



CURRICULUM POLICY/STATEMENT

Our Ethos:

We believe in education for all, for high quality educational provision wherever a child aged 2-5 happens to be on their developmental journey. We strive to create an environment that is welcoming and nurturing and an Early Years Learning Community which fosters respect, mutual understanding and partnership working with parents and supporting agencies. We want to offer children the opportunity to learn with peers and adults in a welcoming and respectful environment to build learners who believe anything is possible. We strive for excellence in our provision, our practice and the way in which we support and include children and families.

Introduction & Background:

A 'curriculum encompasses all the interactions, experiences, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development.' (Department for Education & Training - Australia 2019). But within that, there needs to be an element of curriculum design - 'a top-level plan of everything the early years setting wants the children to learn.' (Grenier, 2020)

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2021) embraces the 4 overarching principles of **The Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments & Adult Support and Learning & Development** and we use non statutory guidance such as the revised Development Matters and Birth to 5 to provide a basic understanding of child development which is then built on to ensure all staff members continue to improve their pedagogy.

There are 7 educational programmes divided into two areas. The first is the **PRIME** areas of learning - Communication and Language, Personal, Social & Emotional, and Physical. The second encompasses the **SPECIFIC** areas of learning - Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. These educational programmes provide an outline of the 'what' children are learning but the 'how' children learn is detailed within what is known as the **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**, further broken down into 3 strands, Playing & Exploring, Active Learning and Creating & Thinking Critically.

OUR INTENT:

At Bolnore Village Pre-School we pride ourselves on having a strong staff team,



knowledgeable, experienced, enthusiastic and committed to the highest standards of care and education for all children, at all times and with particular reference to those children we identify with a greater need of our support.

Staff members are friendly, approachable, and keen to understand a child's individual needs, thoughts, interests and learning styles as well as incorporating all that we know and learn from parents/primary carers to produce a holistic picture of each child which can be built upon over the time children spend in our setting to enhance the learning opportunities and experiences made available.

We want children to settle, feel happy, safe and well cared for and we want each and every child to look forward to coming in to Pre-School eager and excited to find out what possibilities and opportunities await them through playful learning, exploration and discovery so that they flourish and grow into resilient, purposeful, motivated and confident learners.

When children leave Bolnore Village Pre-School to continue their learning journeys we want them to be effective communicators, able to share resources, listen to others, enjoy interacting with peers and adults to build lasting relationships and understand that effort and confidence makes anything possible! We also want the children to acquire the necessary skills and attitudes that make them independent - in their own care as well as themselves as learners.

We recognise that not all children have the same early childhood experiences and so we aim to provide a body of knowledge, skills and experiences which through observation, reflection, staff discussion and partnership with parents, enable access to, enjoyment and mastery of a well balanced range of learning opportunities which is age and stage appropriate, takes account of our local community needs as well as children's cultural capital to help narrow the gap between children of more affluent social backgrounds and those with living in less socially affluent circumstances.

OUR IMPLEMENTATION:

Care of children: We operate the Key Person system (a statutory requirement of the EYFS) to build warm, nurturing and supportive relationships which helps children to settle and feel safe. We offer induction sessions within a staggered start and will discuss individual children's needs with families where reduced hours for example will aid the settling in process.

We make sure that our Initial Parent Chats with the setting's SENCo identify



any medical, allergy, long term health conditions and disability needs are known so that the entire staff team are aware of what individual children require and how we can adjust the environment and/or routines where appropriate.

We now include details about dentists on our enrolment forms and hand out information of oral health to all families as well as signposting families to local dentists to register if they haven't already done so.

We have also registered with the Infant and Toddler Forum Ten Step Programme to offer information of healthy living to all families.

Education of Children:

- **Observation** - we spend as much time as we can with children, teaching **IN THE MOMENT**, not having time out to complete unnecessary paperwork or using technology to record learning in a way which is detrimental and intrusive to the learning process. We utilise the Tapestry software as effectively and efficiently as we can, reviewing how and what we observe and the ways in which information is communicated to parents. Through staff discussion and reflection we decide together how we can best support individual children and utilise tools which make our practice as useful, relevant and effective as possible. We use a weekly staff meeting to continually monitor what works well and what doesn't.

In the Autumn Term we take snapshot photos and link these to the EYFS flags every session a child attends to build an initial picture of a child's needs and interests. Thereafter we record WOW moments, group based adult-led learning and more in-depth observations using a Focus Child rota format. We sometimes use a Personal Profile tool looking at both the prime and specific areas of learning too.

- **Assessment:** Where needed we complete a 2 Year Old Progress Check and for all our Under 3 children we focus on the 3 Prime Areas of Learning to ensure children are making good progress in these foundation areas. We regularly use a general Speech and Language monitoring tool and a more specific monitoring tool for children with English as an Additional Language. Through discussion with parents, as a staff team and with the setting's SENCo we identify areas of strength and areas which require more support for every child.

We use the Leuven Scales of Well-being and Involvement to monitor our provision and ensure ALL children are purposefully engaged, happy and stimulated.

- **Planning:** We plan 'IN THE MOMENT', we plan group based adult led learning experiences based on a child's current interests using our focus child system and we plan continuous provision as a staff team on a weekly basis, using common play behaviours and knowledge of the cohort to ensure we are offering enriching, challenging and stimulating activities



which children can repeat, revisit, rehearse and gain confidence in. Where an adult is present then learning is scaffolded and extended to promote higher order thinking and high levels of involvement and engagement. We also use our knowledge of individual strengths and areas of support to differentiate in terms of equipment provided, adult present/not present, a range of developmentally appropriate outcomes etc to make sure there is access to the curriculum for all children.

