



LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for learning and teaching at Hadfield Nursery School. It lays the foundation for the whole curriculum within our school. Through the implementation of this policy we aim to raise standards in teaching and improve children's learning by a consistent approach that has been agreed by all staff.

We see learning and teaching as a process of cooperative team work and welcome and encourage the involvement of parents and others in the community to work with us in the development of our school.

The **EYFS 2012** states that: "Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development".

Aims of the policy

- To define our whole school approach to learning and teaching
- To ensure consistency of approach
- To improve teaching and learning
- To inform school development
- To celebrate success

Aims for the children

- To help our children learn, make connections in their learning, reflect on their learning and develop enquiring minds
- To support our children to develop positive dispositions to learning so they will want to become lifelong learners
- To help our children develop socially, emotionally, physically, learn self-respect and care for each other and the world in which they live
- To make our children's learning as enjoyable and rewarding as possible, founding this learning in their interests and fascinations, in play, first hand experiences and talk
- To encourage our children to show respect for and be aware of their own and one another's learning
- To ensure our children make progress in their learning

Aims for the teaching staff

- To support the teaching staff in their understanding of teaching strategies which best impact on children's learning
- To ensure staff are able to keep abreast of current thinking and development through Continuing Professional Development Programme
- To encourage staff to share ideas and strengths
- To work closely with parents so that each child can develop to their full potential

Strategies for teaching

At Hadfield nursery School we:

- Foster positive and caring relationships with the children and their families
- Create a learning environment that is welcoming, homely, exciting, inviting, varied and safe. Within that environment we will deploy a variety of teaching strategies – supporting, interacting, encouraging, promoting independence, direct teaching, involving, demonstrating, modelling, talking, listening, extending language, questioning and responding to questions.
- Plan a challenging and open-ended environment with resources, experiences and projects that children choose to become involved in
- Plan provocations, experiences and environments which have a variety of open-ended learning opportunities where adults support learning effectively by taking advantage of ‘teachable moments’ through sustained shared thinking.
- Respond to child-led learning, supporting their explorations, problem solving and discussions to scaffold their learning experiences.
- Respond to children’s interests by introducing enhancements to the learning environment and by working on projects led by children’s interests and questions
- Plan activities and experiences that develop children’s skills, knowledge and concepts alongside building positive characteristics of effective learners.*
- Organise the environment, resources and time so that teaching opportunities are maximised
- Plan for two group times each session, where activities are planned across the curriculum
- Have a daily timetable which provides routine structure to the day
- Work in partnership with parents by home visiting, sharing knowledge, consultations, sharing Learning Journeys /electronic profile summaries and involving parents in nursery life and Family Fun curriculum days
- Observe, assess and record so that children’s progress and interests can be monitored and next steps planned
- Use our assessments to inform planning and target children to support them in their progress
- Use self-review, monitoring and observations to identify areas for improvement, training needs and therefore improve teaching

*For a detailed summary of the role of the adult in fostering positive Characteristics of Learning see Appendix 1.

Monitoring of teaching

At Hadfield Nursery School the teaching is continuously monitored through

- Formal/informal observations
- Scrutiny of planning, observations, Learning Journeys and profiles
- Performance management of teachers and Support and Review meetings for teaching assistants

Developing Learning Skills

We believe that children can become confident lifelong learners if equipped with the appropriate skills, attitudes and capacities for learning from an early age. We value the process of learning and understand that young children have the right to communicate and explore their learning in many different ways.

At Hadfield Nursery School we strive to support children to develop specific learning capacities which will enable them to be effective lifelong learners by:

- Enabling children to initiate and carry out their own activities and make independent choices and decisions
- Encouraging children to find, use and replace equipment and resources independently (in an organised, labelled and accessible learning environment).
- Supporting the children in their independent learning and self-initiated play through sensitive and timely scaffolding, using talk and modelling behaviour.
- Encouraging the children to make plans, modify plans, review and reflect on their own learning.
- Encouraging children to learn using all their senses
- Supporting children to learn to focus their attention and become highly involved.
- Allowing sufficient uninterrupted 'explore time' time for children to work on and revisit resources and areas of learning and so make connections from their experiences and consolidate their learning
- Enabling children to feel safe and secure in the nursery environment, so they feel comfortable enough to learn from their mistakes, to learn from exploration and experimentation.
- Enabling children to challenge themselves and learn through problem solving (learning strategies for when they get 'stuck'),
- Enabling children to work together and learn from each other
- Empowering children to manage their feelings, keep themselves safe and resolve conflicts alongside emotionally literate adults.
- Encouraging children to feel proud of their learning and what they achieve
- Supporting children to learn from visits and visitors from outside the nursery environment and make sense of the wider world
- Providing opportunities for the children to share their learning with parents and carers through our Planning Displays and Project Books, Family Fun Days (seasonal, festival and curriculum links), the plasma information screen, consultation sessions, home-school learning bags, reading record sheets, observation notes, verbal feedback and Learning Journeys

