

**Kenilworth Nursery School & Whitnash
Nursery School and Early Years
Teaching School**



“Recognising and valuing the uniqueness of every child”

“Celebrating the uniqueness of every child.”

Curriculum Policy

Date initial Policies Written	January 2006		
Compiled to one policy	Date:	Head teacher	Chair of Governors
September 2015			
Reviewed Due: June 2019	Date:	Head teacher	Chair of Governors

ABOUT US

Whitnash Nursery School and Kenilworth Nursery School are happy, warm, secure, caring schools that aims to provide the highest quality education and care.

The enthusiastic, committed staff team provide education and care that makes a difference and provides a positive contribution to children's learning and early development, working beside the child and in partnership with parents.

Our approach to learning through first hand experiences and purposeful play in a child centred environment, is based firmly upon years of research into how young children learn and continue to develop into lifelong learners. We actively seek to support children to develop effective learning characteristics and to explore learning with increasing independence. Our ethos recognises and values the uniqueness of every child and we aim to support children to become 'communicators' who convey their ideas, thoughts and feelings and are able to interact and learn socially effectively. We ensure children are 'noticed', listened to and valued as we observe their interests to follow lines of enquiry that motivate and enthuse.

The Curriculum

As such there is no formal curriculum for children of this age. For children between 0-5 years there are statutory requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. To support the requirements assessment guidance documents have also been produced by Early Education specialists in a document that outlines what children may be expected to be able to do within Developmental Bands. In the EYFS statutory requirements we are reminded that assessment must include how children learn as well as what and that these characteristics of learning must also be reported upon at the end of the Foundation Stage.

At Whitnash and Kenilworth Nursery Schools what children learn is very carefully planned in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance, to include experiences and opportunities that address all seven aspects of learning:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy; Mathematics; Expressive Arts and Design and Understanding the World.

We plan the environment with opportunities for learning and then carefully observe each child's interaction and response, noticing the way they encounter the resources, environment and each other. This then leads to a series of professional questions about how we may extend the interests of the children and develop their skills as 'communicators'. Our careful observations of each child are linked back to the EYFS guidance materials, Developmental Bands, so that we may make a professional judgement about each child's skills and capabilities. Observations, encounters and learning stories are regularly shared with parents who often contribute feedback. Throughout all services that run in our School and the Nurture Nursery we regularly audit our environments to ensure they are absolutely tailored to the ages and interests of the children accessing them.

Whitnash and Kenilworth Nursery Schools provide a rich and broad range of learning opportunities that are developed and carefully planned based upon children's interests and provocations introduced by the adults. Areas for 'enquiry' are planned with an interesting mix of found resources and more familiar resources. Children are given time and space to 'think' and work can take place over extended periods of time.

We are very clear about how children learn and support parents and children in recognising the characteristics of effective learning. We also ensure learning covers all of the aspects identified in the EYFS.

How Children Learn

Key Characteristics of Effective Learning

*Playing and Exploring:

We observe ways in which children demonstrate curiosity about objects, events and people. Noticing whether they engage in open ended play and how they may use their senses to explore the world around them. We look to see whether children can use what they know within their play, taking on roles or representing experiences. We observe the extent to which children will initiate activities or seek challenge, do they have a 'can do' attitude and are they willing to take a risk in their play, learning with trial and error.

*Active Learning

This focuses upon children being able to become involved in play, sustaining and maintaining activities for appropriate periods of time. They may demonstrate a particular interest or bounce back after experiencing difficulties.

We also notice when children are proud of accomplishing their goals and when they look for praise or enjoy meeting challenge for its own sake.

*Creating and Thinking Critically

We observe ways in which children may approach problems, finding new ways to do things and thinking of ideas to try. Often this begins with making a link or noticing a pattern from their own experiences. They may test their ideas and talk about cause and effect. We notice if children are planning, evaluating, changing strategy and reviewing their approach to more challenging tasks.

All of these characteristic behaviours help us to identify each child's particular learning style and strengths. It also supports the adults to encourage the development of a particular learning behaviour that may not yet be embedded for the child.

What Children Learn

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We give priority to personal, social and emotional development, which is critical for very young children and gives them the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. This permeates the whole school atmosphere and environment and leads to children feeling good about themselves, respecting others, social competence and having a positive disposition to learn. We develop emotional literacy skills so that children may express their thoughts and feelings particularly with regard to learning. We support children in valuing social learning opportunities working in small groups so that they may also learn from each other. Social communication is promoted and modelled by staff through out play and activities are planned that actively build social confidence and in which children can express their own thoughts and feelings.

