



**Sowing the Seeds for Life Long Learning**

At Gracelands Nursery School our aim is to create a stimulating, healthy, happy, secure and inclusive environment which will promote the independent learning process for all

# Teaching and Learning Policy

**At Gracelands Nursery School we follow:**

- The policies and procedures from Birmingham City Council and Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) which includes the government's prevent strategy.

# TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

## CURRICULUM

### RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

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

- Article 1 - Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.
- Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.
- Article 4 - Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights.
- 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 - Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.
- Article 15 - Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.
- Article 17 - Every child has the right to reliable information from the media. This should be information that children can understand.
- 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 31 - Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2012), the statutory framework that sets the standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth up to 5. We as 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.

The curriculum is everything the children do, see, hear and feel, planned and unplanned, both indoors and outdoors. This includes the dispositions and attitudes within our learning community.

### **Seven Areas of Learning and Development:**

#### **Prime Areas**

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

#### **Specific Areas**

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

## **Guiding Principles:**

There are four guiding principles that shape our practice:

- Unique child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Children develop & learn in different ways & at different rates

## **UNIQUE CHILD**

We acknowledge that specific actions may need to take place to ensure that children who have SEN and or disabilities are provided for intrinsically. We aim to provide access to: activities, the physical environment, both inside and out, resources, including displays and visits outside of school. The range of resources will aim to respond to the learning needs of all children and reflect the society in which we live. These may include specialist materials, such as those accessed through sight, touch, sound and smell. Through this provision we aim to promote positive images to prepare our children.

*“As far as schools are concerned.....schools cannot unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation.” (pg 5 ‘The Equality Act 2010 and schools’ May 2014)*

## **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 have daily contact with their child’s keyworker to discuss any issues. 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.

## **We create Rhythm in the Nursery through**

### **Daily routine**

- Meeting & greeting by key person
- Group time on entry to meet & plan learning
- Child initiated play indoors & outdoors
- Group time at end of session

Rhythm through extended day – Togetherness through eating together at snack time and lunch followed by child initiated play

Rhythm through personal care routines – Learning and development time for key person and child toileting, changing clothes, washing, eating, quiet/resting times.

Experiencing the seasons – connecting to nature & its life cycle. Planned yearly timetable for looking after the garden and visits to the local park. Unplanned spontaneous experiences connected to weather.

## Visits and Visitors

We focus on children developing 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 termly visits to the Lickey hills, visits into the community, artists and visitors to nursery. These all help to enhance children's knowledge and experiences.

## The importance of Home Languages

Many of our children start nursery speaking languages other than English and are at an early stage of acquiring English.

We know that bilingualism is an asset, and the first language has a continuing and significant role in identity, learning and the acquisition of additional languages. Supporting continued development of first language and promoting the use of first language for learning enables children to access learning opportunities within the EYFS and beyond through their full language repertoire.

The skills, knowledge and understanding of children learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) are often underestimated. Cognitive challenge can and should be kept appropriately high through the provision of linguistic and contextual support. Language acquisition goes hand in hand with cognitive and academic development, with an inclusive curriculum as the context.

Personality plays a great part in language development. Some children go through an extended period of silence when entering an unfamiliar language environment; others may continue to speak the language they know best, regardless of who can understand them. Each child must be carefully observed so that, when their situation begins to change, parents and practitioners can support their next steps.

Like all children, those learning EAL thrive and learn best where practice is excellent; key factors include the inclusive attitude and ethos set by leaders and managers and required of all practitioners in the setting, an understanding that bilingualism is an asset, genuinely reflective practice and an adherence to the belief that every child matters.

*Adapted from Supporting children learning English as an additional language National Strategy 2007.*

## **Enabling Environments.**

We aim to provide stimulating environments where children will want to respond and express themselves. A range of teaching and learning approaches will be used to support children's different learning styles to acknowledge their background, the pace they work, their stamina, concentration and emotional well-being. **The importance of play will be considered an essential approach to teaching and learning**, focussing on the process rather than the outcome. We believe that understanding and concentrating on the process of learning will automatically produce an outcome, with the added bonus of sustained learning.