Equal opportunities

It is our school policy that all children will be taught and given the opportunity to learn regardless of race, religion, gender, ability or disability.

Appendix 1

Planning for developing Characteristics of Learning: The role of the adult

Playing and Exploring

Develop an *environment* with:

- Stimulating resources which are accessible, open-ended and can be used and combined in a variety of ways and relevant to children's interests
- Flexible space indoors and outdoors, to explore, build, move
- Order and visual calm to aid concentration
- Resources which children can move, change and affect
- Challenges appropriate to the development of our children

The role of the *adult*:

- Ensure children have uninterrupted time to play and explore.
- Model and encourage open-ended exploratory play.
- Watch and consider the intention of a child, deciding whether and when to support them to manage what they are trying to do. This means giving children opportunities to be independent in play, becoming involved for specific reasons (to support, stimulate or extend) when this is of benefit for the child.
- Join in play sensitively, fitting in with the child's existing play theme.
- Act as 'play tutor' for children with little experience of imaginative play.
- Model self-talk, describing your actions and thinking in play.
- Encourage children to try new activities and assess risk for themselves, giving positive messages with words and body language.
- Focus on processes and not outcomes (not the end quality of what was produced, but the challenges faced, the effort, thought and learning involved).
- Encourage a growth mindset, presenting failures as opportunities to learn and talking about how we get better at things through effort and practice.

Active Learning

The role of the adult:

- Observe and reflect on what arouses children's curiosity, looking for signs of deep involvement to identify learning that is intrinsically motivated.
- Provide stimulating and novel resources and experiences related to children's interests to encourage involvement.
- Enable children to exercise choice over their activities, setting their own goals and methods.
- Be aware of how children gradually gather and process information. Refer back to significant projects and activities through pictures, photographs and models.
- Support children to focus their attention, through shared attention or calming an over-stimulated child as needed.
- Help children to become aware of their own goals and to evaluate their own successes through verbalising what you see them trying to do and encouraging them to talk about their processes.
- Recognising children's successes and showing an interest in how children approach what they are doing to provide a constructive reward in itself.

- Be explicit in giving feedback on learning behaviour (e.g. concentrating, trying different approaches, persisting).
- Support and encourage relationships between children, so they teach each other and we become a learning community together.
- Help children identify with the values of our rule system, talking through consequences of behaviour.
- Break down complex skills into sub-goals, where children can enjoy success and build motivation.
- Encourage children to persist with difficulties, trying again in a different way.

Creating and Thinking Critically

The role of the adult:

- Use the language of thinking and learning (*think, know, remember, forget, idea, plan, learn, find out, confused, figure out, trying to do*).
- Model being a thinker, showing you don't always know, are curious and sometimes puzzled, and can think and find out.
- Encourage divergent thinking (*what else is possible?*).
- Value questions, with many possible responses, without rushing towards answers too quickly.
- Support children's interests over time, remind them of previous approaches and encourage them to make connections between their experiences.
- Balance support between structure and freedom, guiding but not over-controlling children's learning.
- When planning projects and provocations, ask yourself: *Whose thinking is represented here? How will children find their own ways to represent and develop their own ideas?*
- Build in opportunities for children to play with materials before undertaking the project.
- Model the creative process, showing your thinking about some of the many possible ways forwards.
- Be a sensitive conversational partner and co-thinker.
- Plan linked experiences and enhancements that follow what children are really thinking about.
- Show and talk about strategies –how to do things – including problem solving, thinking and learning.
- Give feedback and help children to review.
- Encourage children to learn together and from each other.
- Develop a learning community which focuses on **how** and not just what we are learning.