Communication and Language

Communication is of course one of the most vital aspects of our lives through the opportunities for speaking and listening and increasing our vocabulary we develop effective communication skills. We support development of these through:

- *imaginative play;
- *during small group time;
- *adult child conversations
- *offering children time to share and talk;
- *valuing what children say and always responding;
- *Adults modelling spoken thoughts and naming feelings
- *Working beside the child and enriching language during enquiry and play

Literacy

We ensure the environment is print rich and always provide a range of texts to inspire children to share books. Books are shared with children daily at family time and through out sessions. We also seek to:

- *encouraging early writing using marks and symbols and celebrate children's early mark making;
- *provide opportunities to make motivational marks using a range of media on a range of scales.
- *developing an awareness of the link between the spoken and written word
- *specific focussed literacy sessions to introduce rhyme, sound discrimination, letter recognition and phonics

Mathematics

Maths skills and concepts of number, shape, space measurement and data handling are experienced and developed in all areas of the school. There are daily opportunities to hear, recite and recognise numerals through play and rhymes. Maths is developed in almost every situation both inside and out including:

- *block, sand and water play;
- *imaginative play;
- *specific maths equipment and maths games;
- *rhymes;
- *computer programs.

Above all we make maths integral to activities and fun.

Physical Development

As well as improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement, physical development helps children gain confidence, and feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active. The school has an excellent outdoor area with sufficient space for children to enjoy the freedom of running and large scale movements, whilst taking opportunities to develop balancing, climbing and jumping skills. We also provide a range of opportunities for practicing fine motor skills and develop effective grips for using tools and mark making equipment. We support children to develop self-care skills and encourage independence.

Expressive Arts and Design

Through the expressive arts, children make sense of the world around them, expressing what they see and feel through:

- *the use of a range of media, working with pencil, pen, pastel, paint, collage, etc, to gain experience of colour, texture and form;

*music working both indoors and out musical instruments to develop rhythm, beat and pitch with opportunities for different types and styles of music and dance. Specialist teaching supports the development of music;

*drama; working from stories and imagination.

Understanding the World

Young children constantly seek explanations about the world in which they live. We encourage and build on this behaviour by actively encouraging questions, experimenting with and observing. Hands on experience include:

*growth

*our senses

*forces

*the environment

*weather

*cooking

*growing vegetables

*working with pulleys

*investigating the properties of ice, magnets and light

We also encourage children to think of themselves as members of the school community and the wider community.

Technology

This aspect covers a range of control technologies to enhance learning including use of digital cameras, i-pad and computer software.

The School has an extensive range of construction equipment, using a variety of fixings from simple push methods to nuts and bolts. Children will be encouraged to:

*design and make models from a variety of found materials;

* to fix and attach materials together for a variety of purposes.

*be involved in the planning and design of environments, e.g. turning the home area into a shop

Making Learning Visible

Learning Journeys

Learning Journeys are personal records of each child's significant experiences in which they have demonstrated particular interest or learning skills. The observations are generally based upon a child-initiated activity where they can demonstrate their interests and understanding. They will contain learning summaries and next steps for learning to support all practitioners working with the child and inform parents of ways in which they may actively support. Their purpose is to make the learning visible and ensure each child's capabilities are recognised and valued and they are shared with parents at least termly.

During the time children are at the nursery they will be observed and assessed working against all aspects of the EYFS. Throughout the experiences their learning will be 'documented' so that it can be remembered and shared. Children's effective learning skills will also help staff to identify their particular learning style and support them to develop skills for learning. These observations and assessments form an individual record to ensure progress is taking place. At any point in the year you may wish to see your child's Learning Journey and we ask you please arrange an appointment with your child's family group leader so they can share the Learning Journey with you. In addition to the formal record keeping we will also endeavour to keep you regularly informed of your child's progress on an informal basis. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to Learning Journeys and we welcome contributions in any format including e-mail and are happy to print photographs for inclusion.

Encounters:

Encounters are completed weekly for every area of the Nursery environment. They document significant learning and interests in each of the areas of the planned environment. They evidence groups of children and individuals engaged in particular learning experiences, usually child initiated. Adults may join the children in their learning and their questions may also be documented in orange. Learning is identified by green text and children's dialogue is also noted in blue to help give a full understanding of the learning taking place.

These are displayed with narrations for parents each week and then become part of each child's individual Learning Journey.

Documentation display:

Significant learning experiences are carefully documented. Each piece of documentation produced by the school is colour coded for visibility and includes green **learning** text, blue **dialogue** and orange **professional questions** or interactions. Narration is always in black text and supports the carefully chosen photographs or samples of work. Documentation is used to display learning around the School so that it can be shared and celebrated.