



# Chatham Nursery School Birth to Five Learning and Development Policy

## Introduction

This document sets out our approach to learning, development and teaching at Chatham Nursery School Birth to Five Provision. The experiences we offer reflect the thinking and practice expressed in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework-EYFS (2014). This sets the standard for all children from birth to five.

**All aspects of our work is shaped, guided and underpinned by four themes and principles outlined by EYFS and Birth to 5 Matters.**

- A unique child- every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Positive relationships-children learn to be strong and independent from a base of secure relationship
- Enabling Environments-the environment plays a key role in supporting children's learning and development and can be enhanced to support children's growing and changing interests.. Experiences need to relate to children's individual needs and there is a strong relationship between practitioners parents and carers
- Children learn and develop in different ways at different rates.

We use EYFS to inform our work with the children. The EYFS sets out the legal requirements relating to learning and development and the requirements relating to safeguarding and welfare requirements.

The Birth to 5 framework includes seven areas of learning all are seen as important and interconnected, three are seen as particularly important as they are they can help support curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and the capacity to form relationships and thrive.

### **The prime areas are**

- Personal Social and Emotional Development -Sense of Self, Understanding emotions Making Relationships
- Physical Development - Moving and Handling and Health and Self Care
- Communication and Language-Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking

Prime Areas are fundamental; they work together and support development in all other areas of learning.

### **The specific areas**

- **Literacy**-Reading and Writing
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**- People and Communities ,The world and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design**- Creating with material and Being imaginative & expressive

Specific areas include essential knowledge and skills for children to be able to participate successfully in society.

Birth to5 matters document outlines expectations for learning and development from 0-5 within these areas.

## **How children learn and develop**

All children learn best when play reflects their wide ranging interests and preoccupations. Play with other children is important to their development. Children learn best through active exploration. Active learning involving other people objects, ideas and events When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources they discover, make connections and come to new and better understandings ( EYFS)

### **The Characteristics of Effective Learning (EYFS)**

The Three Characteristics of Effective Learning are-

- **Playing and exploring-** children's desire to explore and investigate and to 'have a go 'at new things.
- **Active Learning**—children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, children enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically-**children develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and past experiences and develop strategies for doing things.

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 people and their environment—playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically—underpin learning and development across all areas of and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner. The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important context for learning.

### **Key Person**

Key Person has special responsibilities for working with a small group of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with families.

When a child starts at our centre they are allocated a named key practitioner. The Key Person role is central to developing positive relationships. The role of the key person is to help ensure transition to nursery is a positive experience and that the child's care is tailored to their needs. The key person is also a point of contact for parents/carers having many opportunities to discuss the child's progress and agree priorities. The key person is responsible for observation, assessment and planning for their key child. The key person acts as a champion for child and parent.

### **Planning in EYFS**

All planning should start with observing children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning .

At our Nursery School planning incorporates a balance between adult and child initiated experiences taking into account children's interests' experiences and schema.

At our Nursery School we capture children's learning through photographs, written notes and extended narratives. Each child has a learning journey file where these observation notes, photographs and pieces of work are gathered together for the children to look at together or to share with parents/carers.

Practitioners reflect on these observations, make an assessment of the learning that is evident in order to plan future learning.

### **Actions may include**

- Setting up an enhancement the environment
- Discussion with the child
- Exploring the same point using lots of different media or resources
- Testing out or extending ideas based on the interest
- At our Nursery School we also plan termly themes based around the seasonal change. We begin

each theme by asking children what they already know about certain aspects of the theme. We then try to find out what the children would like to know.

### **Parents as Partners**

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When children and parents work together in early year's settings, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.

In our Nursery School we understand that significant adults in the child's life, at home and in the centre have complimentary contributions to a child's development and learning. We value the parents/carers knowledge of their child and the life skills they have which may be different to our own.

- Parents are involved in the planning and can contribute to the individual planning process
- Induction visits
- Parents are invited to play in the sessions and join in with celebrations and projects
- Practitioners are available at the start and end of every session
- Childrens learning journeys are shared with parents/carers and added to by them.
- There is annotated photographic evidence in each room for parents to see
- Workshops are offered so that so that we can share our practice with them
- Parents' volunteers are involved fully in the work of the centre.
- Parents are always offered the opportunity to share their expertise and knowledge when possible.
- Resources are displayed in the nursery for the children to share with their parents/carers
- Ideas/ activities for parents to do at home are supplied e.g. listening walk
- Rooms at the centre are regularly used for parents groups
- Parents/carers are given the opportunity to accompany children on educational visits.
- Regular formal parents meetings
- Newsletter
- Loaning resources
- Access to Children's Centre programmes as applicable
- Two year old check discussed with parents and a discussion about how they can support children at home

### **The Importance of the home language**

Many of our children start nursery speaking a language/languages other than English. We know that bilingualism is an asset, and the child's first language has a continuing and significant role to play in identity, learning and the acquisition of other languages.

Supporting continuing development of the first language is therefore a priority. We provide dual language books for home loan and use in the setting .We also have a good range of picture dictionaries. Bi lingual children also enhance the experience of mono lingual children by providing first-hand experience of other languages in use.

### **Ethnicity and culture**

At our Nursery School we seek to reflect and explore the rich cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity of the community in all aspects of our work. We monitor the achievement of all our ethnic groups and plan learning opportunities to meet their particular needs. Every area of our provision seeks to reflect the cultural backgrounds of our children and families. Our seasonal themes draw on the cultural and religious diversity of our community. The children have the opportunity to visit various cultural and religious sites across our city e.g. Chinese arch.

### **Progress check at two.**

When a child is aged between two and three years, practitioners must review their progress and provide parents and carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas. This report will identify the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than

expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special need or disability practitioners will develop a plan of support with parents/carers and SEND co and other outside agencies who are involved.

Beyond the prime areas it is up to practitioners to decide what a written summary should include, reflecting the development level and the needs of the individual child.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

At our centre we believe children with SEN and disabilities have the right to a broad balanced and relevant curriculum. We promote this by implementing individualised learning programmes that focus on particular areas of challenge for the child. (For further information see SEND policy)

### **The role of peers**

We recognise that children learn from each other. We actively encourage friendships and provide the opportunity for children to be together as a whole group and to play together in smaller groups or pairs. Through playing together they learn that others may have different viewpoints from their own. The need to express themselves is necessary to make clear their ideas, negotiate and formulate a compromise so that play can continue.

### **The physical Environment**

Our aim is to create a warm, aesthetically pleasing, uncluttered and clean environment which reflects the children and families that use the centre. The rooms have delineated areas and clear pathways so that play is not disturbed. Each area of provision is well resourced and enhanced linked to the children's interest or theme work. The resources are labelled and accessible to allow the children to make informed choices about their play. The rooms have quieter spaces where children can withdraw when they need to do so.

**This policy was agreed and implemented on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and is due for review in November 2026**