

Curriculum Policy for Understanding the World

Aim

To enable the children to develop the skills and understanding they need to make sense of the world.

Objectives

To provide the children with first-hand experiences that encourage observation, exploration, prediction, problem solving, critical thinking, decision making and discussion.

To provide a range of indoor and outdoor activities that stimulate children's curiosity and interest.

To provide opportunities for children to become aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and other people and to understand that all people deserve to be treated with respect.

To provide support in helping children communicate and record their observations and predictions orally and in other ways (e.g. drawings or models).

Operating Policy

The curriculum will be implemented in order that the children have opportunity for practical investigation with a wide range of equipment and tools, in structured free play, individual, group and adult directed situations.

The children will be encouraged to question, hypothesize, predict and observe, and to form opinions based upon their experiences.

Program of Work

The program of work will take the form of a mixture of child initiated and general activities. The children will be able to explore properties of materials and tools in an open-ended manner. Parental and community links will be developed to further support learning.

The program of work will include some or all of the following types of activity:

People and Communities

- Oral history - discussions about the personal experiences of Pre-School staff, parents and grandparents when they were children.
- Story telling based on family history.
- Stories relating to events in the past.
- Discussion and role-play about special events such as weddings, births and festivals.
- Discussions about daily routines.
- 'Guess who is who' game based on pictures of the children as young babies.
- Long term growing projects (e.g. sunflowers from seeds)
- Stories relating to life in other parts of the country and in other parts of the world.
- Discussion and role play about special events in children's lives such as weddings, Births and festivals.
- Making and eating food from different cultures.
- Listening to music from different cultures.
- Looking at books which show different dress, customs, language and beliefs.

The World

- Observation of objects, materials and living things with and without aids such as magnifying glasses, binoculars and microscopes.
- Pictures and collages of natural scenes including animals, plants and trees.
- Observation of animals and plants both inside and outside the nursery.
- Free play with objects and materials that have different purposes and work in different ways (torch, egg whisk, construction toys).
- Individual and group discussions about the weather and changing seasons.
- Keeping daily and weekly weather charts.
- Structured sand play giving the children opportunities to observe and predict outcomes.
- Structured water play giving the children opportunities to observe and predict outcomes.
- Visits to parks, farm parks, zoos.
- Discussion of the children's findings, allowing them to ask questions and speculate on reasons.



- Observation of changes over time (e.g. the seasons).
- Investigation of items from the past and comparison with present day equivalents (e.g. a modern washing machine and Victorian washing machine).
- Discussion about different types of homes.
- Visits to locations within the local environment - e.g. shops, parks, places of

Work.

- Individual and group discussions following visits.
- Provision of play maps and models to enable children to create their own

Environment.

- Recording of visits through drawing, painting and modelling.
- Discussions and stories that involve journeys - home to Pre-School, home to Grandparents' home, home to a holiday destination.

Technology

- Discussion about different technological items e.g. telephones, televisions.
- Role play using technological items e.g. a telephone discussion between a doctor and a patient.
- Use of remote control and programmable toys.
- Observation of and discussion about ICT in the environment (e.g. bar-code scanners in supermarkets, traffic lights, mobile phones).
- Use of computer programs.



Planning, recording and assessment

Planning takes place on a weekly, half-termly or termly basis following children's interests. Activity planning occurs on a daily basis. The planning sheets used by the Pre-School are laid out to identify each of the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This ensures that Understanding the World is considered whenever planning is done.

Staff are able to observe the children and records of such observations can be made on the children's individual play plans.

Samples of the children's work which relate to Understanding the World are kept in the child's individual learning journeys as appropriate.

Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observation, interaction with the child the use of the information on record sheets and discussion during regular staff meetings. The information gathered during the assessment process is then used for future planning of activities for each child.

Information gained through recording and assessment will be shared with parents other staff and outside agencies as appropriate.

Signed.....Owner/Manager

Date..... Review.....