

## Teaching and Learning at Greenfield Nursery School

### Introduction

At Greenfield Nursery School, we are passionate about play and learning. We believe that nursery life is about learning – all the time! We do that through play!



Play is the foundation for all future learning. At Greenfield 'play' is our main method of teaching. We know that children learn best when they are deeply engrossed in meaningful activity. Play is meaningful to children, and our highly skilled practitioners are able to support children to learn new skills and gain new knowledge through observation, reflection and a carefully planned environment.

### Characteristics of high-quality early education include:

- Learning is play-based and takes place indoors and outside
- Teaching takes place moment-by-moment and is responsive to children's individual needs.
- Language development and the ability to communicate is fundamental to children's success as learners. Developing their ability to talk and speak is the prime objective for all our teaching and learning.
- Adults take children's interests and strengths as a starting point, seeing each child as a competent learner
- Parent involvement is crucial: parent support and a high-quality home learning environment make a huge difference to children
- Practitioners track each child's learning and development to pick up where children are at risk of making poor progress, and adapt the programme and their teaching as appropriate

- Early intervention is offered swiftly, so that children get the additional, specialist help that they need

#### **Our core beliefs:**

- We believe that children learn best when they are happy, secure and actively involved in their own learning.
- We believe that high quality learning and teaching is the entitlement of all children. This must equip them with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices.
- We acknowledge that children learn at different rates and each is at an individual stage of development.
- Effective teaching and learning in the EYFS meets children's identified needs and interests and helps children to learn and develop in all seven areas of learning and development.

#### **Aim:**

The aim of this policy is to set out how staff and governors at Greenfield nursery aim to support all children through providing a stimulating and interesting curriculum with a learning and teaching environment that allow children to fully develop their skills and abilities.

#### **Our objective of this policy is to:**

- establish a consistent approach to high quality learning and teaching which inspires all children and enables them to become happy, confident and engaged learners.
- foster a harmonious atmosphere which supports and promotes self-esteem. Build confident communicators.
- support children's development in all areas of the EYFS.
- help every child to grow up feeling confident about their own identity, in a spirit of friendship, understanding fairness and the rights of others, valuing diversity, and ready to be a British citizen.

### **Effective Teaching and Learning**

We believe that all play involves an element of learning whether with an adult or with other children. This section sets out how we teach children by being present and engaging in their play.

#### **Moment-by-moment teaching**

Teaching at Greenfield Nursery School includes working face-to-face with a child or small group of children during the session and structuring the learning environment to support children in making progress through their chosen play. Sometimes these two approaches overlap, for example when a child or small group initiate play, which is then supported and extended by the practitioner.

When we teach children:

- We make opportunities for the child to make a contribution and to make choices in their learning;
- We scaffold the child's development, to support increasing independence and control;

- We ask questions to check or develop children's understanding;
- We work collaboratively to solve problems and find answers;
- We provide formative feedback to help children to consolidate their learning and extend their exploration and thinking further.

Each nursery session has a blended approach to group times and can involve:

- Reading stories from our Core Book collection, using dialogue and talk strategies, as well as extended by opportunities for Core Book-related play in nursery and at home every week.
- Singing and rhymes.
- Stage One Letters and Sounds activities.
- Opportunities to talk, listen, take turns and talk about the day Environment/classrooms

Activities and experiences are arranged to promote independence. Opportunity is given by adults to play co-operatively, alone, or time is given for children to stand and observe.

There must be time and space allowed to develop play both inside and outside, safely and securely.

The environment is aesthetically appealing with lots of examples of children's current work included in child centred displays. Displays are limited to identified notice boards to reduce visual clutter.

Displays include examples of children's speech where possible and appropriate and give children opportunities to talk about, review and think about their previous experiences and learning (metacognition).

Clear guidelines and boundaries promote positive behaviour. Challenging social situations are seen as opportunities for growth and development, explaining and working with children to help them feel strong and safe, and to learn how to manage difficult issues and conflicts in appropriate ways.

Learning will be supported by appropriate resources including the use of ICT. These resources will be monitored regularly and maintained according to Health and Safety requirements.

### **Learning outdoors**

At Greenfield Nursery School we believe that children gain from exploring and learning outside as much as possible. We give opportunities for children to play, should the chose, all the time. We believe that the outdoors provides space and opportunities for children to learn about the environment and nature. We value this immensely.

In a natural environment, where children, are given time to thoroughly explore their thoughts, feelings and relationships, they develop understanding of the world and the environment through the use of emotions, imagination and senses.

### **Animals**

Children relate connect with animals in a unique way. At Greenfield interacting with our animals offer opportunities to talk about caring for living things, offer opportunities to talk about nature as well as food and where it comes from. We have rabbits, fish, Giant African snails as well as stick insects.

## **Visits and visitors**

The recent pandemic obviously restricted the possibilities for visits and visitors. But we believe that visits and visitors:

- complement the curriculum we provide in school by enabling children to have first-hand experience of places and activities not available in school. They may introduce children to aspects of the world around them that they have not yet experienced.
  - contribute to the development of their confidence and independence.
  - contribute to their social development through sharing an experience with peers.
  - They can be of great benefit to their language development through discussion during and after the visit.
  - They enrich children's enjoyment of school.
  - When parents take part in visits it may develop their knowledge of facilities in the area and allow them to participate more fully in aspects of their child's education.
- We are committed to providing a Forest School experience for all children throughout the year.

