to create opportunities for all children to progress at their own pace.

This commitment encompasses the three prime areas:

## **Personal, social and emotional development**

**Personal Development** - Understanding who we are; **Social Development** - How we get along with others; **Emotional Development** – Exploring how we feel.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is fundamental to all other aspects of lifelong development and learning, and is key to children's wellbeing and resilience. These foundations form the bedrock of a child's journey as they move through life, enabling them to grow into confident, empathetic and well-rounded individuals. We are continually developing our sense of self as we weave a web of relationships with ourself, others and with the world.

For babies and young children to flourish, we need to pay attention to how they understand and feel about themselves, and how secure they feel in close relationships. In so doing they develop their capacities to make sense of how they and other people experience the world. Children's self-image, their emotional understanding and the quality of their relationships affect their self-confidence, their potential to experience joy, to be curious, to wonder, and to face problems, and their ability to think and learn. A holistic, relational approach creates an environment that enables trusting relationships, so that children can do things independently and with others, forming friendships.

Early years practitioners meet the emotional needs of children by drawing on their own emotional insight, and by working in partnership with families to form mutually respectful, warm, accepting relationships with each of their key children.

## **Communication and language**

Babies use their bodies, facial expressions, gestures, sounds and movements to seek connections and respond to those around them. Young children depend on back-and-forth interactions with responsive others to develop confidence as effective communicators and language users. Communication and language development is closely intertwined with physical, social and emotional experiences. Communication and language lay a foundation for learning and development, guiding and supporting children's thinking while underpinning their emerging literacy. Language is more than words. As children grow, they begin to be aware of and explore different sounds, symbols and words in their everyday worlds; a language-rich environment is crucial. A child's first language provides the roots to learn additional languages, and parents should be encouraged to continue to use their home languages to strengthen and support their children's language proficiency as they join new environments.

## **Physical Development**

Gross and fine motor skills develop incrementally throughout early childhood. It starts with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, coordination and positional awareness. Children explore and develop through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies, as well as social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision help with hand-eye coordination, which is later linked to early literacy. These skills support the later development of things like scissor and pencil control and handwriting. Play supports building core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, coordination, and agility. By creating games and opportunities for both indoor and outdoor play, children gain a variety of experiences.

## **Procedures**

The Room leaders meet with all staff regularly to discuss the deliverance of curriculum and all staff constantly evaluate curriculum to ensure the maximum amount of activities and creative approaches are being employed. If any gaps are appearing, or any concerns are raised, these can be addressed during these meetings, and plans made to support the children.

At all times, all staff are assuring that all children are playing and accessing the curriculum appropriately.

## **How can we make it possible in an early years setting?**

- By recognising that as trained professionals we have the confidence in our knowledge of child development, incorporating the birth to five matters guidance.
- The quality of adult relationships (in this case, the staff team) is important in order to establish a safe and healthy environment for the child. Adults should agree a common approach towards the children, making sure that in the setting we are having the same attitude towards children and that we are giving them the same messages through consistency.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage enables the inclusion of children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- By approaching children with a generosity of understanding, aiming to evaluate their mistakes and to praise their effort.
- We recognise that excessive questioning can feel testing for some children, so we use open ended questions and meaningful commentary.
- By being focused on the process rather than on the result.
- Never amend or write on a child's work, unless they ask you to.
- By observing children's interaction closely in order to better understand their needs and own initiatives and plan accordingly.
- By being aware of having too high an expectation of children. These expectations, positive or negative can affect a child's self-esteem and development, and their response to thinking and learning. It is important to provide stimulation but also to allow areas of success.
- By encouraging all children to explore activities before structuring their learning.
- By encouraging children to build up their own hypothesis to understand the world around them. Asking them questions rather than giving them answers.
- By letting a child express in their own words, rather than in ours.
- By genuinely celebrating the children's exploration of the world with praise.

### **A Stimulating Learning Environment**

We understand that children need to have access to a stimulating learning environment, both indoors and out, in order to promote independency and autonomy.

A stimulating learning environment is essential for development to take place, whilst also feeling safe and secure to explore, investigate, and learn. So from the moment children come to the nursery they will be involved in learning opportunities throughout the environment.

A Stimulating Learning Environment needs to be:

- safe
- inviting and attractive
- clearly defined for both adults and children
- planned for every day (also allowing for child initiated and spontaneous activities)
- monitored and evaluated
- maintained and replenished
- clear and tidy
- lots of open ended tools and equipment
- inclusive

### **The Wider Context**

We are aware that learning does not stop when children leave the classroom. There are learning opportunities wherever we are. We therefore incorporate our curriculum planning into our garden area, out in the local community and when organising educational trips further afield e.g. theatres, museums etc.

### **Forest School (See Forest School Handbook)**

At Auden Place we embrace the role of outdoor education, and have regular Forest School sessions at London Zoo, Primrose Hill Park, Regents park and beyond. The staff member leading the session will be forest school trained, and we recognise the importance and benefits of taking the children to the 'forest' and the relevant activities that we can do.

### **Role of the Key Person (See policy 3d.1)**

When a child starts nursery, they will be allocated a key-person. The key person will talk to you and your child (if of an appropriate age), and through observing your child at play, identify your Child's current stage of development and what they enjoy doing/playing with. This is then used in order to plan activities for your child when they start with us, and to create an environment which makes them feel secure.

Parents are the most significant people in the life of the child. The role of the key-person is to build up a trusting relationship with parents and carers and to maintain fluent and honest communication with them. This is the person who parents will refer to, share information with or raise any concerns they may have. The key-person is going to establish the conditions to make parents feel secure.

The key-person will also build up children's learning journeys to show their development using children's artwork, photographs and observations, as evidence. Parents have access to their child's learning journey at any time, but we formally go through them on parents evenings.

Although the key-person has their own group of key children that they take the lead responsibility for, they are still part of a team and they work towards the best outcomes for all the children in the nursery.

**Parent Partnership (See policy 3j.4)**

Practitioners are aware that parents/carers are the children's primary educators and work closely with them. Our planning is on display for parents/carers to see so that they can continue the interest at home. Our weekly planning sheets incorporate parent feedback and areas in which they would like their child to develop further (This is shown on the planning in blue).

We also send monthly newsletters to the parents about which activities the children have been up to and how they can develop this further at home.

**Staff Training**

All staff are provided with regular training in order to:

- Develop and maintain a good quality of early education and childcare provision that is accessible and inclusive to all children and their families that develops children's confidence and helps them to overcome any disadvantage
- Promote the child development principles identified in the birth to five matters guidance
- Provide a balanced curriculum that meets the developmental needs of babies, toddlers and young children physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually
- Creating and sustaining a diverse range of childcare provision across the setting to meet the varied needs of parents and children
- Stay aligned with any new research and/or theories that may add to child development

**Developing Staff Practice**

In order to support and maintain the standard of staff practice, all staff are provided with regular supervisions, monthly room meetings, monthly planning meetings, monthly staff meeting, articles to read, policy reviews and support via Camden's Early Years Advisory Teachers.