



## Westfield Nursery School Curriculum (Teaching and Learning) Policy

### Vision

At Westfield Nursery we aim to deliver against our vision 'Inspired beginnings, outstanding futures'.

See 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five' DfE September 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

### Philosophy

We believe in active learning, autonomy, individualism, creativity, problem-solving, self-motivation and a balance between child initiated and adult initiated activities. We recognise well-being and involvement, as indicators of deep level learning.

### Intent

Building on prior learning, our sequenced curriculum is designed for all children's well-being, confidence and voice; developing their knowledge, skills, behaviours and abilities through play to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence.

We aim to:

- Use parents'/carers' knowledge of their child, enabling us to work in partnership to support their children's learning
- Meet children's needs
- Promote the intellectual, social, emotional, communicative, physical and personal development of all children in our bespoke curriculum
- Provide an effective, exciting, stimulating and nurturing learning environment
- Ensure a balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated learning and a flexibility of approach
- Ensure coverage of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum
- Provide a framework for planning to ensure a similar approach across the classes
- Use effective assessment procedures
- Have high expectations
- Use staff expertise, the learning environment and material resources effectively
- Support smooth transitions

We believe children learn best when they:

- are happy
- are interested and motivated
- achieve success
- engage in tasks which are neither too easy or too difficult, and which are challenging and stimulating
- feel secure and are aware of expectations
- follow their own interests and express their own creativity and ideas

### Implementation

There are seven areas of learning and development which are interconnected. Three areas (the primary areas) are crucial to develop lifelong learning and to help children form relationships

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) – children develop confidence and self-esteem, learn how to manage feelings and respect others
- Communication and Language (C&L) – children have opportunities to listen and speak in a range of situations and experience a rich language environment
- Physical Development (PD) – children have opportunities to be active and develop both gross motor and fine motor skills

The primary areas are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy (Lit) – involves children learning how begin to read and write
- Mathematics (MD) – children have opportunities to develop counting and calculation skills, to use numbers in everyday activities and recognise and describe shapes and measures
- Understanding of the World (UTW) – children have opportunities to find out about people and communities, the environment, places and times
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD) – involves exploring feelings and ideas through art and design, music, dance and being imaginative

### **Our Nursery Curriculum**

Our Nursery curriculum was developed with the parents/ carers, staff, governors and external advisors. It is based on elements of non-statutory guidance and the needs of our children.

We base learning around vocabulary themes. Sequenced plans are followed to support acquisition of **knowledge and skills** so the children can...

1. Communicate with adults and children (C&L)
2. Communicate their feelings, wants and needs (PSED)
3. Look after my health, safety and self-care needs (PD)
4. Develop a friendship (PSED)
5. Move with confidence in a range of ways (PD- gross motor)
6. Use simple tools (PD- fine motor)
7. Listen to and tell a story (Lit)
8. Use mark making tools (Lit)
9. Understand and use numbers (MD)
10. Recognise and use numerical patterns (MD)
11. Show care for communities, the environment and living things (UTW)
12. Create a piece of art/model (EAD)
13. Perform a dance/song or rhyme and use my imagination (EAD)

The timetable is structured to include:

- Message board
- Child initiated play inside
- Child initiated play outside
- Adult led snack time
- Adult led large group time

Each classroom is organised to include:

- Reading area
- Role play area
- Mark making area
- Maths area
- Creative area
- Construction/ small world area
- Sensory/ malleable area

In each of these areas are elements of continuous provision (available for children to use every day)

Practitioners: Skilled and knowledgeable Early Years practitioners role model and demonstrate, plan and assess learning and target individual needs.

At Westfield Nursery School we are committed to underpinning our provision with the four themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### **A Unique Child**

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates and this is reflected in our provision. Children will play and explore and 'have a go' at using all available resources, developing their experiences. Children will develop resilience and enjoy achievements through active learning. Children will make links; explore their ideas and strategies for problem solving through creating and thinking critically.

Practitioners support the children in developing all these characteristics through playing alongside children and, where necessary, scaffolding and supporting their thoughts.

Children are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. We welcome all children and families into our setting so that they feel included, safe and valued.

It is important to us that all children at Westfield Nursery School are 'safe'. We aim to teach children about boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they are important. We provide children with choices to help them to develop these important life skills. Children are allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid things that are dangerous, both within school and in the wider environment. We encourage a healthy lifestyle (mental health, exercise and healthy eating). We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See our Safeguarding Policy)

Children are encouraged to develop organisational skills, independence, confidence, co-operation skills, take responsibilities and have high expectations.

### **Positive Relationships**

We promote positive relationships between staff, parents/carers, children and other members of the school (e.g. governors) and wider community. Children are taught how to deal with difficult situations and relationships through PSED as well as through their daily interactions with adults and other children.

We recognise that parents are the child's first educators and their importance for the child's welfare and education is paramount (See Parent/ Carer Liaison Policy).

All children are greeted as they come into the nursery and have a familiar routine. Staff will work with each child on a one-to-one basis, in a small group or as part of a larger group. They can build up confidence, rapport and respect with each child so that the children feel safe, happy and enjoy their time here.

### **Environment**

We recognise the importance of a rich learning environment both inside and outside. Learning takes place in an environment which is challenging and stimulating, peaceful and calm, happy and caring, organised, well resourced, accessible for all, encouraging and appreciative, welcoming and which provides equal opportunities.

The environment is set up in learning areas, where children can find and locate equipment and resources independently. There is an amazing outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their

senses and be physically active and exuberant. As far as possible we offer the same opportunities and areas of learning in all our environments.

The learning environment is organised to ensure that children can:

-Work individually, in groups and as a class. They make decisions, work co-operatively, solve problems, are creative, discuss their ideas, develop social skills and independence, use initiative, receive support and achieve.

