



Turncroft Nursery School

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Aims

This policy is intended to support and encourage staff in meeting the statutory requirements and in the delivery of high quality experiences for children's learning and development. It is written in light of the publication of the EYFS framework (2021) and in the context of our vision for the provision of high quality play experiences for all children.

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage - setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

Four guiding principles shape our practice at Turncroft Nursery School, 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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- importance of learning and development, children develop and learn at different rates.

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

A Unique Child

Child Development

At Turncroft Nursery School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We also recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/ sharing circle times and reward incentives, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusive Practice

We value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children and their families are valued.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking into account our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of all children: those with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We liaise closely with all relevant professionals in order to provide early support for those children and their families who need it.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence,
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs,
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively,
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of all children are valued,
- Assigning a key person to each child who makes links with children's home experiences through parents/carers,
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping,
- Planning challenging activities for children whatever their age and stage of development,
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Keeping safe

It is important to us that all children feel 'safe'. We help children become familiar with safety, boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide

children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Our children will be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical, emotional and psychological well being of all children.

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. The safeguarding and welfare requirements, specified in this section, are designed to help providers create high quality settings which are welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence."

(3.1 Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2021)

At Turncroft Nursery School we understand that we are legally required to comply with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years 2021 in relation to section 3 of the safeguarding and welfare requirements;

- ❖ Child Protection
- ❖ Suitable People
- ❖ Staff qualifications, training, support and skills
- ❖ Key Person
- ❖ Staff: child ratios
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Managing children's behaviour
- ❖ Safety and suitability of premises, environment and equipment
- ❖ Special educational needs
- ❖ Information and records
- ❖ Other legal duties

Health and Well-being

Children's health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual well-being. We promote healthy snacks and offer foods from different cultures to develop their taste preferences. Activities relating to the food cycle are interwoven in planning e.g. planting seeds, gathering preparing and eating! We ensure that children can rest during the day and have a designated quiet areas indoors and places outdoors where children can relax alongside space for vigorous free movements.

Positive Relationships

Respecting Each Other

At Turncroft Nursery School we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through forming secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we highly value the contribution that parents make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in supporting their child/ren's development. We do this through:

"Turncroft Nursery School, the Place for Learning and Laughter"

- Talking to parents about their child before they start in our school
- The children having the opportunity to spend time with staff prior to starting as part of transition
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's development and progress and allowing free access to their children's Learning Journal through use of 'Tapestry'
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's key person about any concerns they may have
- Offering various activities throughout the year that involve parents and carers in the life of school for example, community events
- Encouraging parents to contribute towards their child's Tapestry online journal
- Supporting parents and carers whose first language is one other than English

Supporting Learning

Effective teaching approaches will be secure where we:

- Engage and stimulate our young learners
- Allow for regular review of progress towards learning outcomes
- Vary what we provide to match children's needs
- Maximize opportunities to explore in a whole group, small group, paired, individual and independent

Routines are an important way that children feel secure and can make sense of all the opportunities offered throughout their time in school

Our routines are structured yet flexible. We have singing and snack-time, small group time and whole group time. Children will use continuous provision indoor and outdoor throughout their day and will also be supported through adult - led activities.

Key Person

At Turncroft Nursery School each child has a key person. The key person builds confidence, gives children opportunities to express their thinking and use their initiative. We believe children learn and develop effectively when the key person provides:

- First-hand experiences
- Individual and collaborative learning experiences
- Appropriate pace
- An environment where children can take risks
- Innovative delivery
- Clear expectations
- Opportunities to review and reflect
- Thinking time
- Thorough preparation and organisation
- Activities building on prior learning
- Open-ended, thought provoking challenging questions
- Support for children with differing needs
- Support for parents and carers

All staff involved with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage aim to develop good and warm relationships, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen.

"The best kind of teacher is one who helps you do what you couldn't do for yourself but doesn't do it for you"

(Child aged 8, quoted in "Teaching Children to think" by Robert Fisher, Nelson Thornes 1990)

Enabling Environments

Observation, Assessment and Planning - Supporting Every Child

At Turncroft Nursery School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's learning and development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, before planning challenging, but achievable, activities and experiences to extend their learning and development. Assessment of their achievements will ensure they make the appropriate progress.

Observation is key to planning an appropriately challenging and exciting curriculum.

The recording of observations is practicable, organised and well-managed. Observations are recorded in children's individual Tapestry journals. They also contain information provided by the practitioner, parents and other professionals where appropriate.

Planning meetings are held regularly to enable all staff to take their children's learning forward. Children also play an important part in planning their own learning, particularly when 'new' themes are being formulated so that a personalized learning approach is achieved.

Long Term Planning

The Development Matters Guidance details offer a top-level view of how children develop and learn. They help us to design an effective early years curriculum, building on the strengths and meeting the needs of the children we work with. They guide us, but do not replace our professional judgement. The guidance sets out the pathways of children's development in broad ages and stages, however, the actual learning of young children is not so neat and orderly. For this reason, accurate and proportionate assessment is vital. The development matters help us to make informed decisions about what a child needs to learn and be able to do next. It is not designed to be used as a tick list for generating lots of data.

In our school we have themes appropriate to our cohort of children and the community to which they belong, these are reviewed annually. Continuous provision plans also form the basis of long term planning.

Medium Term Planning

Planning can run for a few weeks, month or half termly and is based on the needs and interests of the children for all areas of learning and development. Planning details the proposed development matters to be focused upon, gives an overview of possible enhancements to continuous provision, the adult focused activities, resources, display and visits/visitors to school. Often themes are used as a vehicle for delivery.

