

Parklands Nursery School and Playgroup

Teaching and Learning Policy

'Young children learn best by being actively involved in decision-making, exploring, experimenting and in solving problems that they themselves have identified. They need to work alongside skilled practitioners who have an understanding of child development and who know how to support and extend young children's learning.'

We believe that when children come to the centre, they come with a wealth of experience to draw on, it is therefore the task of the practitioners to build on this past experience, to recognise and value what children already know and can do and to support and extend their learning.

There are three important factors when thinking about teaching and learning:

- **The unique child**
- **The adult/practitioner**
- **The enabling environment**

We believe **children as learners** are:

- Actively doing or playing
- Planning for themselves- setting their own challenges
- Being trusted to learn and to try for themselves
- Excited and are full of enthusiasm
- Taking responsibility for their own actions and choices
- Curious and inquisitive
- Having fun!
- Being able to take the lead in their own play/learning
- Trying and testing their own theories, modifying their ideas, repeating, consolidating and solving their own problems
- Observers and thinkers
- Listened to and feel valued
- Secure and feel confident in their environment with both the adults and other peers

See Appendix 1 'A Parklands Child is.....'

The environment which supports children's learning is vital to their individual development and needs.....

- To be carefully planned by the adults from their observations of the children, listening to the voice of the parent and most importantly the children
- To be open-ended so that children are able to access according to their developmental needs
- Materials and equipment which are easily accessible to all children- taking into account age and ability- need to be mindful
- The main areas to remain constant and accessible every day, so children are able to continue to develop their expertise and can return to a developing idea and they know where to find equipment/materials needed
'Knowing that adults, space and time and materials will be constant, the same today as yesterday, helps young children to assume more responsibility for what they do and to follow their own threads of thinking and doing without unnecessary hindrance or over dependence on adults' Cathy Nutbrown
- To be inviting and follow the children's interests
- To involve the children in setting up and tidying away enabling the children to have ownership in their own learning and development
- To have open spaces so children can access their own equipment/resources to develop their own play ideas
- Different heights and levels to stimulate interest and again accommodate for differing ages/needs
- Opportunities to explore- ensuring children have uninterrupted time to play
- To be a safe and secure environment
- To be a flexible and fun learning space- to explore, build and move
- To be inside and outside all year around
- Have good quality resources- which children can move, change and affect- enabling children to set their own goals and methods

The adult is vital in supporting, scaffolding and extending the children's individual learning and development. The role of the adult is crucial, as is their own attitude to learning and development. **'The teacher (practitioner) is partner, nurturer and guide' Reggio Schools.**

- Trust in the children to succeed - value and respect them as individuals
- Help the children to get to know themselves and recognise their own and others feelings
- Encourage the children to be adventurous, to welcome and involve themselves in new situations
- Value and respect children's choices and decisions and support them in reviewing what they have done and celebrating their success
- To share in the learning and discovery with the children
- Balance between giving children space to try things out/ think things through as well as teaching them skills/knowledge they need- sensitive adult involvement
- Teaching the children the knowledge and skills that they need when they need it
- Time to 'muse' with the children
- Being part of the play and interactions- sharing ideas, knowledge and experiences with the children
- See the learning potential of a given situation - adults to challenge/extend learning by adding ideas, and/or equipment- enable children to make connections between their experiences and learning
- Be responsive and empathetic to individual children's needs
- Give feedback and help children to review
- Recognise those times when adults do not need to be involved
- Develop the use of language ask open ended questions, provide a running commentary whilst at activities, model language and introduce new vocabulary
- Focus on the processes and not the outcomes- not the end quality of what is produced, but the challenges faced, the effort, thought and learning involved and the enjoyment!
- Encourage a growth mindset, presenting mistakes as opportunities to learn and talk about how we get better at things through effort and practice
- Effective communicators about individual children's learning to parents/carers so feel part of their child's learning journey
- To take part in training to further develop their own expertise and knowledge

- To be reflective in their own practice as a means of constantly questioning and addressing change
- To follow the EYFS and use this as our curriculum to support the children's learning
- To observe, plan for children's individual interests and styles of learning, as well as evaluate children's achievements and next steps
- To document evidence on each child as a means of supporting that child in their learning and transition to the next setting

See Appendix 2 Parklands Pedagogical Approach.....

Our overall aim- What we want to achieve and why?

- We want children who are confident, able to persevere, to be creative in their thinking and problem solving, as well as use their own initiative
- Children who can use the materials and equipment provided and who are happy to explore and investigate things for themselves
- Children to be responsible for their own behaviours and interests
- Children who follow through their own ideas, plan and take the lead in their own thinking/ideas
- Children who say 'I can do it!' and have that sense of 'chuffedness' and want to share their achievements with others
- Children who are able to sort out their own disputes
- Children who see the adults who can help, support and enable their learning
- Children who want to understand, find out and want to achieve
- Children who are aware of others and want to help
- Involving both the parents and children in their child's learning journey from start to finish
- All practitioners need to be relaxed, encouraging, flexible and be willing to learn!

Why?

- Children making their own choices and decisions are important life skills
- Children who have respect for themselves, their own ideas and thinking and in turn respect for others identify with the values of the community and as a community learn together

- Children who have a strong sense of self and are clear in their own beliefs are confident to articulate themselves and their own actions and reasons
- Children who are happy and feel secure, therefore have high levels of well-being and involvement are more open and receptive to learning
- Children who are aware of their own goals and evaluate their own successes can be agents of their own development and learning
- Involving both parents and children in the learning journey enables them to see the importance and value of the whole process and to be the main contributors too

'What children learn is important but how children learn is even more important if they are to become learners for life in today's society' - Nancy Stewart 2011

- The 'early years' is a valuable stage in its own right as well as a preparation for the future and as practitioners we need to keep this at the forefront of our minds!

Our overall aim- what do we want to achieve and why?

- We want children that are confident, able to persevere, to be creative thinkers and problem solvers, to use their own initiative, to ask questions, to respect their own and others ideas and feelings
- Children that know they can use the materials and equipment provided and that can experiment and challenge their own ideas and theories
- Children to be responsible for their own behaviours and interests
- Children that follow through their own ideas
- Children that say 'I can do it', want others to share in their achievements and that sense of 'chuffedness'
- Children that are able to sort out their own disputes and can negotiate conflicts independently
- Children that see adults in the nursery as people that can help, support and enable their learning
- Children that want to understand, find out and want to achieve
- Children that want to help others
- Involvement of our parents

- All practitioners to be able to support and develop the children's emerging independence

Why?

- Children making their own choices and decisions are good skills for life
- Having respect for themselves and for others
- Develop respect for their own and each other's feelings, strengths, interests, differences and similarities
- Engender deep level learning and encourage critical thinking