



Childhaven Nursery School

EYFS Curriculum Policy

"The term curriculum is used to describe everything children do, see, hear or feel in their setting, both planned and unplanned." - Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. We operate fully within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS April 2017))

Aims Our carefully planned curriculum is tailored to the needs of the individual child allowing every child to progress successfully through the EYFS and foster a love of learning. Through skilful observation and assessment, well planned activities and opportunities the staff encourage children to gain skills with the minimum of pressure and lots of fun.

A balance of child-initiated and adult-led activity encourages the children to be successful through play and exploration. We aim for children to be well prepared for their next stage and we support every child to make excellent progress in relation to their different starting points.

We aim to provide a challenging and enjoyable environment where staff support children's learning and look for ways to extend their knowledge and interests by offering open-ended and curious resources to inspire children to engage deeply in their work.

We use open ended questioning to promote active learning and critical thinking, increasing the ability of children to offer appropriate responses and extend their own learning. The curriculum of the EYFS underpins all future learning by promoting and developing three prime and four specific areas.

Prime areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

In planning and guiding activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn.

Playing and exploring

We have a play-based curriculum where children are provided with opportunities to; find out their own interests, explore and try things out, make their own choices and decisions, play collaboratively with peers and adults, develop a 'can-do' attitude to learning and use what they know and experiment through play. We have stimulating resources which are accessible, open ended and can be used and combined in a variety of ways and are relevant to the children's interests. We have space indoors and outdoors where children are given challenges that are appropriate to the development of the individual child.

Active learning

Children are provided with opportunities for self-chosen and self-directed play. We get to know our children well and observe and reflect on a daily basis, both formally and informally, on what rouses the children's curiosity, looking for signs of deep involvement. Therefore we can provide activities and experiences that are related to their interests and areas of enthusiasm. We ensure children are given the time and freedom to become deeply involved in activities. Children are given verbal and emotional support to help them to persist and keep trying in order to achieve their aims. We give positive feedback to behaviour that shows children's learning processes – such as concentrating, trying different approaches, persisting and having new ideas.

Creating and thinking critically

We establish boundaries in space, time, resources, choice and supportive relationships that children can explore within. We support children's interests over time, remind them of previous approaches and encourage them to make connections between their experiences. We build in opportunities for children to play and explore with ideas and resources before or after a planned task. Adults also try to be sensitive conversational partners and co-thinkers to children's problems, showing and talking about strategies and sometimes modelling the creative process. Children are encouraged to learn together and from each other. We try to foster a learning community which focuses on how, and not just what, we are learning.

Assessment & Record Keeping

Each child has an online profile through the Early Excellence Assessment Tracker, which is based on the 2017 EYFS document. It is used to summarise the children's progress and track their development. Observation and Assessment is rigorous and involves all members of staff observing all children. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and ensure that future planning reflects on what the children have already learned as well as identifying individual interests and needs. We are able to track individuals and groups plus the whole cohort. Every child has a baseline assessment within their first month of starting school, evaluating their abilities and needs on arrival as a baseline. A written Progress Check for children who are aged 2 years is also completed.

Key assessment periods in nursery are:

September - December

January - April

May – July

At these times, learning is summarised, data is analysed to form future planning for children's learning and there are also parent/teacher meetings where this information is shared with parents and carers. These are hosted by each child's key person. A "This is me" document summarises each child's story over their time at Childhaven and is contributed to by staff and parents at these meetings. This document forms part of the transition onto local schools.

Resources

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that is exciting, stimulating and encourages lifelong learning. We purposefully use natural and open ended resources in order to promote curiosity and wonder. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community and the wider world and encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer. Special Books and photographic or video evidence reflect the children's individual learning.

Prime Areas of Learning

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for young children in all aspects of their lives and a pre-requisite for success in every area of learning. Through praise and encouragement the children are given opportunities to grow in confidence and independence and to develop effective social skills by learning how to co-operate and to work with each other. Mutual respect and an inclusive ethos allow each child to feel valued and to develop a strong self-image and esteem. There are clear expectations and we encourage a sharing, co-operative approach to all activities.

- Self-confidence and self-awareness – children are confident to try new activities and can say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They can say when they do or don't need help
- Managing feelings and behaviour – children can talk about how they and others show feelings, can talk about their own and others behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviours are unacceptable. They can work as part of a group or class, and understand

and follow the rules. They can adjust their behaviour to different types of situations and take changes to their routine in their stride.

