



## CURRICULUM POLICY and GUIDANCE

Policy updated: September 2016

Review date: September 2018

Kingswood Early Years Centre follow the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage', which came into force in September 2012.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

### **The EYFS seeks to provide:**

- **quality and consistency** in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind;
- **a secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

Four guiding principles shape practice at Kingswood. These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences are carefully planned for and enriched in response to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

### **The areas of learning and development**

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development.

Children are also supported in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design.

Educational programmes at Kingswood involve activities and experiences for children, as follows:

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

#### **Planning:**

At Kingswood practitioners will consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development. Staff observe and interact with children with a weekly focus on assessing and developing specific skills. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, practitioners will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners will consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. If this is the case they will link with, and help families to access, relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

For children whose home language is not English, staff will take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Staff will also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin Year 1.

When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, staff will assess children’s skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, staff will explore the child’s skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

At Kingswood each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Staff will strike a balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners will respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

In planning and guiding children’s activities, practitioners will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’;
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Each child is assigned a key person who ensures that learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person will engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child’s development at home. They will also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

### Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children’s progress, and observations that parents and carers share.

Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. Paperwork should be limited to that which is absolutely necessary to promote children’s successful learning and development. Parents and/or carers should be kept up-to-date with their child’s progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

### Change history:

Issue	Date	List of Changes	Approved by	Authorised by
1	Oct 2012			
2	Sep 2014	<b>No changes in this review.</b>	Governing Body	Bernice Jackson
3	Sep 2016	Clarified section in planning and added ‘Staff observe and interact with children with a weekly focus on assessing and developing specific skills’ to	Governing Body	Bernice Jackson

		reflect the objective led planning that we follow.		