Curriculum statement

Intention

The aims of our curriculum are to invite children to join a wide range of experiences, broadening their horizons, and equipping them with the social and life skills for the best start in life and to unfold their potential.

Through our curriculum and pedagogic strategies, our intentions are for our children to leave us confident and independent, inquisitive and resilient, fluent and imaginative.

We take account of the whole child, believing that learning flourishes in a calm, familiar, yet stimulating environment, which recognises each child's sensitivities, desires, and interests. We emphasise strong relationships with children's familiar adults and peers.

Implementation

We acknowledge that children join us with their cups filled with a range of different experiences, and some not filled at all. Learning is co-constructed, based on children's interests and lived experiences. Themes based around the seasons, open up and aim to encompass children's interests, knowledge, and skills. Practitioners blend intentional teaching and provocations (open-ended activities) to foster depth and variety in children's own enquiries and explorations.

We do not subscribe to any particular pedagogy or way of teaching, but draw inspiration from a variety of sources. We acknowledge the role of Development Matters as non-statutory guidance, using the seven areas of learning to tabulate our planning, and the developmental milestones to guide our reviews of children's progress. We follow the four guiding principles of the EYFS Framework: That every child is a unique child and develops at differing rates so cannot be compared, and a child who thrives and develops through positive relationships and enabling environments.

We explore the seven areas of learning, split into three prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social, and emotional development

And four specific areas:

- Numeracy
- Literacy
- Expressive arts and design
- Understanding the world

We believe that children learn in a range of ways, these are encompassed in the characteristics of effective learning:

- Via Playing and exploring
- Through Active learning
- During Creating and thinking critically

A seasonal cycle of learning allows the natural world to be central to the flow and structure of our curriculum. A range of culturally significant festivals and holidays are celebrated, allowing children to explore the communities around them. Themes that focus on the seasons repeated yearly allow for skills and knowledge to be revisited, built upon, and deepened.
There is an acknowledgement that not all areas of life fit into a season and that interests of other topics, will be interwoven and explored as they arise, making them meaningful and worthy in their purpose. All activity and play will be process focused and not product driven.

Impact

We review children's progress, strengths, and needs regularly, maintaining strong communication with parents/carers. We rely on professional judgements and knowledge of children's personal achievements, rather than ticking off best-fit statements. We record children's progress and add to these documents regularly, building up a holistic picture of the child, and their strengths and needs.

The key person is responsible for knowing the child, but all other practitioners can inform their knowledge, progress, and judgements. Assessments and observations are done in a variety of ways, and are based upon child-led activities. We use a template called 'Where am I Now' which is a working document, added to throughout the curriculum theme.

If children need additional support, this is done by the practitioner observing the child and noting strengths and needs, and taking these to their team leader who may suggest strategies. The team leader may suggest the involvement of the SENCo, who will sit with the practitioner and observe the child together. They will then meet to discuss findings and previous observations and inputs, and put together an in-house plan. The next step is to involve the child's parents/carers in an informal meeting where they are able to share experiences, input, and thoughts. These are collated into an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is reviewed every few months with the team, parents/carers, and any therapists or external professionals involved.

The impact of our curriculum is judged throughout the year by reflections, reports and reviews, meetings, and focus groups of staff and leaders. Whilst this document outlines our curriculum as it currently stands, there is no 'right' or permanent version, as we are all learning and developing. We will always follow children's interests and lines of thinking.