



Learning and Development Policy

Reviewed & agreed; Curriculum committee 27th January 2023

Review due; 2026

Rationale (Intent)

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. All Areas of Learning and Development are equally important and interconnected. At Caverstede we do recognise the importance of strong Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) (in particular wellbeing and dispositions) and Communication and Language Development and Physical Development in determining children's future outcomes in learning. Through our enabling environment and with positive relationships each unique child can learn and develop individually. We are committed to a principle of learning through play whereby children and adults engage in exploratory and active learning, where creativity and critical thinking is developed, supported and extended and all areas of learning and development are implemented.

The Prime Areas of Learning and Development are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

The four Specific Areas support and strengthen the Prime Areas.

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

All Areas of Learning and Development are embedded in all Continuous Provision.

Parent Carer Involvement (Implementation)

Parents and carers are a child's first and foremost enduring educators. Young children are eager learners and all adults have an important role in sustaining that eagerness. We hope parents/carers and staff working together will be the most valuable way of encouraging children to develop positively. It is also the main way in which children are helped as they move from the home environment to Caverstede Nursery School. Each child has a key person who ensures along with the class teacher that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.

- Parents are invited to join in with celebrations and parent consultations
- Tapestry, our online Learning Journal, is available for parents to view and contribute to
- Workshops are offered to share our practice, ethos and ideas with parents/carers for example our Great Explorers group
- Parents /carers are always offered the opportunity to share interests and expertise
- Activities for parents/carers to do at home are positively encouraged, we provide leaflets to support particular areas of learning. Tapestry and ParentMail are used to offer activities at home.
- Parents/carers are always offered the opportunity to record their child's response to experiences, through our online learning journal
- Parents/carers are given the opportunity to take part in educational visits

Planning (Implementation)

Planning incorporates a balance between adult and child-initiated activities and experiences taking account of children's interests, experiences and style of learning. Individual and group planning incorporates all Areas of Learning and Development and puts the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage into practice.

Professional Development (Implementation)

- Regular training both locally and nationally is undertaken by the staff members and is disseminated appropriately.

- There is a large resource of reference books and documents available for staff to gain further information and to act as a point of reference.
- Staff contribute to training events for practitioners from other settings and schools.

Evaluation and Assessment (Impact)

Evaluation of this area of provision is through discussion and dialogue at team meetings, teachers' meetings, observations and planning.

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Rationale (Intent)

Children's emotional wellbeing is crucial to their learning and development and outcomes for the future. If staff and parents can support children in developing self esteem, self confidence, social skills and positive dispositions to learning then children can develop as autonomous, confident and social learners. Learning about themselves and other people and the world around them is at the centre of PSED.

Our Aims

- To help children develop the following attitudes and dispositions to learning: curiosity, empathy, perseverance, independence, responsibility, self-control, valuing themselves and others, a sense of security, a sense of enjoyment and fun, a sense of success, trust in others, confidence, positivity
- Seeing differences in people as potentially positive and respecting others,
- Value communication in its many forms, e.g. friendship and support.
- To develop social skills and learn how to understand and manage their behaviour.

Aims into Practice (Implementation)

- Key Person approach – creating secure attachments
- Opportunities to play alone and in groups of different sizes
- Individual planning from children's strengths and interests
- Images and experiences that challenge children's thinking
- Role modelling embracing differences and similarities such as gender, ethnicity, language, religion, culture, SEN and Disabilities
- Continuous provision that supports and enables autonomous learning
- Patterns of the year- planned festivals that are celebrated across the school
- Monitoring levels of wellbeing, involvement and engagement using Leuven scales.

Adult Role

- Staff should interact with children in support of their interests and allow them to learn from their mistakes
- Provide a secure base from which children can explore
- Help children to safely use and care for materials and then trust them to do so independently
- Provide activities that encourage children to ask questions, seek answers, take decisions and solve problems
- Encourage children to explore and talk about new learning, valuing their ideas and ways of doing things
- Listen to parents' views on their child's development and any concerns that they have about their child's progress
- Support children's growing ability to express a wide range of feelings by labelling emotions and modelling noticing how others are feeling
- Give information that helps children to understand why people do things differently from each other and encourage talk about these differences
- Explicitly challenging negative comments and actions towards peers and adults
- Have consistent and appropriate expectations of all children, that take account of their individual development, starting point and cultural background
- Establish routines that are flexible but have predictable sequences and events
- Provide activities that involve turn-taking and sharing
- Share with parents the rationale of boundaries and expectations to achieve a joint approach
- Demonstrate concern and respect for others and living things
- Consider if and when to intervene/offer support
- Encourage children to see adults as a resource and as partners in their learning