### **Enrichment**

Across a year we have a range of visitors and experiences to enrich children's experience and support the building of cultural capital.

### **Planning**

Using our curriculum staff plan learning around themes which focus on key vocabulary. Adult led learning at message board teaches days of the week, the weather, number and shape and phonics. Large group times are mainly used for stories.

### **Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation**

Two-year checks are completed for those children starting in our two-year-old class.

Two weeks after settling in week a baseline is completed. Assessments are then completed at the end of each term so the school can monitor progress and target next steps. These include progress against the curriculum as well as well-being and involvement scores.

A learning journey is kept for each child with a range of photographs and pictures to show their learning during their time here.

The school has a program to monitor and evaluate the work of the school through regular scrutiny of policy, planning, assessment, observations and feedback from staff, parents and carers.

The judgements staff make are moderated with outside agencies to support validation of these assessments.

### **Resources**

Westfield Nursery School is well resourced. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure resources are well maintained and presented with care. Children are encouraged to treat their environment with respect in accordance with the agreed behavioural expectations, and it is expected that they will be taught how to use resources appropriately. One of the key messages is 'choose it, use it and put it away'. 'Tidy up time' is an important part of the daily routine and is regarded as such.

### **Working with Parents/ Carers**

We recognise parents/ carers as children's first educators and use our 'All About Me' to find out from them as much as possible about their child so we smoothly transition children into Nursery. We want to know more about learning at home and do this through our passports, our 'My home learning' sheets and consultations as well as daily communications.

Home learning challenges are set half termly and parents are kept informed through the newsletter. We encourage the borrowing of library books as often as families wish. There are a number of booklets available to parents about learning at home.

### **Continuous Professional Development**

It is the responsibility of all staff to contribute to the school development plan and to play an active part in discussion, implementation and review of agreed strategies. It is the expectation that all staff will strive to improve their own practice through reflection, learning on courses and a rigorous and meaningful performance management process. Training is facilitated through weekly school-

based staff meetings and five staff training days. Additional external training is attended where it is identified as necessary. Training links to our school development priorities and individual development needs.

**Impact** (Based on exit data and questionnaires from June 2022)

The impact of this policy is evaluated through routine monitoring activities including observations, governor monitoring visits, data analysis and annual questionnaires. Current analysis shows:

- Children make better than expected progress from initial baselines.
- Children report they like nursery and feel safe.
- Parents/ carers report their children are happy, feel safe and make good progress.

**Conclusion**

The implementation of this policy will support children's learning and a positive start on their education journey.

Reviewed February 2023



## Westfield Nursery School Well-being and Involvement Scales

	Involvement Scale	Well-Being Scale
1 Extremely Low	<p>The child hardly shows any activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No concentration, staring, daydreaming</li> <li>• An absent, passive attitude</li> <li>• No goal-orientated activity</li> <li>• No signs of exploration and interest</li> <li>• Not taking anything in, no mental activity</li> </ul>	<p>The child clearly shows signals of discomfort:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whines, sobs, cries, screams</li> <li>• Looks dejected, sad or frightened, is in panic</li> <li>• Is angry or furious</li> <li>• Wiggles, throws objects, hurts others</li> <li>• Sucks their thumb, rubs their eyes</li> <li>• Doesn't respond to the environment, avoids contact, withdraws</li> <li>• Hurts him/herself, bangs their head, throws themselves on the floor</li> </ul>
2 Low	<p>The child shows some degree of activity but which is often interrupted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited concentration, looks away during the activity, fiddles, dreams</li> <li>• Is easily extracted</li> <li>• Action only leads to limited results</li> </ul>	<p>The posture, facial expression and actions indicate that the child does not feel ease. However, the signals are less explicit than under level 1 or the sense of discomfort is not expressed the whole time</p>
3 Moderate	<p>The child is busy the whole time, but without real concentration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine actions, attention is superficial</li> <li>• Is not absorbed in the activity, activities are short lived</li> <li>• Limited motivation, no real dedication, does not feel challenged</li> <li>• The child does not gain deep-level experiences</li> <li>• Does not use his/her capabilities to full extent</li> <li>• The activity does not address the child's imagination</li> </ul>	<p>The child has a neutral posture. Facial expression and posture show little or no emotion. There are no signals indicating sadness or pleasure, comfort or discomfort.</p>
4 High	<p>There are clear signs of involvement, but these are not always present to their full extent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child is engaged in the activity without interruption</li> <li>• Most of the time there is real concentration, but during brief moments the attention is more superficial</li> <li>• The child feels challenged, there is a certain degree of motivation</li> <li>• The child's capabilities and their imagination to a certain extent are addressed in the activity</li> </ul>	<p>The child shows obvious signs of satisfaction (as listed under level 5). However these signals are not constantly present with the same intensity.</p>
5 Extremely High	<p>During the episode of observation the child is continuously engaged in the activity and completely absorbed in it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is absolutely focussed</li> <li>• Is highly motivated, feels strongly appealed by the activity, perseveres</li> <li>• Even strong stimuli cannot distract him/her</li> <li>• Is alert, has attention for details, shows precision</li> <li>• Their mental activity and experience are intense</li> <li>• The child constantly addresses all their capabilities; imagination and mental capacity are in top gear</li> <li>• Obviously enjoys being engrossed in the activity</li> </ul>	<p>During the observed episode, the child enjoys, in fact they feel great:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They look happy and cheerful, smiles, beams, cries out of fun</li> <li>• Is spontaneous, expressive and is really him/herself</li> <li>• Talk to themselves, plays with sounds, hums, sings</li> <li>• Is relaxed, does not show any signs of stress or tension</li> <li>• Is lively, full of energy, radiates</li> <li>• Expresses self-confidence and self-assurance</li> </ul>