

WHITEHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSERY UNIT

CURRICULUM / PLANNING POLICY

RATIONALE

At Whitehead Nursery Unit our aim is to ensure that all children receive a broad, balanced and flexible programme through a wide range of play experiences, thus promoting learning in the six curricular areas as outlined in *The Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education* (CCEA, 2006).

This will involve a cyclical process of planning, implementation, monitoring/assessment and evaluation, enabling the staff to establish clear goals in relation to what and how the children learn during their time at Nursery.

STAGES IN PLANNING

Long-Term Planning will:

- Provide an overarching framework of the Nursery curriculum;
- Identify the range of learning opportunities available for all children, both continuous and topic-based;
- Outline and show progression in the learning intentions within each curricular area and within each area of play.

Medium-Term Planning will:

- Identify more specific learning opportunities within a shorter time span;
- Focus upon particular aspects of learning that staff and children wish to develop within topics and themes;
- Highlight the strategies that will be employed by staff to support and extend the children's learning;
- Reflect learning styles, interests and needs highlighted by observations of individuals/groups of children.

Short-Term Planning will:

- Be based on Medium Term Planning and outline:
 - ✓ Resources and equipment to be used
 - ✓ Learning intentions and opportunities
 - ✓ Teaching strategies to be employed and the specific roles of staff and other adults working with the children;
 - ✓ Differentiation by outcome and input (level of involvement, specific activities/resources etc)
- Take account of and highlight both information given by parents and that gained from ongoing observations of the children;
- Be flexible, responding and reflecting to children's interests, learning style and requirements as they become evident;

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff

Nursery staff will implement the curriculum and in doing so provide a sound role model for the children by:

- Being sensitive to their feelings and emotional well-being;
- Involving themselves with sensitivity and in a way that stimulate their learning;
- Allowing the children freedom to explore, investigate and experiment, make decisions and express ideas;
- Ensuring the appropriate strategies for promoting learning for individuals and groups are in place.

Children

All children will be encouraged to:

- Explore a wide range of equipment and combine where appropriate;
- Develop the ability to work both independently and collaboratively within various contexts;
- Lengthen concentration, demonstrating purposeful and productive play / work;
- Begin to take increasing responsibility for their learning and develop the ability to reflect on what they have done.

Parents

To encourage reinforcement at home of learning taking place in Nursery, parents will be made aware of overall and specific learning intentions of the curriculum through:

- Curriculum Evenings;
- Information booklets, posters and leaflets displayed in Nursery;
- Short and medium term planning notes displayed in Nursery;
- Monthly newsletters outlining topics being focused upon and suggested activities for their children;
- Participation in the life of Nursery in a variety of ways (see parental involvement policy);
- Discussions at parent-teacher consultations to outline the specific learning intentions for their children;
- Informal chats with parents at arrival and collection times.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

The staff will carry out and record regular observations to determine the progress made by individual children and to highlight particular achievements. These will:

- Ensure children receive the support / extension necessary to achieve their full potential;
- Provide a means of passing on information to parents;
- Enable relevant and detailed information regarding individuals to be relayed to other professionals to whom the children are known or have been referred to;
- Inform subsequent planning (see planning policy).

EVALUATION OF PLANNING

Regular ongoing evaluation of planning, together with written observations on the children will take place to ensure that:

- Children's interests, requirements and abilities are effectively catered for;
- Learning is appropriately supported, challenged, extended and consolidated;
- There is continuity and progression over time, evidenced by development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding;
- Time, the physical learning environment, available resources and staff expertise are most effectively used.

CURRICULAR AREAS

Below are outlined the main learning intentions within each of the 6 curricular areas as laid out in the Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education (2006).

