# Care, Learning, Play & EYFS Policy

Here at 1st Steps we believe that ‘Every little step matters!’ Our aim is:

* To encourage children to build on what they can do and provide opportunities to further their development and reach their full potential
* To create a caring and learning community for under-fives and their families
* To involve parents at all stages of their children’s learning and development

Children learn individually and with others through play. Our starting point for your child’s learning is on admission into the setting. All parents are asked to complete the ‘About Me’ section on Tapestry prior to their induction day. We have a full induction with the parent/carer to assess the child’s development inline with the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS). We are initially guided by the parents who tell us what their child does and does not like. It continues with the key-person who then interacts and observes the child closely to gather information as well as interacting with the parents to form the basis of their individual learning journey (see key person policy).

We offer our children a play-based curriculum which meets all the requirements of the EYFS which supports all aspects of their learning and development. It encourages their in-built curiosity and desire to make sense of the world around them and helps them to discover that learning is interesting and fun which is vitally important if children are going to remain keen learners for the rest of their lives. Children are encouraged to be confident and independent, and every effort is made to develop their self-esteem and learning through play from the moment they first come to the nursery.

Our staff are crucial in providing a memorable nursery experience and our aim is to offer them the best training opportunities to support our childcare and education. Staff are focused on providing fun and education, and they will work to ensure your child develops as an individual, whilst helping to nurture and encourage learning through discovery and enjoyment. Delivery of the best childcare and education is made possible by ensuring staff have in-depth knowledge and understanding gained through continual professional development and higher-level qualification training in child development and the EYFS. Staff must have the skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to observe, scaffold and plan for children's learning effectively, identifying and meeting any additional needs.

We expect all our staff to engage in skilful and sensitive interactions to support a child's learning. This ensures that play opportunities, resources and interactions indoors and outdoors are appropriate to the level of competence and maturity of the child.

We believe that children are active learners from birth and that if we provide them with the right environment, support and experiences, it will help to encourage their curiosity, imagination and creativity. We also need to ensure that we stimulate each child emotionally and intellectually by providing the best circumstances to promote active learning. Children must be offered and allowed to engage in exciting and challenging activities, which support and extend their learning and development. They need to be able to choose, create, investigate, explore, initiate and persist with activities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

1st Steps Nursery works within the Statutory Framework for the EYFS. We aim to help young children achieve the five Every Child Matters Outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being by:

* Setting the standards for learning development and care
* Providing for equality of opportunity
* Creating the framework for partnership working
* Improving quality and consistency
* Laying a secure foundation for future learning

We recognise that all children have from birth a need to develop, learning through interaction with people and exploration of the world around them. For some children this development may be a risk because of difficulties with communication and interaction, cognition and learning, behavioural, emotional and social development or sensory and physical development.

The framework focus is the child. It celebrates the skill and competence of babies and young children and highlights the interrelationship between growth, learning and development and the environment in which they are cares for and educated.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Principles: are grouped into four distinct but complimentary themes.

* A unique child
* Positive relationships
* Enabling environments
* Learning and development

Activities and play opportunities are carefully planned to develop children’s imagination and creativity as well as meeting their care, learning and play needs, and developing emotional, physical, social and intellectual abilities. Planning is informed by careful observation and assessment of each child’s progress.

Daily access to outdoor play is provided and where possible children can choose whether to participate in activities indoors or outdoors. There are opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults, and also those they plan or initiate themselves. Children do not make a distinction between play and work and neither do we. Children need time to become engrossed, work in depth, initiate and complete activities.

Well-planned, purposeful experiences, activities, appropriate teaching and intervention by practitioners engage children in their learning process and help them make progress in their learning. We provide a well-planned and organised learning environment which offers children rich and stimulating experiences and opportunities to explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves.

The curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children’s –

* Personal, social and emotional development (prime area)
* Communication and language (prime area)
* Physical development (prime area)
* Understanding of the world (specific area)
* Literacy (specific area)
* Expressive arts and design (specific area)
* Mathematics (specific area)

Updated EYFS: adopted September 2018

Play helps children to make connections in their learning. Staff at 1st Steps Nursery help children to bring together what they know in a connected and holistic way by:

* Observing children at play
* Using their observations to support and extend play by planning and resourcing a challenging environment
* Evaluating the provision
* Creating appropriate stepping stones with particular children in mind to help children to learn through their play and develop towards the Early Learning Goals
* Engaging in the play, and encouraging the development of communication through play
* Knowing when to take a back seat, and let children develop their play without adult intervention.
* Each child’s development through the Early Years Foundation Stage is monitored and evaluated to ensure they are making progress and that any particular difficulties in any area of learning, whatever the cause, are identified and addressed.

