

Learning and Teaching (Curriculum) Policy

Equalities Statement:

The ethos of the Federation supports the development of self-respect and self esteem in all children, staff and the community it serves. We place a high value on diversity and treat every member of the Federation as an individual. In this respect, we aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion, belief and sexual orientation. In addition to this we also aim to take into account social circumstances.

Aims

- To provide information and guidance for staff and parents/carers on the provision and delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the Federation.
- To outline how the Statutory Framework for the EYFS is interpreted and implemented throughout the Federation.

Principles

- Parents/carers are their children's primary educators and as such, they are best placed to support us in providing for their learning and development
- Play should be at the centre of young children's experiences and learning
- The outdoor area is of particular importance and as such is constantly developed to support and challenge children's learning
- Children have access to the outdoor area in all weathers and are provided with clothing for this purpose.
- Children have access to green spaces as part of our outdoor ethos
- Children who are emotionally secure are more able to learn new things. Therefore Personal, Social and Emotional Development and wellbeing is given high priority
- Great emphasis is placed on the development of communication and language skills as these are very important for all future learning
- Children's voices are important and their views on the environment, experiences and learning will be sought in a developmentally appropriate way
- Parent/carers contributions to providing an insight into the diversity of faiths, cultures, history, languages and places are highly valued.

Learning

- Young children's learning is not a linear or compartmentalised process, therefore it is important to think of learning in a holistic way. An interaction or activity may present many learning opportunities planned and unplanned for the child
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates
- The environment is organised to stimulate the natural curiosity of children
- There are a number of activities (continuous provision) which are available every day
- The activities offer children opportunities for open ended exploration across all of the EYFS areas of learning and development in Prime areas- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), Communication and Language (C&L) and Physical Development (PD) and Specific areas- Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design (as outlined in Development Matters in the EYFS DfE)
- Through observation of children's interests, characteristics of learning and schemas (see Appendix A) staff plan to enhance the continuous provision on a daily and weekly basis introducing 'provocations' where possible to stimulate children's imagination

- Some activities need adult involvement to enable children to access them more effectively. These are planned and differentiated through the delivery of the activity (adult initiated)
- Staff plan focus activities for their Key Children based on their observation and assessments of their schemas, interests and needs (adult initiated)

The Learning Journey (Child's story)

- Children's learning is documented through observations and photographs and collated in diary form on their online 'Learning Journeys' (LJ) and through floor/class books
- Parental involvement in the LJ is actively encouraged and they are available for parents/carers to read and comment on at any time. All parents/carers are asked, through the focus child process, to contribute observations from home
- Parents/carers meet with staff to discuss their child's progress and decide on their 'Next Steps'. This happens in the Autumn term, once they have had their 'spotlight' review, and then again six months later
- Significant information is passed on to schools as part of our transition arrangements. Transition meetings are arranged with primary schools where possible
- Children are encouraged to reflect on their own learning through use of their LJ as a starting point for discussion

Teaching

- Every child is assigned a Keyworker and significant second within the team. The keyworker observes, assesses and plans for the individual child's needs, development and interests
- Teaching happens in all interactions between children and adults, so for this reason, it is important that staff maintain a positive view of children and their families
- For adults working with young children, the opportunities for teaching are all through play and verbal interaction at a developmentally appropriate level for the unique child
- Adults have high expectations for all children
- Teaching is a social process and children learn much from their peers. Adults will encourage peer tutoring, where appropriate, to develop language for thinking skills and self esteem
- Children are assessed on a daily and weekly basis informally through their LJs and through the Opal 'spotlight'. Children who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) will have a language assessment in the Autumn and Summer term
- Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), in addition, will have a targeted plan which is reviewed regularly (See SEN Policy)
- Opal and EAL assessment tools provide a baseline on entry for each child to gauge the level of support they may need in the Prime areas to reach expected age outcomes (or to enable them to exceed age expectations in some cases)
- A named person has responsibility for a Prime area of the EYFS – a yearly plan is formulated with all staff and then the co-ordinator has overall responsibility for the EYFS. The responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum lies with the Senior Leadership Team
- The plans for Prime areas will maintain, develop and enhance the existing provision to improve outcomes for children
- The Federation's Policy for Learning and Teaching (Curriculum) is kept under regular review by the Curriculum and Resources Committee, the Executive Head and the Senior Leadership Team
- The Executive Head informs the Governors about the curriculum through the Headteacher's Report
- The Curriculum and Standards Committee monitor provision and practice through regular meetings to review the progress of children

Links to other Policies/Documents:

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE)
Development Matters in the EYFS (non statutory guidance)
Positive Behaviour Policy
Equalities Policy
Special Educational Needs Policy
Safeguarding Policy

Appendix A- What are schemas and how do we use the information they provide about children?

Appendix B- Most Able Children

Appendix C- The Role of the Keyworker and significant second

The Cambridge Nursery Federation Governing Body is committed to promoting quality and diversity, providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all. We are committed to equal opportunities and the promotion of non-discriminatory practices in all aspects of work undertaken within the Federation.

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect and require all members of the school community to share this commitment.

Date: Summer 2023

Review: As required

Appendix A- What are schemas and how do we use the information they provide about children?

