

## How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early year's 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 friendships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas are:

- *Communication and language*
- *Physical development*
- *Personal, social and emotional development*

Providers must also support children 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*

For each area, the level of progress children should be expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals.

These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of the reception year of their education.

The 'Development Matters' guidance sets out the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the early learning goals. Our setting has regard to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning.

### *Personal, social and emotional development*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *making relationships*
- *self confidence and self awareness*
- *managing feelings and behaviour*

### *Physical development*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *moving and handling*
- *health and self-care*

### *Communication and language*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *listening and attention*
- *understanding*
- *speaking*

### *Literacy*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *reading*
- *writing*

### *Mathematics*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *numbers*
- *shape space and measure*

### *Understanding the world*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *people and communities*
- *the world*
- *technology*

## *Expressive arts and design*

Our programme supports children to develop:

- *exploring and using media and materials*
- *being imaginative*

## Our approach to learning and development and assessment

### **Learning through play**

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Our setting uses the Early Years Foundation Stage 'Development Matters' guidance to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the Development Matters guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

### **Characteristics of effective learning**

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Development Matters guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage as:

- *playing and exploring - engagement*
- *active learning - motivation*
- *creating and thinking critically - thinking*

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child is learning and being clear about what we can do and provide in order to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

### **Assessment**

We will observe your child throughout their session to identify their interests, how they learn and their progress in each area of their learning and development. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

Please use the 'Moments from home slips' to record these observations. This assessment of your child helps us to identify and plan their next steps. In addition to our ongoing observations, your child's progress will be shared with you.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. These form part of children's records of achievement. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as times of transition, such as when a child moves to a different key person or when they go on to school.

### **The progress check at age two**

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that we supply parents and carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the three prime learning and development areas of the EYFS: personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language; when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. The key person is responsible for completing the check using information from ongoing observational assessments carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals. The review may show that your child is progressing at a faster or slower rate in a particular area; this will generally be a normal part of your child's unique developmental journey. Where we have concerns, we will carry out further observations and may seek your consent to share the review with other professionals where we feel their support would benefit your child.

### **Records of achievement**

At Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School we keep records and observations of achievement for each child. This personal information is held in each child's individual 'Learning Journey'. The folders are freely available for parents to view at anytime. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement is one of the ways in we work closely with our parents in partnership. Every child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together with our parents to provide what each child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Your child's key person will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress. You and your child's key person can then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

### **Working together for your children**

In our setting we maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set through the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.

This helps us to:

- *give time and attention to each child;*
- *talk with the children about their interests and activities;*
- *help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and*
- *allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.*

The Prime Areas in more detail

## Personal, social and emotional development

*“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”.*

**For example:** Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School does this by providing activities that promote emotional, moral, spiritual and social development alongside intellectual development. We provide positive images in our books and displays that will challenge children’s thinking. There are opportunities for children to work alone and in small and large groups, along with activities, which are imaginative and enjoyable. The children learn how to interact with others by social interaction which we do by sharing things such as a smile, a greeting and our toys. We provide opportunities and activities for the children to learn how to play, how to choose and also how to cooperate with each other. All staff gives positive encouragement to the children acting as positive role models.

## Communication and language

*“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”.*

**For example:** Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School does this by providing social purposes of communication giving the children opportunities to interact with others and ask questions. The children enjoy listening to and using spoken language in their everyday play and learning. The children are encouraged to listen to others and respond appropriately. We give the children opportunities to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. We talk about past and present events, as well as encouraging the children to talk about events that are to happen in the future. We also encourage the children to develop their own narratives and storylines through their role-play.

## Physical development

*“Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity as well as the importance to make healthy choices in relation to food”.*

**For example:** Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School does this by organising our resources to extend the children’s play by encouraging children to use a range of small and large equipment. We follow free choice and free play: at other times we limit the choice to focus on one skill, i.e. throwing/catching. We provide a range of construction materials to help develop their fine motor skills, along with puzzles, threading, scissors and writing and drawing activities to develop hand-eye co-ordination skills. We encourage the children to know the importance for good health of physical exercise and a healthy diet, as well as talking about ways to keep safe. We encourage the children to manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

The Specific Areas in more detail

## Literacy

*“Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest”.*

**For example:** Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School provide activities for the children to hear and say initial and final sounds in words, along with linking sounds to letters and naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. We encourage the children to listen to stories with increasing attention and recall as well as giving them the opportunities to describe main story settings, events and principal characters from within the story. We also give the children opportunities to look at books independently, so they have the understanding of how to hold a book as well as turn the pages correctly. We encourage the children to use their phonic knowledge to write simple, regular words, by giving them access to a variety of mark making materials.

# Mathematics

*“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”.*

*For example: Yaxley & Mellis Pre-school does this by ensuring that all activities are enjoyable and imaginative. We use number rhymes as a regular part of the children's routine to introduce them to number names, encouraging them all to participate in action rhymes. We provide a number rich environment, with number charts and number cards, all displayed at the child's height. We encourage the children to use mathematical language in their play through sand and water activities, small world toys, construction play as well as tabletop and floor games. We provide them with opportunities to compare qualities as they use various shapes and sizes of containers and objects within their play. Activities such as role-play and cooking provide the children with ideal opportunities to practice what they have learnt. Our activities to encourage sorting, ordering and matching are practical using everyday objects.*

# Understanding the world

*“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”.*

*For example: Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School does this by providing opportunities for the children to talk about themselves, their families and communities. We provide activities that cover the environment, holidays and different cultural festivals. We identify similarities and differences between ourselves and other people, and learn to understand growth and change. All the children have the opportunity to participate in activities of planting seeds and watching them grow. We encourage the children to take an interest in and observe the rearing of our own pets as well as insects in the natural world. We give opportunities to use technology ranging from mechanical toys to cameras and computers, using age appropriate software.*

# Expressive arts and design

*“ Expressive arts and design involves the 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”.*

*For example: Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School does this by providing activities that demonstrate a combination of imagination, practical and language skills giving the children opportunity to express their creativity. The children are able to express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings by being provided with a wide range of materials, suitable tools, imaginative play, movement, designing and making activities and a variety of songs and musical instruments. We have created an environment where the children can play imaginatively, giving those invaluable foundations for creative expression.*