



nexus

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved: October 2018

Review Date: October 2019

Version: 2

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NEXUS SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS AT NEXUS SCHOOL

Introduction:

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The philosophy of our provision underpins a curriculum founded on play; it is supported by a high quality caring environment and provides a broad framework for all our work with young children.

In order to learn effectively, children need a relevant curriculum which is well planned, offers purposeful activities both indoors and outdoors and which is structured in content to match the learning needs of individual children.

Practitioners need to be knowledgeable about child development, able to make skilful observations which inform future planning, to respond and interact appropriately with children and to offer effective intervention to help them make progress in their learning.

During the early years a child is most receptive to learning and develops rapidly. We aim therefore to provide a stimulating, attractive and exciting environment, which offers first hand experiences, opportunities to practice and consolidate developing skills and interests, time to initiate and develop activities themselves and chances to encounter new challenges.

We believe that learning in the early years is holistic. We therefore consider the total development of the child as an individual: their social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs are given equal importance.

We value the home and recognise the role of parents/carers as the child's first teachers. We believe in working in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals in an atmosphere of mutual respect to ensure the best possible outcomes for each child.

We strive to provide a well-planned and organised play based environment that offers children rich and stimulating experiences, alongside opportunities to explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves.

The programme of activities will recognise and take into account the differing interests, backgrounds and abilities of the children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) consists of Nexus Observation and Assessment Nursery and one Reception class.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures.

The Early Years department adheres to all the policies of Nexus school.

Structure of the EYFS

There are currently two qualified Teachers, one in the Nursery and the other in the Reception class.

They are supported by one Teaching Instructor and six Teaching Assistants.

Reception children attend full time and Nursery children attend on a sessional basis. (Please refer to the Nursery Policy for further details.)

The Curriculum

Our early years' department follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

Within the Early Years department, we aim to provide a curriculum that helps each child to develop to his/her potential. We aim to meet children's special educational needs within this curriculum

The EYFS defines what providers must do to promote the learning and development of all children in their care, the statutory requirements which are in place to keep children safe and also guidance on working with parents and carers. The learning and development requirements are informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and reflect the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes needed as a foundation for good future progress. Early years providers must guide the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensuring that children in their care work towards the early learning goals ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- ❖ Literacy
- ❖ Mathematics
- ❖ Understanding the world
- ❖ Expressive arts and design

We value the importance of each of these areas as interconnected and imperative in a child's learning and development.

Practitioners at Nexus take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. These may be delivered on a 1:1, small or large group basis.

Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

The child's needs are paramount and we aim to ensure every child feels happy and secure in an environment that is stimulating and challenging.

Staff will:

- ❖ Display flexible styles of practice and respond appropriately to children according to their age; understanding and needs
- ❖ Support, recognise and promote achievements by all children

The EYFS identifies three **characteristics of effective learning** which are, the ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment. They underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner:

- ❖ Playing and exploring – Engagement – Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to 'have a go'.
- ❖ Active learning – Motivation – Being involved and concentrating, keep trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do.
- ❖ Creating and thinking critically – Thinking- Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things.

Our EYFS practitioners will use the characteristics of effective learning within planning, assessment and most importantly regular observations in order to acknowledge the children as an individual and as having their own learning styles, agendas and interests.

Observation, Planning and Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress understand their needs, and to plan activities and support.

At Nexus school, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe the children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. (e.g. Verbal anecdotes, Learning Journals, Home/School Contact book, Celebration book.)

Both the Nursery and Reception classes carry out formative and summative assessment in line with the statutory guidance for the EYFS.

Reviews take place in line with the expectations of the SEND Code of Practice 2015 i.e. a minimum of 3 times within an academic year.

All children's progress is tracked using Development Matters month bands.

A baseline assessment is completed for all children after three weeks from their date of admission and subsequently updated each term in line with school policy. Summative data is captured three times during the school year in terms two, four and six. On-going assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- ❖ Meeting expected levels of development
- ❖ Exceeding expected levels or,
- ❖ Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. and at the end of the child's time in EYFS they are assessed following statutory requirements and a copy of this is forwarded to parents.

The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress tracker and Learning Journey helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs.

