# 

# TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

**July 2021**

**Aims**

## At Featherstone Nursery School we aim to:

## Ensure sustained, child-centred and reflective, quality education for all children.

## Develop and maintain a safe and inspiring learning environment where all stakeholders’ well-being and involvement is high.

## Ensure that policies, procedures and quality practice promote the personal development of all stakeholders.

## Scaffold a learning community where all stakeholders are confident to challenge their thinking and achieve success.

**Objectives**

These will be achieved through the following objectives:

* Recognising and valuing children as competent, capable learners so that they develop confidence, independence and high self-esteem.
* Offering children, a wide range of learning experiences which acknowledge the diversity of learning styles, so that they have the opportunity to realise and expand their personal potential.
* Motivating and inspiring children to plan and initiate their own learning, as well as participating in activities planned by adults.
* Valuing and nurturing children's curiosity, creativity and desire to make sense of the world, giving time for their thoughts, ideas, conversations, feelings and appreciation of their efforts and achievements.
* Following the Statutory Guidance of the EYFS (September 2021) and Birmingham Safeguarding Board.
* Providing a well-planned, aesthetic, motivating and versatile learning environment which supports children as active learners, provoking their interest and inquiry and linking indoors with outdoors. Encouraging an understanding of the importance of working together as a mutually supportive, unified staff team, to develop reflective practice.
* Providing time and space to reflect as a staff team on children’s learning; using observations and documentation to assess, target and plan for future development.
* Training students from a variety of educational establishments to form an understanding of early years practice and complete the appropriate course to the best of their abilities.
* Valuing and nurturing each child as an individual person and creating trusting relationships where learning can take place.
* Developing strong, reciprocal and mutually trusting relationships between child, family, school and the community including other public services.
* Supporting the children in making the transition to the next phase of their education with enthusiasm and confidence following a happy and fulfilling experience in Nursery.

**Rights Respecting School**

This policy is in accordance with the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

* Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.
* Article 12 - Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.
* Article 13 Freedom of expression Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
* Article 14 Freedom of thought, belief and religion Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide their child as they grow up.
* Article 19 Protection from violence, abuse and neglect Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.
* Article 23 Children with a disability A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.
* Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Discipline in schools must respect children’s dignity.
* Article 29 - Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.
* Article 30: Culture Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, regardless of whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.
* Article 31 - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

## **Introduction**

We follow the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2021), which sets the standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth up to 5. This document provides the standards that all early years’ providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. There are four guiding principles that permeate and shape all early years practice. 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 benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
* 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.
* importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The education and care of all children in our early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is our priority.

Within this framework there are seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected, and these are organised as prime areas and specific areas.

**Prime Areas**

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

**Specific Areas**

* Literacy
* Mathematics
* Understanding the World
* Expressive Arts and Design

**How do children learn?**

Young children are naturally inquisitive and have an innate desire to learn and make sense of the world around them. Children learn in different ways and within the EYFS guidance the ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’, support how children best learn.

These Charateristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development within the EYFS are all intrinsically linked.

**Characteristics of Effective Learning: -**

* **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
* **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.
* **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

These characteristics of effective learning are at the core of everything we do.

Within the organisation of the day we offer a creative, stimulating balance of child initiated and adult led activities. Children are given freedom to make choices, develop and plan their ideas, to review and recall and to encounter and solve problems independently. The children are also introduced to new concepts and skills through group time sessions with a particular focus on the prime areas of learning and maths and literacy during these times. These often provide the stimulus for further exploration during free choice play. There is great emphasis upon children learning through play, where skilled practitioners teach children how to play and teach through their play. We believe that it is important to provide children with a range of play experiences both free choice and adult directed, including small group structured group time session.

**Learning Environment**

The learning environment is zoned into different areas. Resources are available to the children and are easily accessible to support their independent play and interests. Displays support and/or reflect the learning that takes place. We regularly review/audit the organisation of each area to ensure we are continually providing a stimulating, challenging learning environment that the children can explore daily. This stimulating environment sets the climate for learning and will include:

* Creative exploration and expression
* Investigation, experimentation and finding out
* Small, focused groups, individual and whole class learning
* Independent, child-led, co-operative and adult supported learning
* A language enriched environment where children are encouraged to use actions and words to ask and answer questions
* Well organised areas, with interactive displays and easily accessible resources to encourage independence.

As a whole team we have developed our vision for our nursery spaces.

Vision statements for our nursery spaces are:

* Our nursery will have a warm, welcoming and homely feel for children, families and visitors.
* Our rooms will have an atmosphere of purposeful calm or excitement at appropriate times.
* There will be places to relax and spaces for one child.
* The environment will be uncluttered, neutral, clean, tidy and reset regularly.
* Open ended, multipurpose, natural resources that encourage exploration, creativity and language will be provided.
* All staff will take responsibility for the environment and resources in the space they are working in.
* All staff will actively listen, observe and be responsive to what the children are doing in each area.
* Routines, the environment and resources will develop children’s independence throughout their session.
* Times of awe and wonder will be planned.
* All staff will have strong, caring relationships with their children and be sensitive and responsive to their individual needs and behaviours.
* Reflection by children and staff will be encouraged.
* Children and staff will have fun and enjoy their learning.

