

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their talents and abilities as they grow up.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS, 2014).*

At Parkland Pre-school we understand that children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. We acknowledge that development is not an automatic process, and that each unique child’s development depends on them having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.

The EYFS sets the standards that we at Parkland Pre-School must meet to ensure that all children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

By following the EYFS we aim to provide;

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child will make good progress,
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which we will plan around the needs and interests of each individual child, and which are reviewed and assessed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between our practitioners and our parents / carers.
- **Equality of opportunity and anti- discriminatory practice**, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

At Parkland Pre-School we will follow the specific requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

The **learning and development requirements** cover:

- The areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences for our children;
- The early learning goals that we will help our children work towards; and
- Assessment arrangements for measuring progress

The **safeguarding and welfare requirements** cover the steps that we must take to keep our children safe and to promote their welfare (see Safeguarding Policy)

The four themes of the EYFS will guide and shape our practice. These are:

1. Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning to be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Practitioners at Parkland Pre-school:

- Will understand and observe each child’s development and learning, assess progress and plan for their next steps.
- Will support children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture.
- Will identify any need for additional support.
- Will keep children safe.

- And will value and respect all children and families equally.

2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **Positive Relationships**.

At Parkland Pre-School we believe that:

- Positive relationships are warm and loving, and that they foster a sense of belonging,
- That they are sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interests,
- That they are supportive of each child's own efforts and independence,
- That they are consistent in setting clear boundaries,
- That they are stimulating,
- And that they are built on key person relationships.

3. Children learn and develop well in **Enabling Environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents / carers.

At Parkland Pre-School as an enabling environment:

- We value all people, and value learning.
- We offer stimulating resources relevant to our children's cultures and communities.
- We offer rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching.
- And we offer support for our children to take risks and to explore.

4. **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

At Parkland Pre-School we will:

- Teach our children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific area of learning and development.

The areas of learning and development.

There are seven **areas of learning and development**; all areas are important and are interconnected. Three areas are particularly important for 'igniting' children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three **prime** areas are:

1. Communication and language
2. Physical development
3. Personal, social and emotional development.

We will also support children in four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive arts and design.

At Parkland Pre-School we are committed to providing activities and experiences for children as follows;

- **Communication and Language Development (CLL)** – children will experience a rich language environment, enabling them to develop their skills and confidence in expressing themselves, and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development (PD)** – offering opportunities for our children to be active and interactive, to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. We will promote the importance of physical activity, and making healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)** – we will help children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others. We will encourage them to form positive relationships and to develop respect for others, to develop social skills and to learn how to manage their feelings. We will support children in understanding appropriate behaviour in groups, and encourage them to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Literacy development (L)** – children will be encouraged to link sounds and letters and to begin to 'read' and 'write'. They will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics (M)** – children will be offered opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shape, spaces and measures
- **Understanding the World (UTW)** – we will support children in making sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)** – we will enable and encourage 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.

At Parkland Pre-School all practitioners will consider the individual needs, interests and age and stage of development for each child in their care. They will use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development.

At Parkland Pre-School each area of learning and development will be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child initiated activities. We understand that play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, think about problems and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. We will provide a good balance of child led / initiated activities and activities led or guided by adults.

If a child's developmental progress causes concern, we will discuss this with the child's parents / carers and agree how to support the child. Practitioners will consider whether a child may have a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. We

will link with and support families to access relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

For children whose home language is not English, we will provide opportunities for children to play and develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. We will also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard of English language during the EYFS. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, we will assess children's skills in English.

Practitioners will respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are;

#### 1. Playing and Exploring (engagement)

- **Finding out and exploring**  
Showing curiosity about objects, events and people,  
Using senses to explore the world around them  
Engaging in open-ended activity
- **Playing with what they know**  
Pretending objects are things from their experience  
Representing their experiences in play  
Taking on a role in their play  
Acting out experiences with other people
- **Being willing to 'have a go'**  
Initiating activities  
Seeking challenge  
Showing a 'can do' attitude  
Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error.

#### 2. Active Learning (motivation)

- **Being involved and concentrating**  
Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time  
Showing high levels of energy, fascination  
Not easily distracted  
Paying attention to details
- **Keeping on trying**  
Persisting with activity when challenges occur  
Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off  
Bouncing back after difficulties
- **Enjoying and achieving what they set out to do.**  
Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals  
Being proud of how they accomplished something – not just the end result  
Enjoy meeting challenges for their own sake rather than external rewards or praise

#### 3. Creating and Thinking Critically (thinking)

- **Having their own ideas**  
Thinking of ideas

Finding ways to solve problems  
Finding new ways to do things

- **Making links**

Making links and noticing patterns in their experience  
Making predictions  
Testing their ideas  
Developing ideas of grouping, sequencing, cause and effect

- **Choosing ways to do things**

Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal  
Checking how well their activities are going  
Changing strategy as needed  
Reviewing how well the approach worked.