- Create a feeling of openness so that children feel able to learn from each other and each other's experiences and interactions
- Ensure support for all children to participate in discussions and to be listened to carefully
- Anticipate the best from each child and be alert to their strengths
- For staff to view themselves as learners with an understanding of the importance of ongoing training and professional development

2. Communication and Language

Rationale (Intent)

The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning. Not being able to communicate, and having a low vocabulary can seriously disadvantage children as they grow older. The ability to communicate gives children the capacity to participate more fully in their society. At Caverstede Nursery School this is achieved by development of close relationships and through experiences which engage all the senses. Caverstede practitioners value and respect the notion that non-verbal messages remain an important form of communication throughout life. Being read to and beginning to read and write must be supported and extended.

Our Aims

- All children will be supported in developing skills and dispositions to enable them to become skilful communicators
- Children will be supported in engaging all the senses whilst developing speaking and listening skills building the foundations for communication and language
- Children will develop confidence and positive dispositions to using communication and language in a range of situations and for a range of purposes
- Children will listen attentively (e.g. to stories, songs and rhymes)
- Children will communicate about their experiences and ideas
- Children will use increasing vocabulary to express thoughts and explore meanings
- Children will take part in role play and make up their own stories
- Children will develop an understanding of spoken and non-verbal communication that enables them to respond to others, give and follow instructions and ask and answer questions

Aims into practice (Implementation)

- Providing communication friendly spaces and a rich language environment with multi-sensory experiences
- Providing time and space for children to play uninterrupted by adults
- Modelling and encouraging talking and listening to each other
- Developing an awareness of different sounds in words, songs, the environment
- Development of the Every Child a Talker (ECAT) programme to identify and target children who are not meeting or making progress in age related expectations
- Monitoring, observing and evaluating children's communication in the environment
- Sharing developments in communication with families
- Supporting and sharing children's home language
- Encourage the participation of all children through expression i.e. pointing, gesturing, vocalisation and language
- Encouraging an interest in rhythm and rhyme through play
- Using signing with children
- Provide time and opportunities to develop spoken language through conversations
- We have continuous, enhanced provision
- We extend children's interests and experiences through planning, parental involvement, and by listening to individual children
- Using a staged approach to finger rhymes as part of ECAT groups.
- Using letters and sounds phase one to support children's speaking and listening
- Using babble bin with children prior to ECAT
- A wealth of real life experiences and activities are provided throughout the year which extend children's vocabulary, this may be through Woodland sessions, visitors to the nursery and experiences out of the nursery, for example Bertie the dog, chicks, caterpillars, Peter Burrow from Peterborough United.

Adult Role

- To encourage children to use language, to predict and to imagine by modelling, demonstrating and engaging in verbal and non verbal conversations with children
- To use songs and singing within everyday practice, encouraging children to participate in rhyming and rhythmic experiences
- To recognise the importance of the child's name in developing the communication process
- Modelling and sharing an enjoyment of stories and storytelling
- Providing commentaries on what you and the children are doing-more statements than questions
- Value and notice children's contributions and attempts at communications
- Accept and value the language and communication systems of each child
- To create situations and provide equipment that encourage communication and imaginative text
- To introduce a variety of language structures including story, rhyme, non-fiction and poetry
- To create situations where children follow instructions
- To share books with children and read to them on a regular basis, encouraging children to participate according to their language and sensory skills
- Demonstrate reading and storytelling to children and encourage them to take part
- To model and demonstrate listening and distinguishing different sounds in words, songs and the environment
- To identify children's stages of communication development and target appropriate support where children are not making or exceeding age-related expectations
- To plan and lead focus groups for ECAT
- Staff follow child's interest and learning styles and develop learning opportunities in these situations
- Staff observe all children on a regular basis to extend their Communication Language and Literacy development
- Involve close teamwork between all appropriate professionals, workers, speech and language therapists and practitioners
- Staff support children's early phonological awareness through, games, activities, singing, rhymes and stories.
- Staff to model oral and aural blending and segmenting.