The following website can be used to search for further information regarding the EYFS

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

# Long Term Planning

Our long term planning includes the use of continuous provision all year round in the each area in the each room. For example:

* Construction areas
* Small world play
* Sensory areas
* Role play and imaginative opportunities
* Water, sand experiences
* Mark making (the marks that children make through a range of media)

We have designed our nursery environments to be cosy and exciting and they are structured in such a way as to promote a child's independence, decision-making, problem solving and communication. Children are encouraged to both listen and talk in which their verbal contributions to conversation, discussion and storytelling as well as their questions about their world are highly valued. Predictable interests are planned throughout the year as a guide. The 7 areas of learning are prominent throughout, for example visible numbers, words and pictures, cosy spaces, positive language is prevalent along with room layout for space and room for movement. A theme or predictable interest is introduced each half term (Starting: September, November, January, Mid February, April, Mid June). This ensures that all of our children get to experience new concepts and understanding of the world around us, for example cultural differences can be introduced through festivals, etc.

This is not exclusive planning and is subject to change! Children’s interests are recognised and used throughout the year to enhance current themes or create themes based on individual interests. Long term planning is essential to ensure resources, enhancements, knowledge and information can be gathered before the start of any theme to give staff the ability to present an organised and knowledgeable activity.

Medium term planning

This is based on the predictable interests for the year. Each theme includes the 7 areas of learning regardless of subject (these will differ with age). Room leaders gather thoughts and ideas from their team to use in their planning on the medium term planning sheet which is displayed in each room throughout the month. The ideas are then filed with the planning to show which staff have contributed to the planning process. Those who do not record any ideas may need support in this area and receive mentoring. They also tick the relevant areas of learning that can be observed during the activity. Tracking and planning analysis identify areas for further support. The areas can then be planned for each 1/2 term.

Short term planning

This is child and adult led. Child led activities are planned using the children’s individual interests which are recorded on the Children’s interests, experiences and communication developments sheet. The short term planning identifies any interests that have been shared with staff and activities are planned from these. Their next steps are also noted on these sheets and used by room leaders to plan each week. The following examples can be used to collate information which forms the basis of some of the short term planning.

## Children’s Individual Interests, experiences and communications

These can be significant moments that have been observed either at nursery or within the home environment. The Key Person, other team members, parents, grandparents or anyone else in contact with your child can contribute to these observations of play and experiences. These can form the basis of planning for your child’s individual interests. They are recorded in various ways and used for future planning.

The planning may be child or adult led, depending on what the learning outcome should be. Staff have to be creative to plan activities that have a start and end point. What does the child learn from doing that activity? If they don’t achieve the intended learning intention, the activity may need to be repeated or altered to offer more support.

Adult led activities are planned throughout the week from the medium term planning themes. They are also planned from the EYFS using specific developmental matters which the children need support to learn. Planning should challenge children’s thinking and embrace sustained shared thinking whilst extending children’s learning experiences!

Children are assessed regularly in-line with the EYFS. We record observations for all of our children on our electronic learning journal called Tapestry. This allows you to access your children’s learning online at any time. For further information, see Assessment and Moderation Policy.

Reviewed: Alex Walker Jan 19 Next review: Jan 20

Reviewed: Sam Nolan-Booth April 20 Next Review: May 22

**Learning & Development**

**Covid-19 Update 15.05.20**

Where possible the children will use the outdoor spaces as being outdoors has been proven to reduce the risk of cross contamination and the spread of infection. Parents are advised to provide their child with thin layers that can be added or removed throughout the day as required.

The number of toys that the children will have access to will limited and rotated throughout the day in order to keep the risk of infection to a minimum. All toys, furniture and resources and then sanitised after each use and children are supported in washing their hands every 30-40 minutes following the handwashing guidelines.

Whilst no formal planning is in place it is the responsibility of the team to ensure that the children are happy and stimulated by providing a variety of activities and invitations to play and these can be logged on a spider graph. It is vital to ensure the children have plenty of opportunities to build on their PSED having secure relationships with various team members in order to adapt to the ever changing circumstances.

When accessing indoor resources the number of resources available will be reduced and offered on a rota basis. After each use the toys are sanitised and both children and adults will wash their hands.

Sand, water and other non-cleanable resources have been removed from play. This includes but is not limited to gloop, playdough and slime. These will be reintroduced when the company see fit to do so.

Updated by Sam Nolan-Booth 15.05.20