Planning For Learning Through Play

* Our setting plans to provide the children attending with opportunities that will support and promote their overall development in a safe, stimulating and caring atmosphere, created by appropriately trained, knowledgeable staff with the involvement of all families within our community who are interested in and support our aims.
* We take care to provide activities which use equipment appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children attending our setting which will stimulate their interest and encourage investigation as well as enabling the children to practice existing skills and to build on those skills to acquire new ones.
* We ensure children have the opportunity to play inside and outside on a daily basis.
* We recognise that children learn from each other. We enable the youngest children to have regular contact with older children, through a planned activities and experiences.
* We are aware of the importance of reflecting all members of society not just those who attend our setting but also the local community and society in general in a positive way, we ensure that activities, equipment and displays provide a balanced view and also allows children to show their own individual creativity without pressure to have an adult directed “perfect” end product.
* Activities are planned to reflect the different ways that children learn and take account of the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning: playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.
* For children whose home language is not English, we will take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning. Children’s communication, language and literacy skills will be assessed in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, we will explore the child’s skills in the home language with parents to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.
* All children need to experience a balance of adult led and freely chosen or child-initiated activities and experiences tailored to their stage of development and taking account of their individual needs and interests.
* Our staff members respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive, constant interaction. We undertake ongoing sensitive observational assessment through playing with children in order to plan to meet our children’s needs.
* For our youngest children we focus on the three prime areas of communication and language; physical development; and personal, social and emotional development. As children grow in confidence and ability we move to a more equal focus on all seven Areas of Learning and Development.
* We have high expectations of all our children and will work to enable them to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. If we are concerned about a child’s progress in any of the areas, we will discuss this with the child’s parents and agree how best to support the child.
* Parents need to be included in their children’s learning. The Key Person will most likely be the one to give information about their child’s interests and abilities; and be given information on their child’s activities and progress. Comments from parents are incorporated into children’s records.
* For children aged between 2 and 3, a short summary of assessment will wherever possible be written in time to inform the Health Visitor development review, the most useful time to provide the summary will be agreed with parents. It will identify the child’s strengths and any areas where the child’s progress is less than expected. We will discuss the summary of development with parents. We will encourage parents to share the summary of assessment with other professionals including the Health Visitor.
* The activities and experiences planned for the children cover the seven Areas of Learning and Development described below.

The seven areas of the learning: (Development Matters EYFS)

All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

**Prime Areas**: These three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

**Communication and Language (CL):**

This involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and speak and listen in a range of situations.

**This can be supported by:**

* Reading books
* Talking, sharing news etc…
* Letter and sounds activities
* Singing
* Daily interactions between adults and children
* Outdoor play
* Talking openly about processes and completed products and listening to each other
* Modelling good listening skills
* Role Play

**Physical Development (PD):**

Providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their coordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

**This can be supported by:**

* Outdoor play, bikes, cars, tyres, climbing frames and slides etc…
* Musical movement and Yoga sessions
* Making mark activities
* Activities to promote hand eye coordination like, threading, playing with small world objects and cutting.
* Cooking activities Playgroups involvement in the HALO (Healthy Active Little Ones) programme to promote healthier life choices and living

**Personal, social and emotional development (PSED):**

Involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect and understanding for others, celebrating diversity; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups (see behaviour policy); and to have confidence in their own abilities.

**This can be supported by:**

* Spending time together with children and adults
* Allowing feelings to be expressed and acknowledging those feelings
* Talking openly about feelings
* Puppet play
* Role play
* Discussing actions of ourselves and others
* Play experiences
* Talking about families etc…
* Learning about different celebrations and religious festivals
* Talking about similarities and differences

**Specific Areas:** There are four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

**Literacy development:** This involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

**This is supported by:**

* Mark making activities
* Jolly Phonics (preschool)
* Looking and talking about books
* Looking at signs in different environments
* ICT resources
* Singing and story times
* Library Visits

**Mathematics:** This involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; to describe shapes, spaces and measures; to develop an awareness of time through understanding routines and to begin to categorise objects based on matching features.

**This can be supported by**:

* Incorporating colour recognition into daily routines
* Counting rhymes
* Counting objects
* Use resources to support understanding of shape, space and measure
* Referring to time-based events through the use of routines
* Grouping and sorting objects by size, shape, colour or other distinguishing features.

**Understanding the World**: This involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**This can be supported by:**

* Learning about yourself and your family and valuing your uniqueness
* Spending time with different people and learning about them and what makes them special.
* Being out and about in the environment/community
* Learning about the life cycles, habitats, eating habits etc. of plants and animals
* Learning about weathers, season and Space
* Making links with others
* Talking about different professions and the people who help us
* The use of ICT to support learning
* Activities which incorporate daily experiences of children
* Role play activities

**Expressive arts and design** This involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play and design and technology.

**This can be supported by**:

* Expressing selves through dance, yoga and movement sessions
* Creative activities
* Role Play
* Messy play
* Singing
* Creating music with instruments
* Sensory play

**The characteristics of effective learning**: A unique child reaches out to relate to people and things through characteristics of effective learning, which move through all areas of learning.

**Playing and Exploring Engagement**: Children learn through finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to ‘have a go’. Activities, relationships and the environment at playgroup, encourage children to explore, using a variety of resources, carefully providing support when it is needed. Staff use the children’s experiences in and outside of playgroup to enhance development providing suitable resources to support role play and engagement through children’s interests.

**Active Learning Motivation**: The activities planned at playgroup provide stimulation to the children who choose to investigate them through support from staff. Children become motivated by being involved and concentrating, keep trying and enjoying and achieving what they set out to do. Through praise, recognition and interaction staff help children become aware of their own goals, learning together and from each other. The environment is regularly reappraised, reflecting on resources, their purpose and the children’s choices. Staff regularly rearrange the environment and resources to arouse children’s curiosity, making space and time for all children to contribute.

**Creating and thinking critically**: Thinking is a natural process all individuals experience and supports decision making. Children are encouraged to have their own ideas and express them openly within our setting. Staff encourage children through interaction and discussions to make links with their environment, use different forms of communication and explore all available resources. Activities provide opportunity to plan, consider ideas and for feedback to be given by both adults and children.