

The Children's Workshop

CURRICULUM AND PLANNING POLICY

Learning through play

At the Children's Workshop we believe that children learn from every aspect of life around them. Our philosophy is to provide practical and exciting experiences where children are learning through play. Play underpins all development and learning for young children and it is through play that they develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. We have skilled practitioners who help to 'Scaffold' a child's learning and development. We strive to create a positive, exciting, learning environment where each child is interested to learn and will become 'independent learners' A life long skill.

The Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum helps us as educators to track and plan for children's interests and next steps in learning as they move towards the early learning goals (these are assessed at the end of the reception class.) Each child will have an individual record of development showing their progress and their interests which is updated and maintained by the Child's key worker: to do this we use an online system called Tapestry and photos and observations are regularly uploaded onto it. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's journal as we believe that for a child to achieve their potential achieve, it is vitally important we work with parents, supporting the learning going on at home.

The Unique Child

At the Children's Workshop, we take into account differing needs, ability, interests and diversity when planning. We are very aware of the importance of providing a positive play environment so children can develop good social skills and appreciations of the multicultural nature of our society.

We develop a tailor made curriculum according to individual needs which is based on observation to inform planning and draws on children's own interest and needs. This is delivered through a balance of adult initiated and child initiated activities both inside and out. Our practitioners are skilled at observing children and use these observations to make assessments of the children's needs and to plan what to do next in order to extend their learning.

The practitioners' are also able to respond to varying needs including those with special needs and those with special gifts and talents. We recognise that parents are the primary educators and encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning and the learning journeys.

We follow and deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and parents are informed of this with information provided in the welcome packs. We also encourage the children in sustained shared thinking whereby the practitioner will work with the child to extend their thinking, solve problems, ask questions and make connections in their learning.

The EYFS

Parents are provided with information on the EYFS and information on this is very well presented in a booklet called 'What to expect'- a very useful source of information written by parents themselves and is a helpful guide as to what the EYFS is all about.

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We follow and deliver the EYFS which covers 0-5 years. We plan activities for children to help them develop skills and take their learning forward.

The curriculum itself is divided into 7 areas of learning and development.-

Three prime areas;-

- ❖ Personal social and emotional development
- ❖ Communication and language
- ❖ Physical development

Once the children are confident in these areas we will then support the children in the four specific areas;-

- ❖ Mathematics
- ❖ Literacy
- ❖ Understanding of the world
- ❖ Expressive art and design.

All areas of learning and development are connected to one another and are equally important. All areas of learning are underpinned by the principles of the EYFS; the unique child, positive relationships and enabling environments and learning and development.

Characteristics of Effective Learning.

At the Children's Workshop we realise the importance of how children learn rather than what they learn. It is very much process over outcome and effective learning is driven by children's intrinsic motivation. The key skills are:-

- ❖ Playing and Exploring. Children investigate, experience things and have a go.
- ❖ Active Learning. Children concentrate and keep trying if they encounter difficulties, enjoy achievements, self motivation.
- ❖ Creating and Thinking Critically. Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Underpinning these areas is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning which lasts a life time. Children who receive the right support and encouragement during these years will be creative and adventurous learners.

Planning

All staff are involved in the planning process and this is done weekly. Planning for the week is added to Tapestry to inform parents of the learning taking place. This provides parents the opportunity to talk about the learning with their children and also to reinforce the learning at home. We will also add ideas for the parents on activities they can do at home to support their child. A copy of the weekly plan is put up on the parents notice boards.

All planning starts with observing the children in order to understand and identify their current interests and development. The environment is enabled to support every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.

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Our practitioners are skilled at observing children's learning through play and will often extend a child's learning when these learning opportunities arise. We refer to this as 'teaching in the moment'.

Our short term planning is written up by staff, these plans are drawn straight from practitioners' observations and have great regard to the learning needs, types of play and interests of the children. These plans are also tailored for individual children.

We use long term plans to ensure we have included festivals, celebrations and visits from organisations such as fire-fighters and people in our local community

Our Routine

Our routine allows for approximately 2 hours free flow play where the child is intrinsically motivated and engaged in child led play. This is then followed by 'small group time' where every child takes part in an adult initiated activity. This is a chance for the children to focus on a directed activity and helps to prepare for school. We will always take the children outside during the morning in both small groups and large group play. We value the learning opportunities that our outside space provides and recognise that it offers a different learning experience for our children. Being outside and the learning opportunities that this brings is so important for young children's development.

