



Northern Lights Pre-School & Out of School Club

"Committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people".

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

At the Northern Lights Pre-School, we aim to provide a safe, secure well balanced and stimulating environment and support that will provide all children with the best possible start in life and support in order to develop each child's individuality, enabling them to fulfil their potential.

Purpose: with reference to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Development Matters [EYFS] to ensure that children learn and develop well and to promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' by giving children a broad range of skills and knowledge that provide the foundation for good future progress through school and life.

The Learning and development requirements cover:

- The areas of learning and development that shape activities and educational programmes for children.
- The early learning goals that staff help children work towards and the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn 5.
- The assessment arrangements for measuring, reviewing and reporting children's progress to parents/carers and/or others.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise of the 7 areas of learning and development and are all interconnected. 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. These are the prime areas of learning:

Communication and language

- Giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment;
- Develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves;
- To speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Adults will give children time to think and respond, and employ the '10 second rule'

Physical development

- Provide opportunities for young children to be active and interactive;
- Develop children's co-ordination, control, and movement.
- Help children to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to Food.

Personal, social and emotional development

- Develop a positive sense of themselves, and others;
- Form positive relationships and develop respect for others;
- Develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings;
- Understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Staff will also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The four specific areas are:

Literacy

- Encourage children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write.
- Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

- Provide children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting,
- Understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems;
- To describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world

- Guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design

- Enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Guidelines

- Planning for the 7 areas of learning and development will be based on the DfE Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and will be in an agreed format to suit the needs of individual children.
- Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan motivating, challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child in all areas of learning and development.
- Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other 4 specific areas.
- For the vast majority of our children, English is an additional language. The use of English will be encouraged at all times; so that they develop and reach a good standard in English during their time at preschool. Staff will take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, when desirable or necessary.
- Staff will plan appropriately and use teaching and interaction strategies to suit particular learning needs and outcomes.

Characteristics of Effective learning

Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL) are a revived element in the current Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS). CoEL advocate that in planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn, and then reflect these in their practice. A child's individual learning characteristic will determine the way they respond to both the teaching and learning taking place in the environment. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning identified by the EYFS are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The focus of the CoEL is on how children learn rather than what they learn i.e. process over outcome. Underpinning the CoEL is the understanding that during their earliest years, children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime. Children who receive the right sort of support and encouragement during these years will be creative, and adventurous learners throughout their lives. Children who do not receive this sort of support and interaction are likely to have a much different attitude about learning later on in life. Hence, why the supportive practitioner, and the environment they provide, need to nurture these CoELs to occur, but without forgetting that children are individuals who bring their own needs, talents and histories to the learning environment.

Conclusion

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage is as the title suggests, the foundation for all the future schooling that is to come and is therefore of vital importance in engendering an attitude to learning on which the future can build. Effective learning will take place during purposeful play and first hand experiences. Children come with lots of first hand experiences and knowledge from their home environment and it is the role of the Pre-School to value and build on this knowledge and experience.

Last Reviewed: April 2022

Play and Planning Policy

[to be read in conjunction with the EYFS Policy]

Play is the focal point of children's lives. Play is nature's mechanism for children to make connections with the world, to develop survival skills, to build relationships, to experience control and to make sense of life and the world in which they are living and growing.

When children play they are enabled, included, empowered and connected with their world.

The Northern Lights Pre-School understands that children develop quickly in the early years and values the importance of play in the Holistic Development of young children as they play and learn about the world in which they live. Staff at The Northern Lights Pre-School aim to actively support children in reaching out and interacting with other people and the world around them by providing a wide, motivating and stimulating range of activities and experiences within the seven areas of learning and development and the four themes and principles of the Statutory Framework for the early Years.

Aims

The Northern Lights Pre-School aims to provide an environment in which the children can play in a safe and secure environment, with practitioners who support and progress their learning. The 7 areas of learning will be implemented through planned and purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities, first-hand experiences and opportunities will be made for the children to make choices for themselves and to experience spontaneous, unplanned activities, such as snow, seeing a spider or the arrival of a police or fire engine.

Management

All staff have responsibility to ensure that they respond to individual children's emerging needs and interests as they guide them through warm, positive interaction, ensuring that children play and learn whilst gaining the following skills whilst enjoying themselves:

- Exploring
- Thinking critically
- Curiosity
- Investigating
- Enthusiasm
- Discovering
- Creating
- Practicing
- Rehearsing
- Repeating
- Revising
- Consolidating knowledge already gained

The Environment

The Pre-School has ample space for children to explore and play in, and has displays, which are changed regularly, and plans that are adapted to follow planning and new topics.

The Resources

The staff are creative and use everyday household materials to enhance learning of self-discovery, curiosity, interest and many other learning objectives that are set out in the Foundation Stage curriculum. These include:

- Jelly
- Corn flour
- Water Play
- Shaving Foam
- Rice and Pasta
- Icing and other resources of cooking
- Natural materials for the treasure basket
- Recyclable materials for art, design and technology

Evidence of learning

Each child has a folder with his/her work in it, which is observed and evaluated by staff. This will allow staff to know what a child can do, and what skills s/he needs support with. The files also demonstrate what learning objectives have been on offer, and allow key workers to plan effectively for the needs of their children.