**Effective teaching and learning**

Understanding the role the adult plays and what is meant by ‘teaching’ is central in ensuring effective teaching and learning takes place within our nursery. Teaching should be relevant, meaningful, inspirational and enthusiastic within an atmosphere of trust and respect. The Teacher is responsible for leading the learning across the school as appropriate to their role and Job Description. The Professional Standards for Teachers form the basis of our Performance Management for our teacher in conjunction with this policy. The 2012 guidance and policy for Teacher Performance Management is in place to support the development of the teachers within the setting to consistently achieve outstanding teaching.

**Role of Teachers**

* Take responsibility for learning environments, both indoors and out to ensure activities and resources meet the needs of the learners.
* Create opportunities which link to all areas of learning and development and evaluate the impact.
* Support Teaching Assistants to reflect on and assess children’s learning.
* Meet with parents to discuss children’s progress and provide end of year reports.
* Take responsibility for the learning and development of class groups through recording assessments each term, moderating these across the setting.
* Take responsibility for a Key Group’s records.
* Differentiate activities to suit the needs of the learners.
* Observe and document children’s learning.

**Role of Teaching Assistants**

* Support the class teacher/senior leader in the planning and development of the learning environment.
* Support teachers in learning walks and peer observations to develop a culture of reflective practice. Support teachers in the reflection and preparation of activities.
* Reflect with other practitioners to highlight learning and plan for development.
* Meet with parents of their Key Group to discuss the children’s progress.
* Take responsibility for a Key Group of children and their records.
* Observe and document children’s learning.
* Assess children’s learning using on-going observations and documentation.
* Take responsibility for a particular activity or area of learning linked to the EYFS and ensure resources are appropriate and well-maintained.

**Keyworker System**

All adults have a key role in building the right conditions for learning. Firstly, and fundamentally, we ensure that children feel known and valued as individuals, safe and cared for. Crucial to this success is operating a ‘keyworker system’.

Each child has a named keyworker who they will interact with daily, sharing information, interests, emotional well-being and learning. This offers the opportunity for a special relationship to develop. This keyworker builds a close relationship by acting as a companion for the child and being mindful to the needs of the child during each day. Sharing information and creating opportunities to talk during the day builds trust and partnership. The keyworker also acts as a champion for child and parent.

**Teaching- How do adults teach?**

‘Teaching’ is a broad term which covers many ways in which adults help children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities; communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what you are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. At Featherstone nursery we; -

* engage in dialogue with children
* watch, listen and respond to children and this information feeds into planning the next steps in their learning
* model language well which is rich and grammatically correct
* encourage children to express their thoughts, engage in conversations with both adults and each other and use new words
* support independence and confidence
* encourage children to speculate and test ideas through trial and error
* enable children to explore and solve problems
* provide direct teaching of children’s skills and knowledge
* behave as an excellent role model for children to copy
* support children to recognise and respond to their own physical needs
* attend to children’s personal needs
* work in partnership with parents

**Planning**

Our planning is based on the principle that children learn most when they are interested, motivated and engaged in the learning process. We have a sequenced progressive planned curriculum which is delivered termly. Within this structure learning intentions are identified, varied teaching strategies and experiences are implemented and assessed and the outcomes we strive for our children to achieve are known. Regular observations of children’s interests also feed into this cycle. We carefully plan experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable and take into account different learning styles children have.

Daily group times provide a wide variety of learning experiences from direct, adult-led teaching to exploring the children’s own ideas and building future learning experiences from that. All adult-led activities will have clear learning objectives that are appropriately shared with the children. We will praise children for their efforts and by doing so, help to build positive attitudes towards the setting and learning in general.

We strive to provide a rich, enhanced curriculum where children develop a sense of self in school and as a citizen of the world they live in by promoting all aspects of Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development. We do this by planning special experiences - e.g., Trip to theatre, experiencing the world around them and talking about the change of seasons through regular visits to Sutton Park and our on-site Forest School, visits into the community, artists and visitors to nursery. These all help to enhance children’s knowledge and experiences.

# Differentiation for Different Types of Learners

We assess children and identify specific groups of children that may have particular needs. Mainly children attend adult-led group times in their key worker family groups but we also group children according to their language needs to ensure that individuals are appropriately challenged with a balance of adult-led activities and the scaffolding to support child-initiated activities. Groupings are as small as possible, and activities are well planned and differentiated to meet the needs of all the children.

Other groups include children with specific language/communication difficulties and wellbeing needs. We organise nurture groups so that there are learning opportunities for these children during group times and free flow sessions and a range of different strategies and resources are used to engage these particular children.

Children with identified Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities will have

specifically planned Early Support Plans, developed with the support of

parents and any involved agencies. Staff will always appropriately modify teaching and learning for children with SEN and/or Disabilities. When planning work for these children staff will give due regard to information and targets contained in each child’s plan.