- Making Relationships – children can play cooperatively, taking turns with others. They can take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They can show sensitivity to other's needs and feelings and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Physical Development

A child's physical growth contributes to all other aspects of their development as they need to be active and to move about in order to develop many fundamental skills. It is about large and fine motor activities – running, walking, jumping, climbing and dancing as well as cutting, mark-making, pegging, threading or sticking. Co-ordination, balance, dexterity and control are extended through a range of activities enabling them to grow in their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to be healthy and safe. We have a range of equipment to promote physical development both inside and outdoors. Fine motor skills are developed through activities using equipment such as construction toys, pegs, scissors, paint or play dough.

- Moving and Handling – children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.
- Health and self-care – children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, a healthy diet and can talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They can manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

Communication and Language

Communication and Language relies on children learning and becoming competent in a wide range of skills. Children are given the opportunity, encouragement and support to gain confidence in speaking and listening. Children learn about themselves, others and the world around them through seeing, hearing and using language and are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and communication skills through a variety of activities. The curriculum is planned to give children opportunities to practice speaking and listening and to respond appropriately to adults and to each other. This area crosses over with 'Literacy', one of the four specific areas covered later in this document, with respect to the development of letter sounds, mark making and reading.

- Listening and attention – children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They can give their attention to what is being said to them and respond appropriately, while remaining involved in an activity. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
- Speaking – children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listener's needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are going to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Specific Areas of Learning

Literacy

Literacy relies on learning and becoming competent in a wide range of skills. Children are given the opportunity, encouragement and support to gain confidence in speaking and listening as well as mark-making, linking sounds with letters and eventually reading. Children learn about themselves, others and the world around them through seeing, hearing and using language and are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and communication skills through a variety of activities. The curriculum is planned to give children opportunities to experience a rich variety of books and we focus on developing the preliminary skills needed before beginning to read and write more formally.

- Reading – children read and understand simple sentences in stories and information books, using phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read, or what has been read to them.
- Writing – children write their own labels, captions, messages and simple stories which can be read by themselves and others. They use their phonic knowledge to spell words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They make use of letter patterns and sequences found in many words.

Mathematical Development

Mathematics is part of the everyday world. Understanding is developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play so that children enjoy using and experimenting with numbers and numerical language. The children experience a range of early mathematical concepts. They learn to sort, grade, match and count and develop a keen understanding of pattern, shape and colour. Planned practical activities allow children to explore, enjoy, demonstrate and practice their learning.

- Numbers – children are aware of, able to rote count and use numbers up to 10 (and 20) to do simple addition and subtraction to solve practical problems. They can find a total by counting on, and can calculate how many are left from a larger number by counting back.
- Shape, space and measure – children use everyday language to describe and compare size, weight, capacity, time, position and distance. They know and talk about patterns and the properties of flat and solid shapes.

Understanding the World

Children develop the skills, knowledge and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. They are encouraged to observe, explore, investigate and compare so as to gain a sense of awareness and respect for their widening world. We aim to stimulate children's curiosity of the world around them and encourage them to question and find out about their environment and the people and places that have significance in their lives.

- People and communities – children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, communities and traditions.
- The world – children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They can talk about the features of their own immediate

environment and how environments might vary from one another. They can make observations about animals and plants and explain why some things occur. They can talk about changes including in simple experiments.

- Technology – children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology.

Expressive Arts and Design

Expression and creativity are fundamental to successful learning and enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their imaginations. It is achieved through art, drama, music and creative play. Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources and to join in with and respond to music and stories. There are many opportunities for inventive role-play Open-ended exploration of colour shape and texture using paint, glue, crayons and pencils, as well as natural and recycled resources develop skills in painting, drawing and collage.

- Exploring and using media and materials – children sing songs, make music, dance and experiment with different ways of doing these activities. They use and explore a variety of materials, experimenting with colour, design, texture, shape and form.
- Being imaginative – children use what they had learned about media and materials in purposeful and original ways. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through art and design, music, dance, role play and stories.

We meet the individual needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively
- offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued
- providing resources that reflect diversity, avoid discrimination or stereotyping
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress, and providing support as necessary
- extending child initiated ideas and activities.