We have high quality Enabling Environments for Early Learning & Care. There are a range of different part-time and full-time groups for children aged 2-4 years old based on criteria and entitlement.

## Learning Areas:

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.

## Learning and Development.

### Learning - How do children learn?

- Children initiating activities that promote learning and enable them to learn from each other. Providing a stimulating environment with resources children can explore at their own pace.
- Children learning through movement and all their senses.
- Children having time to explore ideas and interests in depth.
- Children feeling secure which helps them to become confident learners?
- Children learning in different ways and at different rates.
- Children making links in their learning.
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language.

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected.

*'The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.'* (EYFS 2012)

The Characteristics of Effective learning support the development of the Unique Child in **how children** are learning.

### 3 Characteristics of Effective Learning

#### Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

#### Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

#### Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

## **We also provide planned opportunities for group learning in daily group time for the prime areas: PSED, Physical development and Communication and Language**

Learning together through:  
Companionship  
Citizenship  
Caring for each other  
Stories  
Sense of belonging to a group  
Talking  
Planning  
Sharing news  
Thinking  
Reflection  
Caring for the learning spaces  
Having a voice  
Listening  
Problem solving  
Building relationships

Activities for the specific areas of the EYFS are often introduced at group time - number, shape space measure, reading and writing

Children are encouraged to use skills and knowledge throughout this play time.

## **Differentiation for Different Types of Learners**

We assess children and identify specific groups of children that may have particular needs. These groups include the more able, SEND and children with language or social communication difficulties. 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.

## **Positive Relationships.**

### **Key person system**

Each child & family has a named key practitioner. This offers the opportunity for a special relationship to develop. The key practitioner builds a close relationship by acting as a companion for the child & being mindful to the needs of the child during each day. Sharing information and creating opportunities to talk during the day builds trust & partnership. The key practitioner acts as a champion for child & parent.

### **Central to positive relationships is the key person**

### **Teaching - How do practitioners teach?**

- Working in partnership with parents, because parents continue to have a prime teaching role with their children.
- Working with parents, who are vital partners in the assessment and planning process.
  - Promoting children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.
- Practitioners who model a range of positive behaviours and learning behaviours.

- Using language that is rich and using correct grammar. Recognising that what is said and how the practitioner speaks is the main way of teaching new vocabulary and helping children to develop linguistic structures for thinking.
- Using conversation and carefully framed questions because this is crucial in developing children's knowledge.
- Direct teaching of children's skills and knowledge. Practitioners knowing the children they teach and judging when they are ready for certain activities.
- Children teaching each other.
- Interacting with and supporting children in a way that positively affects the attitudes to learning the children develop.
- Planning the indoor and outdoor environment carefully to provide a positive context for learning and teaching.
- Skilful and well planned observations of children that feed into the planning cycle to identify the next step in children's learning to plan how to help children make progress.
- Assessing children's development and progress to serve several purposes. Assessment opportunities may be identified in planning or arise spontaneously.

## **Transitions**

Settling new children. Each child and family is unique. We offer open days, home visits and stay and plays. We work together to support the settling process. When parents feel comfortable in the setting it helps their children to settle. Each child's transition to and from Gracelands is unique to them and their needs. For example time settling in or meeting professionals.

## **Planning and Assessment.**

Our planning and assessment is based on the principle that children learn most when they are interested, motivated and engaged in the learning process. Through regular observations of children's interests planning and assessment develops to support and enhance their learning. In this way we differentiate and ensure that individuals are appropriately challenged with a balance of adult-led activities and the scaffolding to support child-initiated activities. The efforts of our children will be valued and respected at all times. We will provide positive encouragement and feedback to pupils to encourage confidence and develop self-esteem.

It is through careful observation and documentation of children's learning that we are able to make judgements about a child's individual development. We use the EYFS 'Developmental Matters' and statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile to base-line children, plan personalised learning and show progress. This data is collected in paper and an electronic form and can be analysed to inform the SEF and SIP.

## **Related Policies**

- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural
- Behaviour
- British Values
- Home Visits
- SEND
- EAL
- Equal Opportunities
- More Able