The children are encouraged to express themselves through music and movement during our music sessions and we ensure that the children are exposed to lots of songs, rhymes and stories. We feel it is very important to provide a literacy rich environment as this will help support and develop pre reading skills and fuel imaginations.

We plan cooking activities as the skills needed for this activity are wide; estimating, measuring, predicting, fine motor skills, listening and attending to name but a few. Yoga also plays an important part of our sessions: we use this to calm and focus the children's minds and improves their emotional well being.

Play

Play is so important for young children as it is an opportunity to use their social skills, negotiate, take turns, keep play going and extend it by adding ideas and suggestions. Children build self esteem and confidence by building positive relationships with their peers. They are developing emotional intelligence, learning cooperation, empathy, sharing and how to communicate appropriately. Physically they are developing their fine and gross motor skills.

Through playing children test their ideas out and make sense of the world through experiences that are meaningful to them. All of these skills will take children into a successful adulthood, increase their independence and give children a love of learning.

Story sessions

'If you want your children to be intelligent read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales'. *Albert Einstein*

At The Workshop we are passionate about exposing children to all forms of stories and books. We have cosy book areas for children to snuggle into and look at the many books we have, we have non fiction books, story sacks, poetry, nursery

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rhymes to help the children develop the linguistic skills needed to read and spark their imaginations.

The Learning Environment

We offer a rich, varied and stimulating learning environment in which children can be independent, active learners who achieve their potential.

Both our indoor and outdoor learning environments are set up for children to explore, investigate, make choices and become independent learners.

We provide an exciting and stimulating choice of activities to spark interest, appropriately challenge, aid fascination and fuel imaginative play.

Our outside areas reflects the learning going on in the indoor area and there are ample opportunities for children to explore, make marks, count, role play, problem solve, construct, climb, balance, and explore sand, water and our wild life area.

Delivering the Curriculum

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult led and child led activities.

We respond to each child's emerging interests and needs, guiding their development through warm, nurturing and positive interactions. Our strong key person approach ensures each child's needs are planned for.

Working with Parents

Parents are regularly kept up to date with their Child's progress through Tapestry and also through parent consultations and observation mornings.

All key staff meet new parents and gather as much information as they can about their key children at the welcome sessions in September. They use this knowledge to form very positive attachments with their individual key children.

We work alongside parents to support all of the important first steps from settling in, toilet training, to preparing for moving on to a new setting or transitioning to school.

We plan for and are mindful of the skills needed to help children transition successfully and we work with our local schools to ensure that this is as successful as possible. We recognise that parents are the children's first educators and we value, respect their views using the information given to support their child's development.

British Values

We promote British values; **rule of law, democracy, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs** and **individual liberty** and this is implicitly embedded in the EYFS.

For example Democracy: making decisions together we encourage the children to value each others' views and opinions and talk about their feelings. When appropriate we demonstrate democracy in action by allowing the children to share their views about what toys to get out with a show of hands.

We promote rule of law by having 'golden rules' which encourage good behaviour and managing feelings. Children are encouraged to distinguish between right and wrong and understand there are consequences to inappropriate behaviour.

We create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where faiths, views, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.

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We promote individual liberty by allowing children to express themselves, increase their confidence in their own abilities, allowing them to be confident in the choices they make and that we all are free to have differing opinions.

We plan for visitors to come to the preschool such as exotic animals, a mobile farm, the police, police horses, fire fighter, air ambulance and we love to involve parents too especially if they have an interesting job, hobby or have talent they could share with the children.

Tapestry (see Tapestry Policy)

At the Children's' Workshop we use an on line learning journal called Tapestry. This is a way of recording each child's progress through the careful documentation of photos, observations and assessments.

Each child's key worker is responsible for the learning journal and will add weekly observations and assessments. They are also able to use the information and assessments to plan for the child's next steps.

Managers can track cohorts of children and look for gaps in learning, development and progress and use this information to help plan meaningful learning opportunities for individual children and groups.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the pre-school	Date for review
<i>Dec 2018</i>	SA	<i>Dec 2019</i>