



Play Station Nursery

Pre-school Long Term Plan (2013-2014)

(in accordance with the Welfare Requirements, EYFS and The National Strategies)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

Our nursery school believes that all children are of great importance and we believe that to be able to learn they need to feel safe, secure, happy and confident. **Children between the ages of 0-3 develop quicker than at any other time in their lives and it is essential that we continue to build on the foundations that have already been laid down.** Children need support in understanding their own rapidly growing range of abilities and emotions, how to get on with each other and how to make friends, as well as understand what is considered to be acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. We will be continuing to provide children with large group activities intended to promote the positive aspects of sharing, turn taking and respecting the needs of others. Daily routines will give children an opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas with the group thus encouraging self esteem and confidence. Planned activities will be based on the abilities and interests of the children and with adult support will serve to encourage children's positive attitude towards new experiences and their own learning. In believing this we ask parents to focus on recognising all of their children's positive behaviour in a consistent and encouraging manner, however small.

Communication and Language:

Children's language development for communication and thinking will be promoted through the use of daily child/adult interaction. **Reciprocal dialogue between children and adults is the most powerful learning tool at our disposal.** Your children could be given the best most expensive toys available but if there is not an adult to lead their interest and extend their thinking and dialogue then development will be minimal. Supporting children's listening skills and levels of attention will increase their chances of being able to understand what is being said and/or expected of them, this will allow them to fully participate and for their knowledge to grow.

It is common practice for early year's practitioners to support children's understanding of linking sounds and letters. Activities are designed to develop children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting. Activities will include the use of rhyming, songs and games that will require children to seek out objects only beginning with a certain letter, matching objects that rhyme or begin with the same letter/sound. Spotting the odd one out, mirror play, alphabet jigsaws and name recognition are just some of the activities that will be made available to children. Sometimes this will be done as a group activity but more often than not we will seek to work with children in this way, during their free play time. **It is when children are in play mode that they are also in the best mindset for learning. When learning becomes part of a child's play it captures their interest in a way that formal learning will not.** Formal learning for children begins at a young enough age as it is, so let us celebrate and encourage your child's interest in learning as young and as appropriately as possible. At Play Station we endeavour to provide a broad and language rich environment that will allow a good and smooth pathway toward children's future reading and writing. This is a crucial part of your child's development. Without good communication skills your child may suffer frustration, anger or find they are unable to socialise as they might wish to. If you are at all worried about your child's communication skills please ask our advice. It is not uncommon for us to work with other professionals in enhancing this area of a child's development.

Physical Development

Using children's photographic diaries to make comparisons can also promote children's learning as regards their bodily awareness and changes that take place as they grow, including growing physical ability in most cases. As well as opportunities to play more freely in the garden we will continue to make regular trips to the park and the school field of our most local primary school. Using equipment whilst cooking, painting, drawing and constructing will all serve to increase each child's physical development. Children who can move freely and with confidence are often those who show the highest levels of self esteem. There are a great many associations between social and emotional development and physical development. Team games are sociable and are often based around rules, discipline

and respect for others. As well as larger scale physical development (gross motor movement) it is also essential for children's fine motor movements to receive some focus. A great many boys in reception class do not have the fine motor skills to hold a pen or pencil in the correct pincer grip. This is a biological fact which cannot be forced but can be enhanced with such activities as lego and construction that involves careful selection and gripping of the objects being used. Each morning your children are already benefitting from 'sticky kids' exercise sessions. Physical development and cognitive development also have close links.

Literacy:

This aspect of child development is concerned with reading and writing. For many children this will be about fostering a positive attitude toward future learning. Opportunities for mark making, be it in the sand with a finger or the more traditional activity of using pen and paper, will be afforded with consistent opportunities to play and learn about reading and writing and the valuable place it holds in their world.

Focused activities will include exploring a range of books both factual and fictional. We will be looking at how print is used in the environment and how we can use print to retrieve information. For example does your child know that when you are reading them a story you are getting the information from the letters and words on the page? Remember they will not know this unless told. Notebooks for shopping lists, telephone numbers and party invitations will be used in the home corner. As well as list making, the use of labelling will be explored and used to identify places and objects within nursery.

Mathematics

All children will have the opportunity to increase their development in this area using such activities as **cooking, whereby concepts such as weight and measurement can be explored alongside counting, shapes and quantities**. Number jigsaws, hopscotch and number rhymes (five little ducks and ten green bottle for example) are all games that will encourage children's counting skills. Maths language such as big, small, larger and heavier can be used during daily interactions though they can be given more focus during such activities as junk modelling, drawing and painting. Construction is an ideal source of problem solving. Maths language and concepts are part of everyday life. For trained and experienced practitioners it is a particular focus of a child's development but it is just as **easy for parents to count what goes in the shopping trolley, sing rhymes on a car journey, how many red cars you pass or how many people the table needs to be laid for**, for instance.

Understanding the World

This too is an area of learning that can be enhanced through the simple activity of cooking, looking at how equipment and tools can be used safely to change things. **Sand, water and mud play may appear messy and without structure however with the correct adult support these can be the beginnings of encouraging children's scientific exploration and investigation of the world around them**. Staff will encourage children to consider the difference in media and material, wet to dry, soft to hard, liquid movement to unmalleable movement.

The use of factual books in showing children the exciting diversity that exists within our world is invaluable, as is ICT. Many of the children are already enjoying the CD Roms we have at nursery. The use of photographs particularly the children's own photographic diaries can be used to increase each child's sense of themselves as well as exploring time, ie. Today, yesterday, last year when you were just two years old, etc. Many of the children consistently ask to use the cameras at nursery and is a valuable source of communication. If children are to learn they need to be curious. It is a very important aspect of our job to allow children to explore sometimes in the face of creating mess. Here again communication is crucial as an adult is present to comment and sensitively ask questions, presenting children with ideas that will successfully extend their thinking and holistic development.

Expressive Arts and Design

A variety of media and materials will continue to provide children with the opportunity to be creative in a way and with materials that interest them and give them the opportunity to express themselves. **The important thing to remember as the parent of a pre-school aged child is that for your child it is often the thinking and doing process (alongside quality dialogue), of creating a picture or 3D structure that is more important than the end product.** Children can often be seen creating something only to then fold it up, paint all over it or even tear it up. This is not necessarily an act of destruction but merely a child displaying schematic behaviour or deciding that the project has reached its end. Children wishing to be destructive will inevitably destroy someone else's work rather than their own, so don't assume this as negative behaviour.

Providing for imaginative play through providing well resourced home style areas and small world toys will continue to be a priority. Focused activities will include acting out children's favourite stories with props. The opportunity to dress up and play at Mummies and Daddies may seem a far cry from a learning environment but it gives children the necessary opportunity to play act situations they have heard in stories and seen at home. This is a child's opportunity to consolidate their understanding of what they have seen/heard and explore how they felt/feel about it. Imaginative expression is essential if children are to use the knowledge they have gained for real life. Also there may be merit in having developed excellent writing skills at an early age but not so much if the child does not have a knowledge base of creative thinking to draw upon. Through our daily music and movement sessions Play Station staff will be able to link in many aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage, as songs and rhymes will often involve counting (1,2,3,4,5 once I caught...), knowledge of the world (old MacDonald...), physical (head, shoulders, knees and toes...), social skills (sharing instruments around the room), communication (repetitive use of language), creative (the opportunity to be expressive in movement or sound). **Music and singing as a key element of child development should not be underestimated, please take every opportunity to share and enjoy appropriate songs together.**