

Current Policy Date: 27 November 2017

Review: Every 3 years

Date of Next Review: September 2020



LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Play is vital to children's learning. It is their work, a serious pursuit through which they make sense of the world.

"Learning at this stage may improve later performance, but, first and foremost, learning enables children to achieve their present potential and enriches and fulfils their present life."

Moss and Penn 1996

"What the child can do in co-operation today, he can do alone tomorrow."

Zone proximal development

'The challenge for practitioners is to ensure that children's learning and development occur as an outcome of their individual interests and abilities and that planning for learning and development takes account of these.'

The Early Years Foundation Stage

"Teaching means systematically helping children to learn so that they make connections in their learning, are actively led forward, and can reflect on their learning"

The Early Years Foundation Stage

General Principles

Our general principles are to:

- provide opportunities for children to engage in practical activities which are interesting, enjoyable, challenging and based on first-hand experiences, remembering that young children learn more effectively by doing
- ensure activities are well planned to take account of the child's prior learning and to provide opportunities for practice, consolidation or extension of skills, knowledge and understanding
- maintain a general ethos that encourages children to explore, experiment, question, take risks, make and learn from mistakes and engage in purposeful play.

Aims

Our aims are to:

- provide children with a planned curriculum that fosters learning and is challenging and progressive, recognising what children already know and can do
- provide opportunities for children to make choices and become independent in their learning in a variety of stimulating and safe environments. This should occur through play and in other ways. Children will be given extended periods of time to be engrossed, work in depth and complete activities
- develop each child's knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning
- foster positive attitudes to learning: trust, confidence, curiosity, responsibility and independence
- establish and maintain good relationships with parents and carers.

The Curriculum

The curriculum received by children will:

- be broad and balanced and promote their social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual development
- be provided in relation to the early years foundation stage
- reflect fundamental British values
- be cross-curricular, recognising that children learn in a holistic way
- be differentiated by using open-ended activities.
- give opportunity for learning both in and out of doors
- be informed by observations
- provide the basis for continuity of experience by establishing links with the national curriculum
- provide a balance between adult-initiated and child-initiated learning.

Learning

Learning will include:

- child-initiated activities that promote learning and enable children to learn from each other
- opportunities to develop their personal, social and emotional skills by encouraging them to develop stable relationships with both children and adults and to show consideration for others.

Children will be provided with:

- opportunities to learn to build up concepts and ideas through movement and all their senses.
- time to explore ideas and interest in depth
- a secure environment which helps them become confident learners
- a wide range of opportunities, accepting that they learn in different ways and at different rates
- the time and space to make links in their learning
- opportunities for creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development and use of language
- opportunities to take responsibility for their own actions
- a structure within which they are given a measure of freedom to develop their own ideas and to encounter and solve problems independently.

Teaching

We recognise that all interactions that adults have with children are teaching opportunities. At Victoria Park Nursery School staff will:

- use a variety of teaching methods and styles
- engage in play experiences with a view to stimulating, supporting, and extending interest
- act as positive role models
- demonstrate skill or impart knowledge
- promote the development of the Characteristics of Effective Learning

or any combination of the above.

The needs of the child will be borne in mind when determining the approach and we will recognise the moment when the child wants to or needs to have their learning supported.

Staff will:

- support learning by sensitive and timely intervention to reinforce or extend children's responses
- promote children's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable
- model a range of positive behaviours
- use language to teach new vocabulary and develop linguistic structures
- use appropriate language, conversation and carefully-framed questions, open-ended questions and comment to encourage and extend language
- value children's contributions, encouraging children to teach each other
- help children experience success and satisfaction in their learning
- interact with children in a way that supports and positively affects the attitudes to learning that the child develops
- plan the indoor and outdoor environment carefully
- assess and monitor children's learning and use these observations in the planning of the curriculum
- work in partnership with parents
- enthuse children through the environment we plan, through our responses and support of children as teachers.

Organisation

Children will work towards and achieve these aims through:

- direct teaching
- a variety of groupings including whole school/large group/small group/1:1
- a variety of teaching methods and styles
- equipment, range of activities and media within the environment
- visits, visitors, guests and social celebrations
- a balance between child-initiated, adult-supported, adult-initiated activities
- free flow between indoors and outdoors.

Environment

The planned environment will provide opportunities for:

- practising and refining skills
- acquiring knowledge, developing concepts and consolidation
- developing positive attitudes to learning
- experimenting and investigating, pursuing personal interests, allowing children's learning to be scaffolded and supported through different types of learning opportunities and experiences
- children to have areas where they can be quiet, comfortable, relaxed, lively, and focussed
- children to have access to a range of materials, equipment and resources
- working at a variety of different surfaces, textures, levels
- provision for the whole curriculum, indoors and outdoors
- display – interactive, acknowledging children's work.

Resources

Resources will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are:

- adequate to match the needs of the children
- in a safe and clean condition for use
- appropriate to all areas of learning

High Achieving Children

Children who attend Victoria Park Nursery School & Family Hub come with a varying range of skills and experiences. Children have the right to access high-quality educational experiences and to participate in a broad and balanced curriculum which challenges, motivates and rewards them. At Victoria Park Nursery School, we have developed inclusive practice which will benefit **ALL** children and we:

- support all children to develop their full potential
- respect children, their ideas and thinking
- meet the needs of all children appropriately
- value the children's special talents, skills and interests.

The terminology that we will use to define higher achieving children will be: – high achievers. These are the children who achieve a level significantly in advance of their age related expectation – and will be expected to achieve beyond the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Our identification strategy will draw upon a wide range of evidence including our understanding of appropriate child development. It will also draw on our observations of the children's ability to make connections, their approaches to learning which show capacity for self motivation, extended concentration and curiosity as well as background knowledge from parents and information from health visitors, play groups and other specialists

We aim to:

- recognise the talents, skills and needs of all children
- identify specific talents and abilities in curriculum areas and also in other respects
- promote children's learning and development in all areas
- provide a curriculum which is stimulating, accessible and challenging for all children
- ensure under achievement is avoided and children do not become disillusioned.

To ensure we meet the needs of our high achieving children, we will carefully structure planning and the learning environment to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, plan for differentiation and provide opportunities for more able children to work individually or in small groups on extending tasks.

Provision for high achieving children will be a regular part of the school's monitoring of learning and teaching. It will be regularly discussed in staff meetings and planning.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Children's special educational needs will be met through a well-planned curriculum and supportive adults. (See Special Educational Needs Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy and Equality Scheme)

To ensure that no children are excluded or disadvantaged, it is our intention to identify special needs early and try to make appropriate arrangements.