Planning

Throughout the week staff carry out many adult -led and child-initiated activities. These are all planned for carefully, with children's needs and interests in mind.

Weekly

At the Northern lights preschool we follow children's interests and plan accordingly. Key persons plan for individual children depending on their interests and the gaps in their learning. On a weekly basis staff fill in the planning template in the staff meeting and discuss children's individual targets. Staff discuss cohorts of children and ensure suitable activities are planned to narrow the gap between the different cohorts. This is written in black on the planning template, which all staff have access to.

On the Spot planning

On the spot planning takes place when staff are observing children and find that they have a particular interest. Staff will immediately plan an activity to extend their learning to support that particular interest. This type of planning is written in green on the planning template. In order to ensure that a child does not lose interest staff are encouraged to follow the child's interest immediately and not wait for the following session or following week before they plan an activity around that particular interest.

Last Reviewed: April 2022

Our EYFS Curriculum

[to be read in conjunction with the “EYFS Policy” and “Play and Planning Policy”]

Our Intent

- To work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in preschool and reach their full potential from their various starting points.
- To understand and follow children’s interests and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps.
- To create an indoor and outdoor environment which supports learning.
- To prepare children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and ensure children make good progress from their starting points.
- To support school readiness and transition into Key Stage 1

Our Implementation

- We keep parents informed and we meet regularly with parents and carers to ensure children’s transition into school and through the EYFS is happy and allows them to reach their potential with the support needed. This includes Stay and Play sessions, Parents’ Engagement Group meetings, workshops and parents consultations.
- We have a curriculum that is child-centred and that is based upon in the moment planning that enable practitioners to scaffold learning accordingly to keep them engaged whilst meeting their next steps. We encourage active learning to ensure the children are motivated and interested. We take time to get to know children’s interests and their likes to support learning.

All areas of the EYFS curriculum are followed and planned for to ensure there is a broad, balanced and progressive learning environment and curriculum. The children will learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding through the seven areas in the EYFS curriculum.

Pupils learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in ‘exploration’ throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned in a cross-curricular way to enable all aspects of the children’s development including understanding the world and expressive art and design as well as to promote sustained thinking and active learning.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum.

We use the Jolly Phonics Program to introduce Phase one phonics to children to prepare them for Reception Class. We aim to instil a love for books from a very young age and we encourage parents and children to borrow books from preschool on a weekly basis. We also plan monthly visit to the Local Library and invest in new books regularly to keep children’s interests.

Our pre-schoolers are supported to develop key Mathematical skills in all areas where they explore sorting, quantities, shape, number and counting awareness. These early mathematical experiences are carefully designed to help children remember the content they have been taught and to support them with integrating their new knowledge across the breadth of their experiences and into larger concepts.

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together but we have a range of additional intervention and support to enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential or challenging children who are doing very well.

The characteristics of effective learning are viewed as an integral part of all areas of learning and are reflected in our observations of children.

Our regular monitoring of teaching and learning includes coaching, peer observations and feedback to further develop staff practice and interaction.

Impact

- We strive to ensure that our children's progress across the EYFS curriculum is good from their varied starting points.
- Evidence in children's Learning Journeys supports all areas of the EYFS curriculum.
- Practitioners use observations to make formative assessments which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace.
- Termly Cohort assessment compares children's attainment to age related expectations. This is tracked to ensure rates of progress are at least good for all children, including vulnerable groups such as those with SEND or who are disadvantaged.
- Children who have English as an additional Language make noticeable progress and gain better proficiency in their command of the English Language before leaving preschool.

Last Reviewed: April 2022

EAL Policy

Language Learning

At The Northern Lights Preschool we recognise the fact that a child may enter our setting who is already developing one or more languages and is now learning English as an additional language. We always allow these children extra space and time, patience and support. We acknowledge and celebrate the skills they have in their home language for we believe this promotes confidence in their own abilities and raises their self-esteem. We recognise and reassure parents that their children will benefit if they use, maintain and develop their 'home' language and we encourage them to spend time in this interaction with their child.

We invite parents to share their home language and cultural background with staff and other children in the setting through visits and participation in activities. Parents are invited to provide a list of key words and phrases or translations of these, to assist the child's transition into Preschool.

Social Skills

Children who share the same home language are encouraged and enabled to spend time together in the setting to communicate. Staff ensure that they make their teaching as visual as possible through the provision of pictorial and additional resources to assist EAL children and to enable them to fully access the inclusive language environment. Staff ensure that they use gestures, facial expressions and explanatory actions together with the use of objects to explain each part of an activity.

Language Development

We differentiate between those children who speak English as an additional language or those who are bilingual by using the following definitions as provided the Department of Education. **EAL** stands for English as an Additional Language and recognises the fact that many children learning English in schools in this country already know one or more other languages and are adding English to that repertoire. **Bilingual** is used to refer to those children who have access to more than one language at home and at school. It does not necessarily imply full fluency in both or all of their languages.

Should a child start Preschool as either an EAL or bilingual speaker we will add their name to our EAL register.

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