The efforts of our children will be valued and always respected. We will provide positive encouragement and feedback to pupils to encourage confidence and develop self-esteem.

**Assessment**

It is through careful on-going observation and documentation of children’s learning that we can make judgements about a child’s individual development. It is about the adults knowing the children they teach, motivating and building on their existing knowledge and understanding and then making informative judgements when they are ready for certain activities. We use the EYFS ‘Developmental Matters’ to baseline children, plan personalised learning and show progress. This data is regularly reviewed and analysed to identify what interventions are needed.

**Parental Involvement**

We believe that parents/carers are a child’s first educator and have a vast amount of knowledge about their development. We encourage parents/careers to share their thoughts and any concerns regarding their child’s learning and development. They are welcomed into the nursery and have daily contact with their child’s keyworker to discuss any issues.

Alongside this informal contact we have termly, 'Play and Learn Days’ for parents to work with their child on a specific area of learning and parents are invited to attend our story time sessions too. We ensure that all parents/carers are kept informed about what and how their children are learning through a variety of means including:

* holding parents’ meetings to discuss children’s progress.
* having an annual report to parents in which our setting explains the progress made by their child and indicates how the child can be supported to make further progress.
* informally or formally explaining how they can support their children with any work at home.
* the use of Tapestry Learning Journals which detail observations made on their child and ways parents can support their learning at home.

We appreciate the time parents give to participate in their child’s learning through contributing to their learning journals, participating at workshops, attending parent consultations and supporting their child on school visits.

**Transitions**

In order to achieve and to ensure continuity when the child leaves nursery, communication and liaison with the receiving primary schools is a high priority. Each child’s individual learning records are passed to the primary school and are discussed with the reception teacher wherever possible. Reception teachers and SENCos' are invited into nursery to observe them in the setting and discuss work in their learning journals.

Good communication between families and keyworkers, not only helps to ensure a smooth transition, but also enables the practitioners to learn about each child from the adults who know her/him best. The parent’s first-hand knowledge of their child is invaluable in assisting teachers to understand and have a more complete picture. We aim to develop a two-way partnership that benefits the parent, child and practitioner. We believe that the educational process at its most effective when there is a strong partnership between home and school and therefore, we aim to involve parents as fully as possible in their child's learning.

**Working with Professionals**

We work with a range of External Support Services, working hard to maintain the close links we have with Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, Communication and Autism Team (CAT) and Educational Psychologists etc. Further details can be found on our website in our SEND Policy, SEND Information Report and Behaviour Policy. We have links with other agencies including Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS), Erdington Children’s Centre and other health professionals as appropriate. We believe that multi-agency responses to children and families can meet needs in a holistic way, can promote a joint approach to planning and delivering services and can make the best use of resources. Our practice reflects the ‘Team Around The Child Approach’ and we use the Early Help Assessment Framework to support our multiagency working.

**Promoting British Values at Featherstone Nursery.**

**The Rule of Law** - To learn routines at nursery, to gain an understanding and adhere to expectations and boundaries.

**Individual Liberty** - Children have the option to choose any activities, or resources in the indoor and outdoor environments. Open-ended resources mean that children can shape their development through their own interests; we celebrate the uniqueness of all children.

**Democracy** -Children are listened to in a variety of ways and have active roles in decision-making and planning of activities, Children and families become part of the Osborne community.

**Tolerance of those of different Faith and Beliefs** - Having a staff team who provide positive images reflecting the cultural diversity of Great Britain. Our resources reflect multicultural, multi-faith Britain and we positively celebrate our similarities and differences through celebrating meaningful festivals and events.

**Mutual Respect** - Listening to each other’s ideas and experiences in everything we do, learning to share, take turns and play co-operatively, Using positive behaviour management strategies (Behaviour Policy) to understand feelings and behaviour, focussing on developing empathy and understanding of feelings, Understanding that all children have individual needs (SEND Policy), using Makaton signs to reinforce meaning such as Good Looking, Good Listening, Good Sitting and Good Thinking

**Supporting and Monitoring**

To support and monitor the quality of teaching and learning in our setting, the senior leadership team will provide, review and consider:

* observations of the quality of the learning environment and how the routine of the day makes it suitably accessible for children;
* observations of children in free play within the learning environment;
* observations of adult- led activities – carpet/group time and focused activities;
* children’s records;
* displays;
* planning;
* internal moderation of children’s achievement;
* external moderation;
* the child’s voice.

Within our supporting and monitoring framework we will:

* support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
* ensure that the setting’s buildings and premises are optimally used to support successful learning and teaching;
* monitor the effectiveness of learning and teaching strategies;
* ensure that staff development, supervision and performance management policies promote good quality teaching and learning;
* ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to adopt a fundamentally supportive role in helping children to learn.

**Staff development** **and training**

Staff training needs will be identified in line with this policy particularly through performance management / appraisal

When monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning any resulting training needs identified will be met.



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| **TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY** |

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis and whenever significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place.

Policy Agreed by Governing Body on:

Signed: ……………………………………………… Date : …………………

Next Review Date: ……………………………………………