

## Hartcliffe Nursery School and Children's Centre

### Learning and Teaching Policy

Our approach is underpinned by the themes of the Early Years Foundation Stage: a unique child; positive relationships; enabling environments and areas of learning and development.

We value every child as unique and as having the capacity to become resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We plan closely from children's individual needs and interests, drawing on our knowledge of their prior learning and experiences.

We have an inclusive ethos and provide a responsive and personalised curriculum, tailored to children's individual needs.

Secure attachments are vital if children are to feel safe enough to explore and take risks, to deal with difficulties, change and uncertainty. We ensure warm and authentic relationships in all aspects of our practice.

Children who have 'self-efficacy' (a belief in their own competence) are those who are most likely to succeed later in life. We therefore aim to support children to develop the ability to persist when they have setbacks.

Parents have a key role in their child's early learning and so we share our ideas and thoughts about their children's learning and our teaching as part of a two-way process.

We view all areas of learning as equally important and interlinked.

However, the **prime areas**: personal social and emotional development, communication and language and physical development, underpin the others.

The **specific areas**: literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design are explored within this context.

Children learn in a variety of ways, including through play, imitation, everyday experiences, seeking information from others, structured planned activities with learning intentions, direct instruction and having the opportunity to practise.

Young children need opportunities to play and explore, be active and motivated in their learning.

Our practitioners are skilled, qualified early years professionals who are able to draw on a range of strategies when working with children.

### A Play Curriculum

Play is vital as there are some skills and dispositions children learn most effectively through play. Play includes physical/exploratory play, symbolic play (representing things e.g. writing, dance, drama), games with rules and socio-dramatic play/role play. We value play which is freely chosen, intrinsically motivated, open-ended, spontaneous, exploratory and imaginative. These include:

- self-efficacy (a person's belief in their own competence); resilience and the ability to see others' perspectives;
- collaborative skills; management and self-management, making choices; planning and carrying through activities; finding solutions to problems, thinking flexibly; persistence and concentration, to exploration and experimentation.

We provide a learning environment which:

- has a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities;
- is nurturing but also stimulating, challenging , exciting and fascinating – creating provocations for learning;
- covers the 7 areas of learning and their inter-connectedness.

Practitioners who

- Model language at an appropriate level;
- Value and support children's creativity and support them to talk about their thinking;
- Use questioning effectively – open-ended and/or thought –provoking,
- Give explanations and support children to find things out;
- Play alongside children e.g. to extend play which needs to develop purpose or complexity;
- Demonstrate and sometimes instruct;
- Role-model;
- Convey to children the value in the process of learning – the goal of learning rather than the end product;

Reviewed June 2014

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