What is a schema?

A schema is a pattern of behaviour. Children can, and generally do, have several schemas that they are interested in at any one time, but commonly have one dominant schema that will remain with them into adulthood.

When do schemas begin?

Schemas begin from birth. Initially schemas are very simple but they will develop rapidly if they are supported. Research has shown that brain paths develop faster when connections are supported; schemas are a way of supporting children and extending their learning.

How do we know about schemas?

Schemas were first identified by Piaget, a childhood theorist. His work was further developed by Chris Athey during the 1970's. Additional research has now been undertaken about how children learn and how their brains develop. Because schemas follow interests, they can develop high levels of concentration and learning in children.

How do schemas work?

A child will have an area in which they are mainly interested at any one time. To learn about how this interest works, they will repeat an action over and over again until they understand about this interest.

If adults can tune into the child's interest we can support a child to develop their knowledge and extend their interest so further increasing the knowledge.

When a baby is dropping things from a high chair repeatedly they are exploring vertical trajectories or up and down schemas, this can be extended by showing them a yo-yo on a string or lifting them up and down.

It has been known for many years that we learn from doing, when a child is repeating an action, they are learning from what they are doing. In addition to repeating an action, a child will look for other ways to explore their interest.

When a toddler carries everything to you they may be exploring transporting of items- giving them bags and trucks they can put things in will support this. Extensions can be made by encouraging them to help with the shopping in the supermarket or going on a picnic. Older children may become interested in how people are transported and trips could be made to an airport or train station- maps could also be drawn showing how we get to places. Supporting children in areas they are interested in will enable them to continue their interest. Schemas can be seen in children's play and artwork, as well as in body language and heard in speech.

How do we use our knowledge of schemas?

We collate information about children's schemas to help us understand what they are interested in. We use this information to inform our planning on a daily and weekly basis. The continuous provision is enhanced daily to support and extend children's particular interests. We plan activities for groups of children to support the development of their schema and their language for thinking skills.

Appendix B- Most Able Children

One group of children to be tracked to discern strategies for intervention and to ensure progress are the 'Most Able'.

Children who are 'Most Able' are identified as those children who are achieving at a level above the average for their year group, across a range of areas of learning.

These children will be identified by the usual methods of:

- Teacher observation through Learning Journeys
- Teacher assessment (including, but not exclusively, through tracking)
- Parent information
- Discussion with the child

Children who are identified as 'Most Able' will have learning experiences planned and differentiated appropriately for them by their Keyworker.

Focus activities planned for the whole group will also be differentiated to take account of their specific needs and abilities.

Where possible, outside agencies may be involved to provide unique experiences or assess individual children according to their abilities and needs.

Appendix C - The Role of the Keyworker and significant second

Keyworker Responsibilities:

It is a requirement of the EYFS that a Keyworker should be allocated to a child as soon as the child begins in the setting. In order to ensure that this is happening we are suggesting that the Keyworker should be allocated as soon as the child has a starting date at the Nursery.

Keyworker

- Is a secure base
- Nurtures the child
- Supports the child and family
- Safeguards the child
- Provides for their additional needs

Working with the child involves the keyworker to:

- Support children depending on different needs
- Listen
- Spending time playing/ talking
- Build up trust with them
- Be someone for them to turn to – being dependable to build confidence
- Be the welcoming face
- Know the child **really** well
- Make them feel included
- Be the person that holds them in mind
- Show love/respect for the child
- Give intimate care
- Give emotional support- to both the child and parents/carers
- Know the child well and be able to plan accordingly –notice changes – know what is usual- know them inside out
- Safeguard the child and note significant events, alerting the designated safeguarding person to significant changes
- Facilitate better communication for the child (explaining to others how the child learns/ is motivated) to other children & staff members
- Have some flexibility to be where the child is
- Provide continuity
- Get to know the child intimately e.g. likes, dislikes, interests, family circumstances, friends
- Know the child's personal routines e.g. bottles , sleep etc
- Know the child's likes & dislikes

Working with the families enables the key worker to:

- Know parents/carers and home life- support them- feed back to parents/carers
- Know the family composition- EAL- Equalities- emotional needs- friendships- significant events/issues- background- learning style/schemas
- Build relationships with the child and parents/carers
- Know advocates for the child
- Know their community
- Give emotional support to both the child and parents/carers
- Spend time building a relationship with the child and parents/carers
- Attending meetings, when practical, to support the child

Child protection, CIN or Early Help Assessments:

Where the child may have a plan, it is important that close liaison is happening between the Key Person and the person supporting the family outside the educational setting.

Designated Person for Child Protection

Named person for individual CP cases: Amanda Bannister; Ruth Holman; Gill Learmond; Janey Morrison

Child in Need: Amanda Bannister; Ruth Holman; Gill Learmond; Janey Morrison

Early Help Assessment: Gill Learmond and Ruth Holman (if Education need only) or Named Family Worker

SEN: Key person responsibility to be aligned to the New Code of Practice (High need children only to have Specific Plans). Learning needs to be addressed through Quality First Teaching or Targeted Group Work.

EAL: The EAL assessment will be performed by the Key person.