Short Term Planning

This is written alternate weeks and details adult focused and child-initiated learning experiences. It outlines the elements of development, effective learning for children and details prompts for staff linked to observation as well as key language/questions and resources.

Evaluations and next steps determine our planning for subsequent weeks. Planning for and with other agencies is also incorporated where possible and appropriate. Where appropriate, reference will be made on short term planning for children with Special Educational Needs or disability linked to their Personal Education Plan (PEP) or for children in our care (CIOC/PLAC) linked to their Personal Education Plan (PEP) where appropriate. For children who have a first language other than English links to bi-lingual support or visual strategies will also be made using specific strategies. Children who may struggle in their early learning are not 'low ability'. We do not know what their potential might be. Every child can make progress with the right support.

Staff complete assessments on an on-going basis and at least termly, this data is analysed termly and therefore highlights areas for future development. We also work with parents during the year to promote 'School Readiness' which focuses on some basic skills and emotional readiness to learn in a primary school environment.

The Learning Environment

A high quality environment is key to our success. It is the shared responsibility of staff and children to care for the environment both indoors and outdoors. Staff take pride in developing areas of continuous provision and displays which enhance and broaden opportunities.

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely indoors and outdoors. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is organised into continuous provision areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our outdoors provision offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers our children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

We are committed to providing high quality continuous provision. Areas are established and maintained, long term plans are displayed in areas, with short term planning detailing enhancements. Areas are audited and resources replenished regularly. Resources are labelled and organised to aid self-selection and our provision reflects the cultures and community that we serve. Risk assessments, where appropriate, are in place and areas are print rich.

We aim to reflect the community we serve and represent our children appropriate to their age and/or stage of development. We are respectful of children's uniqueness across all areas of learning and development and displays reflect current themes in learning. Displays show

what children have experienced and learnt and are annotated by adults describing the process involved and, where appropriate, the outcomes. Our displays are interactive, inviting and of high quality. Staff have their own boards which reflect their key person group experiences these are changed on at least termly basis.

The Wider Context

We recognise that children's social, emotional and educational needs are central to any transition from home to setting, within one setting or from setting to setting. We communicate with other settings and with parents/carers to ensure that children's needs are met. Information is shared in order that there is continuity in their learning and development. Visits are undertaken by all key people to meet with the children prior to them starting in school. These visits provide the opportunity to discuss individual needs and to meet the children within the home environment.

We have good links with local schools and early years settings and during the summer term in particular we have the opportunity for reciprocal visits for both staff and children.

Staff work together across services in order to achieve the Every Child Matters outcomes, this may involve working with multi-agency professionals. Our aim is for all key partners to communicate well and put the children and their families needs first. Staff know the local area well and use this knowledge to plan the children's learning.

Learning and Development - Characteristics of Effective Learning

At Turncroft Nursery School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. They develop their skills through a variety of processes. These include:

- Investigation
- Experimentation
- Listening
- Observing
- Talking and discussing
- Asking questions
- Practical exploration and role play
- Retrieving information
- Imagining
- Repetition
- Problem solving
- Making choices and decision-making
- Making predictions

We use the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' to shape our practices; in observing, interacting and planning provision. We provide opportunities for children to become engaged, motivated and to think critically.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control their behaviour and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They can express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. This happens best when children have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides our children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning. Children's learning is extended through accessing resources freely and being allowed to move them around our school.

Children are given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning and development, not just through the arts. Staff support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open-ended questions.

Areas of Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development. None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others: they are equally important and depend on each other.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the **prime areas**:

- ❖ communication and language
- ❖ physical development
- ❖ personal, social and emotional development

We must also support children in 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

All areas are delivered through a balance of adult focused and child initiated activities. In each of the 7 areas there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS (end of the reception year). We plan our intentions, implement and review the impact as part of our two weekly planning cycle. Each cohort of children may have very different needs and we plan according to that need, having high aspirations for all children.

Children are taught how to use all resources safely through focused activities. The adult's role within continuous provision areas encourages our children to interact with resources and

the environment with care and respect; and with regard for health and safety. We offer a range of resources both natural and man-made. We have a range of multi-sensory, multi-cultural and non-stereotypical resources which are reviewed and replenished regularly.

Leadership and Accountability

The Headteacher, Mrs Shears ensures that local and national initiatives and directives are appropriately responded to and provided for in liaison with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), reporting regularly to the Governing Body and School Improvement Group. We have a termly cycle for self-evaluation in place which ensures that we are constantly monitoring the quality of what we do. We review our practice and provision frequently which then informs our school development plan.

Internal mechanisms regarding monitoring quality include:

- observations of teaching and learning
- peer observations
- data analysis
- performance management and appraisal
- consultations
- action planning and target setting
- policy review

Monitoring takes place through the SLT, Governing Body Meetings, appraisals, performance management meetings and through Ofsted inspections. We evaluate as a staff and SLT with parents/carers, our multi-agency partners and the community.

Continuous Professional Development

We are committed to all staff accessing Continuous Professional Development. Individual training will be chosen or identified based on individual's interests or remits, linked to appraisal or performance management and in response to Ofsted inspections and national/local initiatives. We have systems in place to cascade this information with others and ascertain the impact of the training on our provision.

N.B. This EYFS Policy reflects the ethos, values and practices of all our school policies. All relevant legislation and guidance has been adhered to in developing this policy.

Policy written by: E. Shears

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