3. Physical Development

Rationale (Intent)

At Caverstede Nursery School, our aim is to encourage children's physical development as they grow in body awareness, and explore the range of movement experiences within a safe environment.

Our Aims

- To help children explore and enjoy the freedom of movement both indoors and outdoors
- To encourage children to be active and interactive
- To support children in using their senses to learn about themselves
- To help children develop increasing control over their bodies
- To help children practice and consolidate new skills
- Provide opportunities for children to practice and refine developmental movement patterns
- To help children become aware of sensation in different parts of their body
- To help children develop confidence and self esteem
- To help children develop a sound central nervous system, raising awareness of sensory stimulation
- To help children recognise the importance of keeping healthy through good eating, sleeping and hygiene routines
- To help children increase their vocabulary, practice and develop understanding of new words
- To help children develop a sense of space indoors and outdoors
- To help children express feelings through movement, and experience different emotions
- To help children to develop independence in their self-help skills
- To listen to and work closely with parent/carer in raising awareness of child's physical needs and interests
- To help children by providing opportunities for children to develop fine motor skills

Aims into practice (Implementation)

- Through the provision of an exciting, stimulating, challenging and imaginative outdoor and indoor learning environment; the children are presented with a wealth of opportunities to learn, rehearse and extend their

physical skills. Playing in our free-flow environment supports physical development, gross and fine motor skills, coordination and confidence.

- Where possible we work closely with outside professionals e.g. Speech and Language Therapists (SALT), Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists (OT) to support the children with physical disabilities.
- During Woodland sessions children will have opportunities to use real tools, such as spades for digging, brushes for brushing leaves and hammers for hammering wood or pumpkins. Practice safety during activities such as cooking damper bread over the fire, using hand drills to make holes in wood. Den build on large and small scales.
- Through activities and experiences such as the Water feature, Woodland sessions, puddle play, messy play, children will gain experience of dressing and undressing themselves for a purpose. This will include wetsuits, wellies, swimwear and coats.

Our well-planned environment provides for most children's sensory needs. Where we observe children are not processing and organising sensory information effectively and demonstrate behaviours that seek sensory impact elsewhere we talk to parents and plan strategies to help their child's sensory system to develop. If we felt more specialist input was required we would refer to O.T.

Adult role

The adult's role is to:

- Identify interests in children's movements and encourage the dynamic aspect
- Listen to parents/carers views on their child's development and interests to inform a shared understanding of the child's learning
- Ensure observations inform planning allowing practitioners to match the challenge – finding challenges children can manage and which develop their style of learning/interest
- Allow children free exploration and enjoyment of movement
- Allow freedom of space and movement both indoors and outdoors
- Observe children's movements, healthy practices and fine motor skills
- Provide opportunities for children to revisit and practice developmentally appropriate movement patterns
- Provide opportunities to consolidate new skills and to use their new movement knowledge in a variety of situations
- Build children's confidence to take risks within a safe environment
- Motivate children to be active
- Value children's spontaneous movements
- Allow children time to support and develop their understanding
- Promote healthy active lifestyles and choices
- Introduce vocabulary alongside their actions
- Identify and support progression in all aspects of physical development
- Talk with children about body parts and bodily activity- teaching the vocabulary of body parts, positions and movements
- Support parents routines with their children's toileting and developing self care
- Talk about different spaces within their environment, so they are able to match spaces with actions
- Mirror children's movements, vocalise actions and participate with enthusiasm
- Demonstrate new skills and use of equipment
- Consider if and when to intervene/offer support

4. Literacy

Rationale (Intent)

Literacy has its roots in Communication and Language but is developed through all Areas of Learning. High wellbeing and opportunities for movement, music and imaginative play and creative mark making are prerequisites to developing early literacy and phonological awareness. Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Our aims

- Children will readily turn to mark making as a form of expression and communication
- Children will use and enjoy books, know that pictures and words have meaning and that pages turn, text reads from left to right and top to bottom
- Children will associate sounds with patterns in rhymes, with syllables and with words and letters

- Children will use their confidence in communication to extend their reading and writing skills
- Children will use literacy as a continuation of relating to each other
- Children will respond to and recognise their names verbally and in written form
- Children will become aware of letters of the alphabet relevant to their stage of development by shape and/or sound
- Children will become aware of upper- and lower-case letters
- Children will use pictures, symbols, familiar words and letters in their writing to communicate meaning

