

Play Station Nursery

Age group 2-3’s Long Term Plan (2013-2014)

(in accordance with the Welfare Requirements, EYFS Development Matters and Every Child Matters)

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. They 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. In the early months babies become very socially orientated though their primary interest remains on what can and should be done for them. 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 the 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. Children need to believe that they are valued and by building a positive community spirit and by facilitating good communication between the home and the setting, children’s levels of security and confidence will be enhanced. In believing this we ask parents to support our setting ethos of open and respectful communication, whilst continuing to communicate with their children in recognising all positive behaviour in a consistent and encouraging manner, however small children’s achievements may be.

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. Using equipment whilst cooking, painting, drawing and constructing will all serve to increase each child’s physical development, including their fine motor skills. Activities of this kind will offer great support to the development of children’s fine motor skills; skills that are needed to be able to hold a pencil correctly for future writing skills. Children are encouraged to consider healthy eating as a precursor to having a healthy body and lots of positive energy.

Children will be encouraged to take ownership from an early age of their own bodies; equipping them with independence is something that we endeavour to do through their daily routine. This can be from simple things like the ability to thoroughly wash their hands, to recognise their need for the toilet, or to pour their own drinks. Children thrive from responsibility and independence and we endeavour to encourage this through appropriate modelling and support.

Communication and Language:

Children’s language development for communication and thinking will be promoted through the use of daily child/adult interaction. Much of a young child’s communication will be non-verbal yet their facial expressions and the sounds they make will tell us what we need to know much of the time. Reciprocal communication between children and adults is the most powerful learning tool at our disposal. The most expensive toys in the world will teach children very little if there is not a playful adult willing and able to support their learning and effectively extend their thinking. 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.

All activities can be used to develop children’s listening and speaking skills when in the supervision of an understanding and knowledgeable adult. Activities will inevitably include the use of rhyming and songs, alphabet jigsaw, name recognition games, snap cards and matching games. 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. Some activities will be done as a group but more often than not the nursery day will allow us to work with children on a more spontaneous and individual basis. It is when children are in play mode that they are also in the best mindset for learning. When learning becomes a part of a child’s play it captures their interest in a way that formal learning will not.

Communication is a crucial part of your child’s development. Without good communication skills your child may suffer frustration, anger of 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.

Mathematics.

All children will have the opportunity to increase their development in this area using such activities as cooking, construction, exploring different materials, colours and amounts. During cooking and messy play based activities for example, concepts such as weight and measurement can begin to be explored alongside counting, shapes and quantities. Number rhymes are part of the daily routine and general maths language such as big, small, larger and heavier can be used during daily interactions and specifically during focused problem solving activities such as junk modelling and construction. This area of children’s development is very much complimented by aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. For trained and experienced practitioners it is a particular focus of child development but it is just as easy for parents to count what goes in the shopping trolley, sing rhymes on a car journey, watch the snow melt, an ice cube defrost or build a lego bridge that will fit a toy car underneath, how many red cars you pass or how many people the table needs to be laid for, for example.

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. Practitioners will encourage children to consider the difference in media and material, wet to dry, soft to hard, liquid movement to solid objects.

The use of factual books in showing children the exciting diversity that exists within our world is invaluable, as is ICT. Small group activities will be used to explore this. The use of photographs particularly the children’s own learning journey’s can be used to increase each child’s sense of themselves as well as introducing the concept of time and place (‘that was us yesterday at the park’, ‘look at this picture of you as a baby, that was a year ago’, do you remember when we visited the farm in the spring time and saw the lambs, heres a picture of you with a lamb’).

Equally, the outside space that is available to the setting is a place where listening, touching, smelling, and many other of the senses can be stimulated. Through exploring the world outside them, many other lessons can be learned such as how elements are affected, e.g. ice, water and steam, or how the sun can transform plants and help them grow. Many of the processes that we learn about and use in later life can be found through exploring the natural world around us. Children will be encouraged as much as possible to use this space to test out theories, gain understanding and broaden their interests in their surrounding environment. This could be in the form of gardening, messy mud pie play, sand and water play, examining the weather and its influences on motion and noise, and many other activities.

Expressive Arts and Design

Many 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. It is important to remember that at this stage in your child’s development the process of making something is much more important to their development and valuable to them as an individual than the end product. Children can often be seen creating something then folding it up, painting over it or even tearing it up. This is not necessarily an act of destruction but merely a child displaying schematic behaviour or deciding that the project has in fact reached its natural end. Children wishing to be destructive will inevitably destroy someone else’s work rather than their own, so please don’t assume this is negative behaviour. Providing for imaginative play through providing well resourced home corners and small world toys will continue to be a priority. Focused activities will include acting out children’s favourite stories with props, or being at a pizza restaurant or at an ice cream parlour will give children immense pleasure and many opportunities to express their individual thoughts and ideas whilst acting out real life experiences.

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.

Literacy

Narrative and books are indisputably key in a child’s environment, stories having a huge impact on a child’s listening, speaking and understanding development. Not to mention their relationships with others. Books will be used in conjunction with puppets, rhyme, songs and imagination to bring the stories alive and engage the children. Key stories that are of interest to children will receive more in-depth focus, often having activities formed around them such as an outside activity using different areas of the garden to represent the ‘Going on a Bear Hunt’ book. Rhyme games will be used throughout the daily routine and in key group time to help teach children the foundations of tone and sentence structure.

Children’s mark-making will be motivated by art galleries that feature around the setting that celebrate children’s use of media, materials and mark-making tools. We aim to equip children with the skills to attach and display their own work (once dry!) onto these child-height display boards in order for them to feel the full rewards of their hard work and to understand the value that we as staff put on the children’s creations.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We anticipate that through quality adult modelling, guidance and stimulation that children will succeed in all areas of effective learning. Through promoting independence, wonder, resilience and ownership, we hope children will thrive in the nursery environment and have the skills needed for the transition to later life by the time they leave us for school. Qualified practitioners possess the skills and understanding to help progress children’s cognitive and PSED skills through support, strategies and if necessary wider agencies to ensure their early childhood development is as successful as possible.

Child development: Key concepts Over the coming months (and beyond, if helpful and successful) parents will be provided with more detailed information of what we do and why we do it at Play Station. In addition key research findings will be presented that may help us all continue to be the supportive adults we want to be in children’s lives. There is no wish to preach on our part but simply to share with you the knowledge and understanding that is gained through focused early years training. Please always feel you can offer your honest opinion to Play Station or the parent representative group. Any particular questions you have would be welcomed.