**November 2014**

Characteristics of Learning: During a staff meeting we discussed and evaluated the planning to ensure everyone was meeting the needs of the children, regarding how children learn. This is important in order to make the most of learning opportunities for children. When planning the main activities of the day and also small group activities it’s important to think about whether the activity provides opportunities for the children to fully engage, which they will do if it supports the way they learn best. It’s important to think about whether we are offering a new experience to the children, whether it is as fun and exciting as it could be, if it’s providing enough challenge.

*Evaluation: Throughout our planning system are reminders and prompts to ensure the learning styles and interests of the children are always considered. When planning, we meet as a team and discuss the interests the children have. These might be things like transporting objects, collecting things, physical play, making dens, bugs etc. We then discuss comments or questions children have made or asked which we have recorded. From this we are able to plan experiences and activities to support these interests while also extending their understanding, language, literacy and other areas of development. Recently a number of children have shown an interest in the spider webs in the garden for example and some have been fascinated by watching bubbles blow away in the wind. Therefore we have planned a number of experiences to build on this such as making wind socks and wind mills; following a recipe to make giant bubbles and watching them blow away. All these activities are provided to parents to share in these experiences where possible.*

New staff: We have 3 new staff members and inductions are taking place at the moment. This is an ongoing process which is reviewed regularly. We have a robust action plan in place to ensure all the new staff are confident in their knowledge of Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities. Training has been booked for all 3 members in Safeguarding, 1st Aid, Food Hygiene and also other training in areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage such as Physical Development, Communication and Observation. All staff had read and understood all relevant Safeguarding Procedures. The new staff members all complete a Safeguarding Quiz following their induction to ensure they completely understand their role in safeguarding children.

Staff Practice Observations: This month peer observations will take place. This is an opportunity for staff to observe one another in the setting, evaluate the practice and feedback to the observed member. The member of staff observed also reflects on their own practice during this exercise and together come up with targets and strategies to build on their skills.

*Evaluation: Although we have 3 new staff members they have all been included in this as observers as well as being observed as it helps them develop their own skills watching others and also to see what we are looking for in a skilled practitioner. Most of these are now complete and we now need to make sure targets are appropriate.*

Staff Supervisions: these are carried out this month. They are an opportunity to discuss any concerns the staff member may have and to have support and guidance.

*All supervisions have taken place and are set for the last week of December.*

Smelly pots: *These are now in place. We have small pots with cotton wool inside and have scented them with spices and herbs and various other smells for the children to identify.*

The next staff meeting booked for 1st December will be focussing on action planning as a result of learning and development review by staff. We will also look at our Self Evaluation Action Plan and review the progress we are making.

Policy Reviews:

All staff have copies of the new ‘Transfer of records to School’, ‘Information Sharing’ policies.

Banwell Buddies Aims & Objectives: We would like to offer parents a lending library consisting of information booklets and reference books to support them in a wide range of areas. We do already provide a range of leaflets and booklets but this will be extended to include other useful resources. We will be working on putting this together shortly.

Curriculum/Play Policy: No changes needed.

Staff Sickness and Absence Policy: We have added a reference to the Key Person Policy in relation to absences.

Student & Volunteer Policy: No changes.

Valuing Diversity: No changes needed.

Mobile Phone & Camera Policy: We now keep the safe for the mobile phones in the office and not in the store room. This was updated on the policy. The policy also states that the setting’s mobile phone is labelled. We noticed that it isn’t labelled, but will do so in case it gets lost during an outing.

Training:

Inclusion Cluster: Attended by Daniela as Deputy Inclusion Co-ordinator. This covered the SEND Code of Practice.

Food Hygiene: New staff, Eliska, Lauren and Katie.

1st Aid: Attended by Eliska and Katie. Lauren already has this.

Child Protection Basic Awareness is booked for January for all 3 staff but in the meantime they have completed Basic Awareness online training and in house training.

Child Protection Basic Awareness is booked for Apprentice Jenny Meek to take place in March along with Kirsty Webber as an update.

Advanced Interagency Child Protection Update : Booked for Lisa Banwell as Safeguarding Practitioner. This is an update course which is due 2 years from the last Advanced training attended.