Aims into practice (implementation)

- Speaking and listening will underpin all aspects of play and learning
- Children have free access and planned opportunities for movement activities and experiences
- Children have access to high quality, readily available picture books
- Children will have access to high quality, readily available mark making materials
- We use Letters and Sounds, Phase One, to embed phonological awareness
- ECAT groups
- Children have opportunities to participate in spontaneous and planned musical activities and experiences
- Create an environment where books and reading are enjoyed and valued and positively reflect a diverse range of languages and cultures
- Give children a wide experience of many types of books and opportunities to browse and talk about books
- Encourage children to recognise the use of print and symbols by adult demonstration in the environment
- Encourage children to explore and experiment with mark making. Using and modelling a common letter formation when children are ready to begin to form letters (Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics Primary National Strategy– Appendix 2 – Letter formation)
- Referring to letter names and letter sounds
- Children have opportunities to participate in spontaneous and planned listening activities within the all the nursery gardens as well as the classrooms.

Adult role

- To embrace opportunities to play with words using rhythm, rhyme and alliteration
- To ensure speaking and listening opportunities are maximised so that children's vocabulary and understanding enriches their play and vice versa
- To teach children as appropriate to their development, the correct sounds (phonemes) and names (graphemes) for letters of the alphabet.
- Make the forms and purposes of writing explicit. Provide situations where writing is meaningful and appropriate
- Encourage children to participate in mark making and writing in a variety of contexts
- To model the correct formation of letters in their own writing/scribing
- To teach children as appropriate to their development, the correct formation of letters
- Act as a scribe so that the child's own ideas can be written down and read by others
- To value and support children's attempts at communicating through print
- To provide a reading rich environment with time opportunities and resources that promote a love of reading
- To use and develop story props and sacks
- To provide dual language texts and books in children's home languages where possible
- To introduce and discuss media, including television, computer, film footage and photograph
- To support children who don't have as many opportunities at home to engage in speaking and listening, reading and writing with an adult
- To support and challenge children who show areas of strength in reading and writing
- To work with parents to support their children's speaking and listening, reading and writing at home

5. Mathematics

Rationale (Intent)

Children's mathematical development arises out of daily experiences in a rich and interesting environment. Children should be supported in their enjoyment and exploration of problem solving and mathematical development. They should be enabled to learn, revisit and reflect on their skills and understanding within numeracy and problem solving.

Our Aims

- To provide children with opportunities to learn, discover, think, practise, problem solve, challenge, count, share and to enjoy all mathematical learning indoors and outdoors
- To help children practice and consolidate new skills in counting, cardinality, space, shape, measures and pattern
- Children increase their mathematical vocabulary
- Children will become confident with number to five
- To encourage problem solving in young children at every opportunity, outside and inside, at school, at home and in between!

Aims into practice (Implementation)

- It is important that children have a variety of opportunities to talk about their mathematical experiences and to relate situations in all play activities to their developing understanding of number and mathematical concepts. Talking, observing, manipulating, counting and exploring all materials and play opportunities is important, as is the provision of specific and carefully selected resources and activities
- Children will have experience of counting, cardinality, space, shape, measures and pattern
- Children will use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems

Adult role

- Adults provide a range of mathematical opportunities and encourage children to explore real life problems, to make patterns and to count and match together.
- Adults ensure the environment provides a wealth of mathematical opportunities e.g. stories, songs, games, the natural environment, daily routines
- Adults participate in children's play to encourage, support and develop their use of mathematical language, ideas and concepts
- Model mathematical vocabulary in conversations so that children have an opportunity to hear mathematical words in context
- Through observation adults will identify mathematical learning in children's spontaneous play
- Value children's graphic and practical exploration of Mathematics

6. Understanding the World

Rationale (Intent)

Our children live in a complex, interesting world and we need to provide opportunity to help them make sense of their environment and the world around them. We must provide them with skills, knowledge and understanding to do this.

Our aims

- Children will have opportunities to investigate and explore, be curious, experiment, solve problems, pose questions, find things out, adopt appropriate language.
- Children will observe and identify features in their local environment and the natural world.
- Children will learn to use tools and equipment correctly and safely. They will extend and develop their interests and skills in designing and constructing.
- Children will find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use communication technology to support their learning.
- Children will develop an interest in the past and the present, in their own families and the wider community.
- Children will develop an awareness of the diversity of their world including a range of festivals, cultures, faiths and interests.