At Parkland Pre-School each child will be assigned a key person (keyworker). Parents will be informed of their key person and their role within 2-4 weeks of their child starting our setting. Every key person will ensure that each child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. Each child's key person is assigned through the relationships that are made within the first days and weeks of attending and the child and their parents/carers will have a say in this choice and it will be regularly discussed and monitored to ensure that children are being provided with the best possible start.

Every child will have a learning journal, which their key person will be responsible for maintaining and sharing with parents. Learning Journals portray the child's learning journey during their time with us. They contain photographic evidence, observations, and formative and summative assessments.

**Assessment** plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities. Ongoing assessment – **formative assessment** is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievements, interests and learning styles, and then using this information to inform their planning, and learning experiences.

**Summative assessments** will be written after 6 weeks in the form of an Early Assessment Review (EAR), a progress summary in the second term (Spring) and at the end of each school year, providing a transition report for children starting school or changing provider. A transition report will also be provided if a child leaves or moves setting at any time. Any concerns that arise at any point during the assessment process will be discussed sensitively and confidentially with parents.

We maintain our knowledge through training so that we are best placed to understand the different processes involved in children's learning and development.

We encourage children to feel positive about their identity and their culture, to promote their self-esteem and help them develop a positive self-image.

We respect and value every communication and interaction with every child in our care. We understand that children communicate in a variety of ways, and try to ensure that each communication is enjoyable and valued.

We demonstrate to our children that we value them, by ensuring that we include them in our planning and decision making. This inclusion ensures that our topics and activities are of interest and relevant to them, leading to the children being involved and absorbed in their learning and play.

We protect the children in our care by ensuring they are in a safe and secure environment, which is stimulating and challenging to all.

We maintain their safe keeping through the many policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed, by having regular health and safety checks and by our daily risk assessments.

We believe in the importance of giving children choices, encouraging their independence and giving them the skills necessary to be confident learners for life. Our free-flow and free-choice ethos ensures children are continually making choices, whether to learn alone or with others or to participate in an adult led activity or child initiated play and when they wish to use the snack bar/drinks station.

We discuss and decide our rules and boundaries with the children. This ensures that they feel valued and respected and gives them a clear understanding of what is right and wrong.

We aim to find the best ways to care for, nurture and help develop each individual child in our care.

We believe that parents/carers are the best teachers for their children and encourage parental involvement in a variety of ways including through our stay and play sessions, parents evenings held twice yearly, gardening mornings, celebration ceremony's and productions. We ask parents to fill in a questionnaire after each event to enable us to know what was good and what could be made better, we also encourage that parents write any comments down and put them into the comments box to help us improve the provision for their children.

We aim for all children and their families to feel a part of our setting, to make friends, have positive relationships with staff and their peers which are close warm and supportive.

## **RESOURCES**

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multi-racial society.

Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

We use resources which reflect diversity such as books, dolls role play and equipment and provide activities to help children appreciate and value each others' similarities and differences.

## **LANGUAGES**

Information written or oral will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary. Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset. They will be valued and their languages recognised and respected in the Pre-school.

Appropriate advice will be sought from the Local Authority Early Years Team as required.

## **SELECTING EQUIPMENT/TOYS**

The equipment/toys in the Pre-school provide opportunities for children to develop new skills and concepts in the course of their play and exploration. The equipment we provide will:-

- Be appropriate to the age and stage of the child.
- Offer challenges to develop physical, social, personal, creative and intellectual skills.

- Feature positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethnic and cultural groups with and without disabilities.
- Include a range of materials that can be used in a variety of ways and encourage an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.
- Conform to British Safety Standards and be brought from bona fide suppliers. They will be for the sole use of the Pre-school.
- Enable children to develop individual potential and move towards the required learning goals.
- There is access to a telephone on the premises.
- Rooms will be maintained at an adequate temperature (65 degrees).
- There is adequate safe, dry storage space free from damp, infestation and contamination.
- Where provision has been made for special needs equipment this will be maintained to the same standard as all other equipment.
- Where equipment is no longer required positive efforts will be made to return or reallocate as required

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

We have an “All Weather Play” approach at Parkland Pre-school which means the children can play outside all year round in all weather conditions. Our free flow system allows children to have access to both the indoor and outdoor learning environments throughout each session where children are able to access activities, resources and equipment that ensures the seven areas of learning along with the characteristics of effective learning are implemented.

Parents are asked to provide appropriate clothing for the weather including waterproofs and wellington boots for wet and muddy play.

Outside risk assessments are carried out daily, ensuring gates are shut, there are no hazardous materials etc. During outside play our staff ratio will be maintained and monitored at all times.