## **Staff teams**

The core responsibility for teaching and learning rests with the class teachers or lead practitioner.

Although many tasks may be delegated to the key person, the class teacher/lead practitioner must support staff to achieve best practice, coach, encourage and model, and monitor the quality of work by each team member. Where necessary we will not hesitate to take action to ensure that all children experience an appropriate early education and care.

Staff roles and the routines of the sessions will be used to effectively support the aims and objectives of this policy. Sometimes staff work with individual children or groups of children, in guided learning activities or observing children at play both inside and outside.

All key people are involved in planning and assessing children's work.

Key people maintain the records of a group of children assigned to them by their team leader.

Students, volunteers and adult helpers are deployed as effectively as possible with clear guidelines as to what is expected of them.

## **Curriculum responsibilities**

As a small school, we do not allocate curriculum responsibilities to teachers. Instead we review our approaches regularly working towards every child accessing excellent provision in all the areas of learning in the EYFS. Each year in our School Improvement Plan, we have a curriculum-area focus, and we will also have a strand about embedding and securing the focus of the previous year. This year our curriculum focus is on Communication and Language development.

## **Assessment for learning**

Children in Greenfield Nursery School are assessed regularly. We begin our assessment processes through getting to know each child, using close observation in structured and incidental ways. Observations are written down if necessary, and all written observations are assessed to indicate the

child's level of development. All these written assessments lead to action for the child, identifying next steps of development. This is a process of formative assessment.

Children are involved in this process through their Learning Journeys, and through their Learning Stories, where they can reflect on their learning and voice their opinions. Each child has one **Learning Journal** during their time in nursery, which is designed to celebrate a particularly important episode and to showcase the way the child goes about learning.

We also use assessment to track children, and to identify children at risk of making poor progress – always remembering that in the early years, progress can be uneven. Class teams identify the 20% of children in their class at risk of making poor progress and they specifically focus planning to meet their needs. Staff also identify the more able children (assessed as being ahead of the expected levels of development in EYFS Development Matters) to ensure that we plan rich and stimulating experiences to extend their learning.

Progress data is entered into our spreadsheet on entry, at the end of the first term, end of the second term, and when the child leaves. We moderate our assessments through internal processes, and through moderation meetings with the receiving primary schools.

### **Focus Children**

At Greenfield we use a system where children are observed and assessed more in depth every half-term. These more detailed observations are carried out by all staff. The key person uses this information to make a judgement about a child's learning. At this time they will also have a conversation (via zoom) or a meeting with parents/carers to discuss progress and decide next steps. At this point parent/carers are also encouraged to send in information about learning from home.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Staff will always appropriately modify learning and teaching for children with SEN and/or disabilities.

We value each child as a unique individual, are familiar with, and meet all the requirements of relevant equal opportunities legislation regarding race, gender and disability.

We work closely and in partnership with parents and any other involved agencies to meet the needs of our children through provision that is inclusive to all.

Children with identified Special Educational needs and /or disabilities will have an Individual Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) developed with the support of parents and any involved agencies. Much of the EHCP will be included on the Provision Map, which enables us to engage with a range of children's needs through regular, planned provision, which is additional to the core curriculum.

Children who benefit from additional support and enhanced teaching will have a learning plan each, which specifies additional in-session support. Some of these children may be entitled to additional support. In that case, we will apply for additional funding to support that child.

The SENCO monitors the progress of all children with Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND) to ensure that they are benefitting from an appropriate curriculum, which enables them to feel safe and secure, and to learn effectively. Where children with SEND are making limited progress, further assessment is undertaken, or support sought.

## **Partnership with parent and carers.**

At Greenfield Nursery School we work together in an integrated way to promote parent involvement and support families.

Parents are welcomed each session and encouraged to stay to settle their child and they are made to feel welcome to come and have informal discussions each day. Parents are encouraged to take Learning Journeys home. They are involved as partners in assessing children's progress and identifying needs; during the home child has a specific target, which is the joint responsibility of the parent and nursery, where the contribution of each party is clearly set out.

## **Leading and monitoring teaching and learning**

The school's improvement plan sets out the specific actions aimed to improve outcomes for children in the nursery school and to narrow the gap between the lowest 20% and the rest.

These actions are linked to teachers' appraisal targets. Teachers are observed regularly to judge progress towards their targets, and their general impact on children's progress and wellbeing. The senior leadership team also carry out termly "class reviews", looking at the quality of provision and the progress of children in each class. Teaching and learning is informally monitored throughout the year and a brief log of judgements is kept.

Monitoring itself cannot lead to better teaching. We strongly promote professional dialogue about children and their learning, and staff are encouraged to innovate, to use ideas from other schools and to act based on research. We believe that it is important that all practitioners are given support, encouragement, and targeted coaching through supervision to improve the teaching and learning at our school.

This policy relates to the following policies:

- SEND Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct