



## **Curriculum Policy**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage (reformed in 2024)**

At Phoenix Childcare we believe it is important to take a holistic approach to children's learning as we should be thinking about the whole of the child and their well-being, allowing their self-esteem to develop in a positive manner. We incorporate the reformed Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework to support and develop children's play and learning.

The EYFS covers birth until the end of Reception and is split in to seven main areas of development, three prime areas and four specific areas, each broken down to smaller aspects of learning. All areas are important and interconnected

**Prime:** These three areas are particularly important for a child's development and future learning.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- Building Relationships
- Self-Regulation (managing feelings and behaviour)
- Managing self (selfcare such as toileting, oral health and becoming independent)

#### **Communication and Language**

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

#### **Physical development**

- Gross motor development and skills
- Fine motor development and skills

**Specific:** There are four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied.

#### **Literacy**

- Comprehension
- Word Reading (phase one phonics for us)
- Writing (Mark making)

## **Mathematics**

- Number (recognition, counting by rote and 1:1)
- Numerical Patterns (subitising, part, part whole)
- We will still look at shape, and measurement in line with the development of our children

## **Understanding the world**

- Past and Present
- People, Cultures and Communities
- The Natural World

## **Expressive arts and design**

- Being Imaginative and Expressive (role play, singing, dancing, artwork)
- Creating with materials (construction, modelling)

The curriculum is all the planned and unplanned activities that are organised within the nursery and are based heavily on a child's Personal, Social and Emotional development which underpins all curriculum areas. Children learn and develop best when they feel safe, secure, and supported. This enables children to take risks and allows them to feel valued.

## **Values**

British Values are embedded within our environment and routines. We are respectful, kind and considerate to all those who attend. We recognise the diversity of our children and families within our setting, treating everyone as they deserve to be treated. Our objective is to celebrate the developmental stage of the children, not necessarily the age of the children. We embrace the curricula and lay the foundations for the promotion of well balanced, kind, and considerate individuals.

## **Organisation and planning**

The rooms and routines are planned out and organised to support the development of the children in a holistic way.

There is a yearly overview of topic ideas for each half term which is regularly reviewed. Topics and curriculum areas are discussed within planning meetings with key staff in each room on a regular basis, incorporating the children's ideas and individual needs.

Activities are carefully planned to enable children to develop both physically and cognitively at their own pace.

There is a balance of pre-planned and in the moment planning of activities that reflect both our themes and the children's interests. Children have independent access to a variety of activities and toys in each area from the shelves and resources provided.

Our weekly planning sheets are working documents that reflect the areas of learning that are pre planned and added in the moment. All plans are subject to change dependent on the environmental surroundings and children's interests.

### **Characteristics of Learning**

Effective learning is defined as methods of learning that involve children actively participating in their own learning and personal development.

The emphasis on how children learn has huge potential to transform early years practice and empower children as confident, creative, lifelong learners.

Children are encouraged to follow their interests, make independent choices about their learning and are supported to develop their thinking skills through quality adult interactions.

We use named dinosaurs to represent the '**Characteristics of Effective Learning**'. The Characteristics of Effective Learning are divided into three sections. They are all interconnected and overlap with one another. All children demonstrate each of them at some time – provided they are given the opportunities to do so.

This means that everything in our setting, including the outdoor and indoor environments that children are active in throughout the day, have been thought about and developed with these characteristics in mind. There are three characteristics that drive our teaching and signpost to practitioners that a child is learning:

**Playing and Exploring** – Children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

- **Imagindocus** – Playing with what I know.
- **Explorosaurus** – Finding out and exploring
- **Candoceratops** – Willing to have a go.

**Active Learning** – Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy environments.

- **Proudosaurus** – Achieving what I set out to do.
- **Tryceratops** – Keep on trying.
- **Stickosaurus** – Being involved and concentrating.

**Creating and Thinking Critically** – Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

- **Thinkodactyl** – Having my own ideas.
- **Solveosaurus** – Choosing ways to do things.
- **Buildosaurus** – Making links/ using what they already know to learn new things.

### **Aims and objectives**

The aim of the nursery curriculum is:

- To provide an environment and atmosphere in which children feel safe and secure in sharing their ideas and thoughts, supporting their self-esteem so they have the confidence to try
- To promote a positive attitude towards learning by providing hands on, fun activities with clear expectations and engaging stimuli
- To provide a balanced curriculum with quality interactions with the staff using open ended questions.
- To enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability, at their own pace
- To empower children to take control of their own learning, self- discovery, exploration, and their natural curiosity.
- To promote the importance of the process of learning and not just the end result.
- To inform our planning and assessment needs
- To identify what adults can do and provide support to further the child's learning
- To enable us to provide continuity between home, nursery, and the receiving primary Schools

### **Observations and Assessment**

The purpose of assessment is to:

- Inform planning so that the child's existing knowledge and skills can be considered
- Identify children who may need specialist help as early as possible
- Evaluate the quality of provision provided for the children in our care.
- Create a profile of the child's development for parents and the schools those children will move on to.

Our main form of assessment is developed through observations of the children across the whole nursery environment, routines, free play, outside play, group activities and 1-1. Observations are recorded using "Family" an online account to

create an individual learning journey for each child in our setting. Please see our separate Family policy for more information.

The methods of observation used:

- Setting up specific activities and observing the child's reaction to them
- Focusing on a particular task or activity
- Following children's IEP (Individual Educational Plan) where necessary and addressing through observation and assessment the targets set.

Through recording children's development, we are able to:

- Find a child's stage of development so that appropriate aims and objectives can be set through planning.
- Monitor children regularly and check on their progress
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Enable us to provide continuity between home, Nursery and the child's receiving Primary School
- Inform our planning
- Identify what adults can do and provide to support the child's learning further
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Recording and sharing of observations and assessment:

- Family online journal
- Parental questionnaires via 'All About Me' book
- Individual child progress checks in each room termly to inform discussions at parent's evenings
- Wellcomm speech and language check in Cubs and Tigers
- Two year checks
- Tigers end of Pre-school report

### **Wellcomm Speech and Language check**

The Wellcomm check is done at roughly 2yrs, 3mths and then periodically thereafter up until the term before school. It checks on a child's understanding of language and highlights areas of language that require further developing. Any real concerns are shared with the parents with a possible referral to a speech therapist if required.

## **Two Year old Progress Check**

Between the age of two and three every child who attends Phoenix Childcare will have a progress review. This is a requirement of the EYFS and will be carried out by the child's key person, concentrating on the prime areas of learning. It will highlight strengths and any areas the child's progress maybe less than expected and steps put in place to address any concerns.

The child's parents/carers may be asked to come in and discuss the review with the key person and include their views and comments into the summary, and the parent/carer may ask for a copy to take to their Health Visitor 2-year check

## **Information sharing**

At Phoenix Childcare we value the importance of how parents and carers contribute towards children's assessments and learning and understand the benefit of information sharing.

To ensure this happens we will,

- Display an information board which explains how the Early Years Foundation Stage works and how it links to each age group.
- Offer ideas to support children's learning at home
- Hold parents/carers evenings annually
- If a child attends another setting, each term the child's keyworker will endeavour to make contact with them to share developmental information on the child. (Permission will be sought from the parent carer first)

Policy updated May 2025

Due for review May 2026