Aims into practice (Implementation)

- Opportunities for children to experience awe and wonder.
- To use the potential of daily events i.e. weather, visits, child's interest/objects
- To introduce children to a broader vocabulary and descriptive language.
- To extend children's knowledge and understanding of a range of interests and experiences through educational visits / visitors
- To extend and enhance the provision in the Nursery e.g. as benefits the seasons
- A range of experiences are on offer such as cooking, woodwork, clay and sewing
- Offer children opportunities to use a range of tools safely e.g. woodwork, gardening
- Provide opportunities for children to encounter creatures e.g. natural habitats within the garden, bird watching, visiting pets

- Provide opportunities for children to encounter different people - visits from parents, sharing of skills, expertise, cultures, food, visitors from the community, photos and artefacts from familiar peoples' lives
- Provide opportunities for children to encounter plants, e.g. gardening, natural environments in the park, vegetable patches, observational drawing of flowers
- Provide opportunities for children to explore objects from real life experiences e.g. real tools, vehicles, machines, observing maintenance work, observing delivery vehicles
- Within Woodland sessions children will take part in events such as International Mud Day, Bird Watching week.
- Woodland sessions provide further opportunities for bug hunting, planting, growing, learning about the seasons and weather.

Adult role

- Adults observe children at play, analyse their learning, interests and develop their knowledge and understanding of each individual child
- Plan, deliver and participate in woodland days that ignite children's interest in the natural environment
- Adults provide a range of exciting and interesting opportunities for children to explore and investigate every day
- Adults inspire and provide challenge
- Adults 'seize the moment' and respond to a child's spontaneity
- Adults follow children's interests and learning styles, and develop learning opportunities in these situations
- Adults will enhance children's learning by providing artefacts, experiences
- Adults will have an awareness and recognition of different cultures in our society

7. Expressive Arts and Design

Rationale: (Intent)

Creative learning should be inspired and inspiring, challenging and fun, unique to the individual. In accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage, and following learning through play ethos using continuous provision, all children are entitled to:

- A stimulating environment in which creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued
- Sufficient time to explore, develop, revisit and finish working at their ideas
- Opportunities to work alongside artists and other creative adults
- Experiences that enable them to express their ideas through a wide range of types of media
- Acknowledgement and celebration of their diverse and specific needs, interests and cultural beliefs

Our Aims

- We value and appreciate young children's creativity e.g. painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, dance, music, imaginative play etc. at every stage of development
- We support children's developing confidence in responding to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel
- We plan learning experiences that develop creativity and support children's learning styles and interests and where appropriate teach the skills required for certain techniques and materials
- We enable children to use gestures and words to communicate their ideas about their own creations and the creations of others
- We promote aesthetic awareness and an appreciation of things of beauty
- We provide a variety of media, tools and materials for children to explore, experiment with and enjoy

Aims into practice (Implementation)

Practitioners are aware that Expressive Arts and Design is cross curricular and that creative thought is embedded in all areas of the curriculum.

- We give the children opportunities to develop their own ideas by giving them ownership of their "timetable"
- We interact sensitively and support children to make decisions, take risks and play with ideas
- We value and display the child's voice by recording it through their online learning journal and classroom displays. We have continuous and enhanced provision
- We provide a range of experiences to extend children's creativity through for example painting, drawing, block play, music, mathematical experiences, woodwork, clay, cookery
- We provide and display good quality resources and artefacts from a variety of cultures which stimulate new ideas
- We encourage visits and visitors

- We provide open ended opportunities and materials for children to choose their own way of creating and producing things. We value the process of creating rather than the end product. We limit the use of templates, stencils or work with predetermined end products in any media as this devalues the child's own ideas and unique attempts
- We teach children the skills using particular tools and materials e.g. watercolours, hammers, sewing, percussion instruments

Adult Role

- Staff value children's own ideas by not imposing pre-determined end products
- Staff model and pass on skills, but children are encouraged to make things their own
- Staff enable children to communicate their ideas through works and gestures, and where appropriate introduce and model vocabulary to express this
- Staff participate in children's play to encourage them to develop confidence in their creativity and imagination and work in new ways
- Staff enhance children's creative experiences by providing stimulus resources, artefacts, visits and visitors