



# EYFS Learning and Development Policy

including Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping

Updated  
January 2022

This policy applies to Sandcastles Nursery including 'early,' 'late' and 'wrap around care' and all staff, volunteers and visitors in Sandcastles Nursery.

*(Please note that the term 'parents' also relates to carers and those with legal guardianship of children)*

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage (2021.) Sandcastles Nursery reflects the four key themes and sixteen commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## **Learning and Development**

### **How we provide for Learning and Development:**

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by Sandcastles Nursery helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

For each area of development and learning, the practice guidance sets out the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of the Reception year of their education.

The practice guidance also sets out in 'Development Matters' the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the early learning goals. Sandcastles Nursery has regards to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. 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.

### **The 3 Prime Areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

#### **Physical Development:**

We support children to develop...

- Opportunities to be both active and interactive.
- Good control and co-ordination in large and small movements.
- Confidence to move in a range of ways, safely negotiating space.
- The ability to handle equipment and tools safely.
- Knowledge about the importance of physical exercise and making healthy choices in relation to food.
- The ability to manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs; including dressing and going to the toilet independently.
- The importance of good oral health and hygiene.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

We support children to develop...

- A positive sense of themselves and others.
- The confidence to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others.
- The confidence to speak and express their own thoughts and ideas in a familiar group.
- The ability to choose resources that they require in order to undertake their chosen activities.
- The ability to say when they do and don't need help and support.
- The ability to discuss how they and others convey and manage feelings and emotions.

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- The ability to manage their emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary.
- Understand their own and others behaviour and its consequences; having an awareness that some behaviours are unacceptable.
- The ability to work as part of a group; understanding and following both rules and instructions whilst having an understanding of appropriate behaviour.
- The ability to adjust their behaviour to different situations; taking changes of routine in their stride.
- The ability to play co-operatively and take turns with others; developing social skills and learning how to manage their feelings.
- The ability to show sensitivity to others needs and feelings; forming positive relationships and developing respect for others.

**Communication and Language:**

We support children to develop...

- Opportunities to experience a rich language environment.
- The ability to listen attentively in a range of situations.
- The ability to listen to stories; accurately anticipating key events and responding to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- Attention skills in the form of listening to what others say and responding appropriately; sometimes whilst engaged in another activity.
- The ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
- The ability to answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.
- Confidence and skills in expressing themselves effectively; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- The ability to use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future.
- Their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events

**The 4 Specific Areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

**Literacy:**

We support children to develop...

- Phonic knowledge and the ability to link sounds and letters in order to begin to read and write.
- Understanding print and the written word.
- Understanding about stories and print that they may see in different places; accessing a wide range of reading materials such as books, poems and other written materials.
- A lifelong love of reading, including language comprehension and word reading.

**Mathematics:**

We support children to develop...

- Their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers and calculating simple addition and subtraction problems.
- The ability to solve mathematical problems.
- A secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which the foundations of Mathematics are built.
- Their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of Mathematics including shape, space and measures.

**Expressive Arts and Design:**

We support children to develop...

- Opportunities to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials.
- The ability to enjoy singing, music and dance.
- The ability to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques; experimenting with different ways of media.

- The ability to represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.

### **Understanding the World:**

We support children to develop...

- A sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- Talking about events in their own lives and in the lives of their families.
- Knowledge that others do not always enjoy the same things; being sensitive to their needs.
- Knowledge that there are similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, communities and traditions.
- Knowledge about the environment.
- The ability to make predictions and notice and comment on changes.
- Recognition that technology can be used in the environment.
- The ability to select and use technology for a particular purpose.
- Understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world.

### **Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping**

#### **Our Approach to Learning and Development and Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping**

#### **Learning Through Play:**

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking; which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Sandcastles Nursery uses the practice guidance Early Years Foundation Stage to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the practice guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used as a supporting tool to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Early Years experiences should be built on what children already know and can do. At Sandcastles Nursery we value working closely with parents who are the child's first and most enduring educators. The information which parents share with us in the early stages is vital in forming a basis for further learning.

Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Should a child's progress in any prime area give cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and agree how to support the child. Practitioners must consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. They should link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

Observation, assessment and record keeping are an important part of the educational process which begins as soon as the child starts at nursery school; sometimes earlier if a family receives a home visit or a child attends a 'taster day.'

#### **Observation:**

Observation involves watching children closely and then noting down what is seen and heard in order to

- Gain a detailed understanding of the child.
- Plan for children's needs and interests, including specialist advice and support when required.
- Plan for progression and differentiation.
- Inform curriculum planning.
- Share the child's development with parents/carers.
- Provide information on transfer to the next stage in education.
- Give practitioners a greater insight into how children learn.

