

3- A Parent's Guide to Pre-School

These next few pages are just a few ideas, advice and activities to do with your child and to explain what the foundation stages are for pre-school.

Pre-Schoolers enjoy getting to know the real world; creating imaginary worlds; pretending to be other people; playing with other children; sorting and organising ideas and objects. They learn about how the world works; what people do; what it feels like to be someone else; how to co-operate with others; how to express their ideas and feelings in words pictures and play.

Play activities

Real activities – gardening, cooking, shopping, tidying up and cleaning. Pre-Schoolers gain self-esteem, knowledge and pleasure from doing these activities with adults.

Pretend games – pretend to be someone else, such as mum, doctor or a cat.

Drawing and crafts – making marks in sand / mud, or dough; colouring, sticking, “writing”, modelling, doing puzzles, playing card games. Such activities contain the roots of literacy, mathematics and creative thinking.

Picture books – stories of people, problems and happy endings; nursery rhymes and fun alphabets.

Physical Activities – outdoor play, music and movement, games such as what's the time Mr Wolf and Bear Hunt,

REMEMBER: Pre-Schoolers are thinkers and artists eager to understand the wider world.

A Parents' Guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2017)

This prepares children for the work on the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1, which they will start in their Primary School. The foundation stage is the period of education from 0-5 years, and it is called the Early Years Foundation Stage because it gives children a secure foundation for later learning. Childhood is important in itself and we want the children to have enjoyable childhood experiences. These experiences affect children's attitudes to learning which in turn create the basis for later learning, in school and beyond. We follow the areas of learning within the principles of The Early Years Foundation Stage which include A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Developing.

Within the group, all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. Our key working system enables us to ensure a planned curriculum tailored to the needs of each individual child. By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and a high level of adult input, we offer a curriculum which leads to nationally approved learning outcomes and prepares children to progress with confidence to the National Curriculum at the age of five years.

The Seven areas of Learning and Development

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.

These three areas, the *prime* areas are: Communication and language; Physical development; and Personal social and emotional development.

There are also four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The four specific areas are: Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the world; and Expressive arts and design

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of different situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotions development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, both fictional and non-fictional, poems and other written materials such as magazines and catalogues) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, space and measurements.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about peoples, places, technology and the environment

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

We have an appointed member of staff who is responsible for overseeing the curriculum. The advisor is responsible for fostering awareness of active learning in an enabling environment to an outstanding standard by:

- taking a lead role in teaching by example
- encouraging team members to innovate and respond to the changing interests of the children, thereby making learning meaningful and fun
- supporting the room manager in deploying staff and resources effectively
- introducing new initiatives to enhance children's development and progress
- promoting the effective implementation of the EYFS throughout the play room and environs
- supporting and advising the staff team in implementing the long term plans, the medium term plans and the short term plans by using observation and assessment of children's interests and needs

The Early Learning Goals

These have been developed following consultation with Pre-School providers and others with an interest in the early years. Settings that are registered with the Local Partnership receive funding and, are therefore, subject to inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and will be required to provide a curriculum that takes account of the goals. The Early Learning Goals reflect the Government's intention to continue to expand free nursery provision for all 3 and 4 year olds. The expectation is that most children will achieve these goals by the end of the year in which they are

5. More importantly the document recognises the period from the age 3-5 as a distinct age in children's development and as such, it is important in its own right – a statement that was welcomed by all early years' settings.

The Early Years Goals are not themselves a curriculum. It remains the responsibility of the individual settings to design, plan and put in place a curriculum that will enable children to work towards, achieve, and/or exceed the goals. The policy is a set of principles for early year's education, which includes:

Experiences provided for children should build on what they already know and can do.

"Well planned play" is the key to the way young children learn with enjoyment and challenge.

The curriculum needs to be carefully structured and should include three inter-related strands which are:

1. Provision that takes into account the different starting points of children, activities, the various elements of which match the different levels of children's needs, planned and purposeful activity, which provides opportunities for teaching and learning both in and out of doors.
2. A well planned and organised environment that allows children to explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves.
3. No child should be excluded or disadvantaged because of their race, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

All children should feel secure and valued, Positive relationships with parents will help Pre-School staff work effectively with them and their children.

The policy goes on to explain that the aims set out for children during the foundation stage should support, foster, promote and develop children's personal, social and emotional well-being, positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning, social skills and persistence, language and communication, reading and writing, mathematics, physical development, expressive arts and design and understanding of the world.