The Key Worker System

The EYFS operates a key worker system. This means that each child will be allocated a key worker. The key worker will support the child in settling in and transitional periods and will be the main practitioner involved in maintaining a Learning Journey (development file). They will also liaise with Parents / Carers about daily routines and the child's development. Parents/Carers will be informed of the key worker system and will be given the name of the staff member who will be their child's key worker. The key worker will also be responsible, alongside the Nursery Teacher / Reception Class teacher in supporting Parents / Carers in guiding their development at home. The key worker also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

The Learning Journey

The Learning Journey celebrates each child's experiences and progress over time and tells a unique story for each individual child.

All staff within the EYFS work together to build this learning journal as a record of their progress.

There are numerous opportunities for parents/carers to look through and contribute to the learning record. In addition, parents are provided with the resources to create their own Celebration book that they share with school. Using both journals we are able to build a clearer picture of each child's learning and development.

Parents/Carers are given the Learning Journey when their child leaves the nursery or at the end of the year.

Nexus Observation and Assessment Nursery Policy

Rationale

Nexus Nursery aims to provide an environment, with all the facilities, resources and skills necessary to promote development in the early years. We specialise in offering assessment for young children with special needs.

The aims of the Observation and Assessment Nursery (O&A) is to ensure individual children's special educational needs are clearly identified, that suitable provision for their needs is provided and to ensure that the outcomes of access to that provision are good progress in their learning, communication and social skills, health and emotional well-being.

Nexus Nursery provides places for up to 16 children who attend on a sessional basis. It is usual for up to eight children to attend any one session.

Admissions and exit arrangements.

The Local Authority manage all admissions to the Nursery. No pupil can be admitted without the prior agreement of KCC.

All children will be referred to the Multi Agency Early Years Planning Meeting that takes place 6 times a year.

Children can be referred, with parent's permission, by Portage, Health Key Workers, Private, Voluntary and Independent; non-maintained settings (PVI) or Specialist Teachers. All children referred should be known to Portage or the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS). Places within a specialist nursery will be prioritised by school entry date.

The vast majority commence their O&A placement the year prior to school entry.

It is usual for a home visit to be undertaken prior to the child's entry into nursery. This would be organised by the Nursery Teacher. The purpose of the visit is to strengthen relationships and elicit essential information that can ease the child's transition into nursery.

Information from this visit helps to complete a Care plan (Health) that is developed prior to each child's admission.

Criteria for admission

- There is evidence that the child is assessed at two or more levels below their age expected age band in four or more aspects of the prime areas of learning within the EYFS.
- It is highly likely that the child is known, or has been referred, to Portage
- The child has significant medical needs
- The child requires a high level of adult support for functional activities, child initiated, and adult led play experiences.

Placements will initially be offered for 2 terms.

An Initial Review will be held no later than twelve weeks from the date of admission.

Following the Initial Review one of the following will be agreed as an outcome:

1. The child returns to a mainstream setting and an informed provision plan of support is put in place
2. The child remains in the O&A setting on the current number of sessions per week because the LA has identified that further assessment is essential

3. The child remains in the O&A setting and the number of sessions per week is increased because the child's needs cannot be met elsewhere.

Pre-school Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Children considered appropriate for specialist nursery placement on the basis of statutory assessment will be referred through the area SEN Team. The decision to admit will be taken by the relevant SEN Manager in the area team following consultation undertaken in compliance with S39 (6) Children and Families Act 2014.

Transition from the Observation and Assessment (O&A) Nursery

Where a placement at the Nursery ceases or the child transfers in to school there is a requirement to plan for the child's move.

There is no automatic entitlement to admission into the host special school from the O&A.

Children should never remain in an O&A Nursery beyond the point at which they reach statutory school age.

Outreach.

The majority of the children who attend the Nursery maintain a dual placement with a mainstream setting.

It is imperative that both settings work together in order to meet the holistic needs of the child. The Nursery will offer outreach to these settings.

Transport.

Children below statutory school age do not have any entitlement to travel assistance from the local authority under transport legislation. Therefore, it is an expectation that Parents/Carers accept a placement at Nexus Nursery on the understanding that they are able to transport their child.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according the EYFS statutory framework.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy Nexus school
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy Nexus school
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy Nexus school
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy Nexus school
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy Nexus school
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy Nexus school
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy Nexus school