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Observations are made by adults who are involved with the child; including practitioners, parents, students and other professionals (such as health visitor or speech and language therapist) as well as the children themselves.

Anecdotal observations are recorded using 'Tapestry,' an online learning e-journal which helps to build up a detailed picture of the child's development over time.

### **Assessment:**

Assessment is the process of reflecting, analysing and making an informed judgement on a child's learning.

At Sandcastles Nursery an initial assessment is based on information from the home setting that is shared by parents with practitioners. This is in addition from information that may have been gathered from other settings and agencies, such as playgroups and health visitors.

We use a combination of formative and summative assessment. Formative; where the emphasis is on planning the next stages to be taken by the child. Summative; which provides a snapshot of the child's achievements and abilities at a particular stage.

Formative assessment is the regular recording of children's learning experiences, which informs appropriate planning to allow for progression in learning. This information also provides evidence for summative assessment.

Through the use of 'Tapestry' parents/carers are invited to contribute to their child's learning experience; by sharing information, concerns, commenting on development alongside any areas of strength or weakness that need to be discussed further.

Within Reception, children undertake an initial Baseline Assessment within the first half-term of starting school.

### **Record Keeping:**

We keep a variety of records including emergency contacts, addresses, parental consent for outings, media, video and photographs, medical and allergy information and individual records of learning.

### **Records of Development and Learning:**

All children are regularly and continually observed and assessed. These records are on-going and inform planning throughout the year. Records cover all aspects of a child's development, covering the seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- Physical Development.
- Communication and Language.
- Literacy.
- Understanding of the World.
- Mathematics.
- Expressive Arts and Design.

Each child will also have a series of observations, photographs and/or videos that will contribute towards a personal record of their early education at Sandcastles Nursery.

Children are encouraged to contribute to their records and development of learning by reflecting on their achievements and prior learning, discussing activities and having their ideas and views listened to and respected.

### **Assessment:**

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs and/or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. At Sandcastles Nursery we believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like and do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

For those children who attend another setting or who have a secondary carer (such as a childminder) we share information on a regular basis.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as at times of transition, such as when a child moves to a different setting a new room or when they go on to school. At present the Foundation Stage uses 'Tapestry' in conjunction with the Local Authority 'Milestone Assessment Toolkit (MAT)' system alongside observations, assessment and information to effectively highlight children's progress alongside any areas for concern. If the child is 'on track' at the first assessment but in the period before they reach the next milestone checkpoint their Key Person identifies that there are some concerns and support is required, the setting implements a Graduated Approach. If a child remains in the same chronological assessment period at the next assessment, it will be recorded as GA (Graduated Approach) at the same checkpoint as before (because the child has met the milestones up to this point). Support will then be determined to meet the needs of the child to help them to be on track at the next milestone checkpoint.

Attainment levels are also obtained for all children at regular intervals throughout the academic year (autumn, spring and summer term.) In addition, children in Reception will undertake a baseline assessment upon entry alongside regular phonics, reading and maths assessments.

In the final term of the year in which a child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, an EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile reflects ongoing observation. Within the EYFS we recognise that all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents, and any other adults whom the teacher and/or parents judges can provide a useful contribution.

#### **Two Year Old Summative Assessment:**

The progress check at 2 years old has been introduced to enable early identification of development needs so that additional support can be put into place. In particular emphasis is placed on the three prime areas of learning; physical development, personal, social and emotional development and communication and language.

If there are any concerns about a child's development then practitioners and parents should consider all contextual information about a child before taking any further steps. For example, has the arrival of a new sibling in the family caused a child to regress to younger patterns of behaviour? Are there signs that the child is about to make a developmental leap in this area?

The progress check must 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 educational need or disability, practitioners should develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and other professionals (for example, the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) or health professionals) as appropriate.

Practitioners (in conjunction with parents) gather the information that they will need to undertake the progress check and this will inform the conversation that parents and practitioners will have as they complete the progress check.

Examples of information that may be gathered:

- Parental knowledge of the child
- Key person knowledge of the child
- Observations from home and the setting
- Anecdotes
- Information from other professionals who may be involved with the child
- Key events in a child's life, for example the birth of a sibling

#### **'Late and 'Wrap Around Care:'**

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For those children who attend either 'late' care (after 3.15pm, term time only) or 'wrap around care' (during the school holidays) the setting embraces a more 'creative' curriculum that incorporates all seven areas of learning and development.

Activities are based around a weekly theme that is differentiated and reflects the children's current interests or a particular event such as the celebration of a festival. Children may participate in activities such as craft, cooking, sports, nature walks etc.