




Childhaven Nursery School

EYFS Curriculum Policy

Signed:  **Headteacher**

 **Chair of Governors**

Date: September 21 Review Date: September 23

"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 (Revised September 2021)

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.

We follow the revised EYFS statutory framework and try to ensure our practice is based on the core principles;

- 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
- Children develop and learn at different rates. (See “the characteristics of effective teaching and learning” at paragraph 1.15). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These areas are at the forefront of all planning at nursery.

Prime areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Communication and Language

The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children’s language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity

to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives⁷. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are

Specific areas:

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the world

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

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 a learning story which collates observations from nursery staff and information sent in from parents. This is maintained by the child's key person and supports them in building a picture of each child.

Every child has a baseline assessment within their first month of starting school, evaluating their abilities and needs on arrival as a baseline. We use OPAL (observation of play and learning) to support us to make a best fit judgement. Information is also gathered from home to support children settling into nursery.

A written Progress Check for children who are aged 2 years is also completed, as this is a statutory obligation.

Children's progress is then monitored in 'spotlight' months – 6 month and 12 month birthdays, when changes in development are expected to be seen, with reviews in between. Information from home is also gathered at these times to help us to tailor the experience of each child.

Key assessment periods in nursery are:

- Entry
- 6 month birthday – spotlight assessment - 'This is me' assessment from home and nursery
- 9 months – review progress and adapt if necessary
- 12 month birthday - spotlight assessment - 'This is me' assessment from home and nursery

This cycle continues, with regular sharing of information between all staff to support children's individual needs. This creates an ongoing and continuous cycle of exchange between home and nursery at key times that are relevant to each individual child.

Parents and staff meet on an ongoing 'as needed' basis, and updates are provided at spotlight month assessment times. A "This is me" document summarises each child's story over their time at Childhaven and is contributed to by staff and parents. This document also 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 base our choices on 'intelligent materials' that offer the widest set of possibilities to children. 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.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the teaching, learning and assessment policy (2021)