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Children will have opportunities to:

- Explore their surroundings, choosing a wide range of materials and equipment to ensure that a balance is maintained.
- Foster self-confidence, self-esteem and a sense of personal worth.
- Acquire self-help skills through the course of their play.
- Establish good relationships with both peers and adults.
- Engage in sustained and purposeful play as their concentration lengthens.
- Develop skills playing in a variety of situations; independently, in small/large groups and as a whole class, having the opportunity to lead and to follow.
- Be aware of the reasons why rules and routines are in place to aid their development of discipline and self-control.
- Respect and care for classroom equipment, materials and living things.
- Acknowledge and come to terms with fears and anxieties.
- Demonstrate an increased awareness of the feelings and needs of others.
- Experience the therapeutic value of working with natural materials.

Physical Development & Movement

Children will have opportunities to:

- Enjoy the freedom of physical play
- Develop spatial awareness and begin to use space imaginatively.
- Move confidently with increasing co-ordination and control.
- Use a wide range of equipment with increasing competency and safety.
- Develop manipulative skills through practise of small tools and equipment.

Language Development

Children will have opportunities to:

- Use language for an increasing number of purposes including describing, expressing themselves, asking questions and responding to questions.
- Understand and follow one or more instructions.
- Extend their vocabulary through the course of their play.
- Communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings.
- Gain confidence conversing with both peers and adults.
- Develop fluency and clarity of speech.
- Develop an interest in books/stories and acquire predictive and recall abilities.
- Use books as a means of gaining information, for relaxation and enjoyment.
- Be aware of book format i.e. front, back, cover, pages etc. and handle appropriately.
- Understand that print conveys meaning and be aware that it goes from left to right, top to bottom.
- Experiment with a variety of writing tools to encourage pre-writing skills/emergent writing.

The Arts

Children will have opportunities to:

- Explore the properties of natural and manmade materials, experimenting with colour, shape, texture, form and sound.
- Use a variety of tools and media to develop representational skills, displaying increasing detail and form.
- Develop originality and creativity in their thinking.
- Value and talk about their work and that of others both in progress and as a finished product.
- Express ideas and emotions and come to terms with the adult world through engaging in role/imaginative play.
- Respond freely to music through movement and rhyme.
- Develop an awareness of rhythm, pitch and differentiate between sounds.

Early Mathematical Experiences

Children will have opportunities to:

- Begin to understand the concept of size and quantity and use associated language.
- Sort, match, order and sequence during their play.
- Develop a sense of perspective and position.
- Develop an awareness of number through games, stories, songs and rhymes.
- Use mathematical vocabulary to talk about shape in their environment.
- Acquire problem-solving and predictive skills through exploration and investigative activities.
- Develop an awareness of time through daily routines, seasonal events and taking turns.

The World Around Us

Children will have opportunities to:

- Observe, explore, investigate and problem-solve using a range of equipment and materials.

- Talk about their observations and represent them through drawing, collage etc.
- Put things together in various ways to develop skills of cutting, joining, folding and building.
- Identify familiar sights and sounds in the environment.
- Recognise and name parts of the body and face.
- Become familiar with using information technology e.g. CD players, digital cameras, iPads
- Learn the names of play equipment and use appropriately.
- Talk about themselves, their family and events, both past and present.
- Show an interest in their environment and notice changes.
- Develop an awareness of the work of people in and out of their immediate environment.
- Respect and care for living things, handling them sensitively.
- Take increasing responsibility for caring for their environment.
- Become familiar with and use some positional and directional language.

TRAINING (Continuing Professional Development)

- The Nursery teacher will attend school-based curriculum development meetings that are relevant to Nursery.
- The Nursery teacher will participate in the annual PRSD process (linked with whole school development as well as that specifically regarding Nursery).
- Based on yearly action plans, the Nursery staff will identify specific training needs.
- The appropriate member/s of Nursery staff will attend any courses being offered that are relevant to pre-school education.
- On return from INSET days and cluster meetings, all information will be disseminated to Nursery staff and, where appropriate, other staff.
- Based on training received, current policy and practice will be reviewed and changes made and implemented where necessary.

DATE: April 2016

REVIEW DATE: April 2018