- **Teaching:** We use the teaching approaches outlined by Anna Ephgrave following the Teaching In the Moment model, sustained shared thinking (Siraj-Blatchford et al) and a range of DfE publications which explore a diverse range of teaching and learning. We attend training either remotely, delivered in-house or provided for a fee by the Local Authority to develop, expand and refresh our pedagogy and within the staff team support each other through discussion, sharing ideas and recommending appropriate reading/podcasts/blogs/websites etc
- **Learning:** Children learn through play and being given the time to explore resources in a way which is meaningful to them. They need time to follow their own interests, guided by sensitive adults who through knowledge and experience know when to observe, collaborate or instruct. Children need the opportunity to learn in both the indoor and outdoor environments and spend the majority of their time learning whilst moving. Children learn through conversation, instruction, shared adult-led activities and knowing that their questions will be answered by available, interested and familiar adults.

Social Skills of children: These are embedded throughout every activity, planned and unplanned, modelled by adults, explicitly taught for children who have identified social communication support needs (one to one and small group sessions with the setting's SENCo) and encouraged and prompted by Key Persons during learning through play, snack time, tidy up time and other setting routines. In addition as part of the statutory EYFS framework (2021) we aim to incorporate the skills enveloping executive function and self-regulation by using the Key Person/Key Group format to foster a sense of belonging and community, supporting communication skills so that children are increasingly able to label and express their emotions, and encouraging children to have the courage and resilience to take risks in their learning, trying new things and discovering 'how to' through trial and error, perseverance and changing strategy.

Happiness of the children: At the start of the Autumn Term we use the Leuven Scales for Wellbeing and Involvement as part of our observation process to provide an on-entry baseline assessment. We then take a look at the scales for every child once a term, using the focus child rota system, to monitor how



engages, purposeful and happy each child is. We do not limit this monitoring to the focus child system only though and utilise the weekly staff meeting and informal chats to discuss individual children with individual Key Persons and/or the staff team as a whole. If it is then felt that children need additional support in this area this will be discussed with parents and actions put in place to be regularly reviewed. We aim to spend time with children nurturing them to build confidence and independence and will make it a priority to ensure children who are struggling to feel comfortable and happy are greeted by their Key Person, partnered in a starting activity of their choice and/or identified as a current interest.

Inclusion: *(please see separate Inclusion Policy)* Our setting's SENCo is Fay Flude. Fay is responsible for identifying, monitoring and teaching/supporting children with additional needs and/or disability and liaises on a daily basis with the staff team and individual Key Persons to ensure individual needs are being met. Fay is responsible for ongoing conversations and exchange of information with parents as well as referring children to supporting agencies such as Portage, Child Development Clinic, SEND Under 5s (previously EYPARM) etc. Time is set aside every session for Fay to work one-to-one or in small groups with children who have been identified as requiring additional support. These children have their own I Can Plan which is written, implemented, evaluated and adapted by Fay through observation, assessment and discussion with parents. We also aim to include parents as partners in the education process, making time for both informal and formal Parent Chats to share information, and using a private Facebook page and email to send a weekly newsletter, setting home learning challenges and providing materials, documents and weblinks for parents to support their child's learning and development at home. We use Tapestry to update and inform parents/primary carers and to encourage them to upload photos of what their own child is doing/enjoys/has achieved at home.

OUR IMPACT: To evaluate the impact our curriculum is having on the cohort we will discuss as a staff team any revisions which need to be made to our desired outcomes for children on a regular basis via our weekly staff meeting. We have an initial starting point for a few outcomes in each of the following areas but as this is an ongoing process these can be added to, to take in to account the uniqueness of each child and each cohort.

Care of children:

- (1) Children will come into Pre-School happy and keen to start the session, separating from parents/primary carers smoothly



- (2) Children will choose what they would like to play with and/or ask an adult for a particular resource
- (3) Children will engage in conversation and play with their Key Person or another adult in the setting
- (4) Children will spontaneously sit with a preferred adult, hold hands, seek them out, cuddle, play with
- (5) Children will talk at home and or Pre-School positively about an adult at Pre-School s/he enjoys being with

Social Skills of children:

- (1) Children will respond to a simple verbal instruction from an adult eg get your bag/shoes/coat
- (2) Children will respond to the support of an adult to take turns with a resource
- (3) Children will spontaneously pass a resource to a peer, recognising the need to take turns
- (4) Children will use a sand timer to wait their turn for a preferred resource
- (5) Children will allow themselves to be comforted and then distracted by an adult to manage their emotions
- (6) Children will be able to tell an adult for example, 'I feel sad' thus seeking a way to help resolve the problem
- (7) Children will be able to resolve conflict with a peer with, and where developmentally appropriate, without the support of a familiar adult

Education of children:

- (1) Children will be engaged, initiating, sustaining and choosing their own learning through play - they will be concentrating, completing a task, interacting with peers
- (2) Children will be making progress within the 7 educational programmes as outlined in the statutory EYFS 2021 framework, using professional judgement and knowledge of the individual child
- (3) Children will be making progress in terms of their individual needs ie for those children with an I Can Plan, there will be evidence that a skill, knowledge, understanding of etc has been gained/used/repeated/applied outside of the one-to-one format

Happiness of Children: Please see points made in Care of and Social Skills of for suggested outcomes



Inclusion:

- (1) Children with identified additional needs and or disability will attend the setting, supported by a dedicated Key Person and the setting SENCo
- (2) Children will access all 7 educational programmes in a way which supports their understanding and level of development at any given time

Above all, we want to evolve, expand, and enrich the lives of the children who come into our care and education at Bolnore Village Pre-School, where learning is child centred and where we form a bridge between what a child can do now and what s/he can do tomorrow. Through warm, trusting and affectionate relationships we WILL nurture, motivate and inspire children to thrive, be confident and be ready to learn for life.