

Curriculum

The Federation of Kintore Way Nursery School and Children's Centre and the Grove Nursery School believe that everyone learns best when they feel happy, relaxed, safe and secure. We aim to provide a rich learning environment where play is recognised as vital for development. For young children, play is the child's work. Through play:

- children have practical experiences;
- children explore and investigate;
- children use their imagination;
- children can be successful;
- children make sense of their world;
- children learn at their own level;
- children learn at their own pace;
- children learn how to solve problems;
- children learn to collaborate with others;
- children find out that learning is fun.

We want children to feel excited about learning. We believe that children, parents, carers and staff all have a role in promoting the 'four Cs' – **curiosity, confidence, cooperation and creativity**. We do this by providing a multi-layered curriculum.

Our multi-layered curriculum is responsive to children's individual needs and interests as well as opening up new ideas and learning opportunities; reflecting seasonal changes and events; and promoting the development of different skills. The children have access to a varied, inclusive and enabling learning environment which reflects all aspects of the curriculum. The 10 elements of our curriculum include:

1. Responding to children's needs and interests;
2. Including input from parents and carers;
3. Seizing teachable moments;
4. Being responsive to the seasons, celebrations and events;
5. Introducing and exploring core books and rhymes;
6. Providing provocations and promoting curiosity;
7. Introducing and practising skills;
8. Providing opportunities for enrichment;
9. Ensuring the children have experiences in all areas of learning;
10. Focusing on how children learn as much as what they learn.

We understand that all children are unique and learn in different ways, and our curriculum aims to enable all children to reach their potential, be inspired and thrive throughout their learning journey.

Many of the 10 elements of our curriculum are responsive to each child and their individual needs, interests and curiosity. However, we do plan half-termly to reflect the seasons, celebrations, events and core books and rhymes.

1. Responding to children's needs and interests

We believe that every child is unique and has their own individual needs and interests. Children learn best when they are excited about what they are doing. Most children have particular interests and use these as a starting point for expanding their learning. Learning linked to children's interests is highly motivating for them and all kinds of skills can be developed through these. Some of these interests will last for a long time, such as superheroes or dinosaurs or cooking, and some will change over time. It is important to find out about these interests from the time a child starts at nursery and to reflect the changes in these interests as and when they occur. As we plan for each child, we include their interests, reflect this in what we provide, and plan for each child in accordance to what their next steps might be. This element of the curriculum enables us to individualise what we provide and the support we can give to each child, wherever they are developmentally.

2. Including input from parents and carers

We recognise that parents and carers are the children's first and most enduring educators. When parents/carers and practitioners work together, it has a positive impact on children's learning and development. We depend on good communication between parents/carers and practitioners to understand more about a child's well-being and interests, and to have an ongoing conversation about each child's learning and development so that home and nursery can be working in partnership. We have opportunities for in depth discussions with parents/carers when children begin their time at nursery and periodically throughout the year(s). We also have regular daily contact with parents to talk about their child's well-being, friendships, interests and any highlights in their learning. Each child has a Learning Journey Book which reflects the learning that happens at nursery and home, and therefore provides a complete picture of what children are doing in all aspects of their lives.

3. Seizing teachable moments

We provide opportunities for children to develop their skills and knowledge across all areas of learning. We support children's natural curiosity by providing a wide range of experiences. We encourage children to become creative problem solvers by providing them with a thought-provoking learning environment. Children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions for a later date. As practitioners we remain in the moment with the children so that we can 'seize' the teachable moments that occur. We do this by carefully observing and interacting where appropriate to develop the learning further. Again, this is very responsive to each individual child depending on their developmental stage and what is appropriate for them to learn and practise. It is also inclusive of all children, including those with SEND, those who have EAL, and the children who need more challenge. We may extend learning through:

- introducing new language;
- extending their thinking;
- posing problems;
- suggesting a challenge;
- encouraging them to persist when difficulties are encountered;
- demonstrating a new technique or process;
- commenting or wondering about what is happening;
- introducing new information to extend an activity;
- providing additional resources.

4. Being responsive to the seasons, celebrations and events

We recognise that there are seasonal changes and events occurring throughout the year, which children will have connections with both at home and at nursery, and it is therefore important to plan for these times. For example, the Autumn is a time to focus on falling leaves and planting bulbs; the Winter might include ice

exploration and dressing warmly; the Spring is a time for growing and recognising new life; and the Summer might include dressing for the warm weather and enjoying the vegetables and flowers planted earlier in the year. There are also events such as World Book Day, Fireworks Night, Black History Month and Science Week; and celebrations including Christmas, Eid, Diwali and Chinese New Year. It is good for the children to experience these different events and celebrations as they can learn about diversity and cultures and faiths different from their own, some of which the children in their groups may celebrate. Special events and celebrations are also important times for parents to be involved, and they help everyone to feel part of the same community.

5. Introducing and exploring core books and rhymes

We have a range of core books and rhymes that we introduce throughout the year. This enables the children to gain knowledge of a variety of books which become familiar and which they can explore in different ways, as well as having access to a rich array of stories and non-fiction texts in the learning environment. Some of the books are well-known, such as 'We're Going On A Bear Hunt' and some are less well-known, such as 'The Colour Monster'. We also like to focus on some traditional stories, such as 'The Three Little Pigs' and stories which connect with the time of year, such as 'Stick Man' in December. We ensure the stories and rhymes we choose reflect the diversity of the children, such as 'Errol's Garden', 'Look Up' and 'My Hair'. Rhymes are also very varied and reflect the seasons, support counting skills, introduce new ideas, and help children to understand the rhythm and rhyme of speech and language. Please see the planning below to find out the core books and rhymes we have been focusing on this year.

6. Providing provocations and promoting curiosity

We highly value the learning that comes from the children and their interests, but sometimes it is good to inspire curiosity and wonder by introducing a provocation into the learning environment. This may come from an interest shown by a child or group of children, or could be connected with the season or a story. For example, we may introduce a large egg or a footprint or animals trapped in ice or photos of people in different occupations. This leads the children to ask questions and put forward ideas and solve problems. How did it get here? Who does it belong to? What can I do about it? What can I find out? What can I use to help me find out more? This in turn can lead to all kinds of learning, such as making up stories, creating habitats, using tools and role play.

7. Introducing and practising skills

We know there are so many skills that young children need to learn and practise as part of their development. We understand that children will learn different skills at different times and at different stages of their individual development. Some of these skills can be built upon, such as the development of mark making, and some of these skills are learned in parallel, such as hammering and drilling in woodwork. We aim to teach specific skills and give plenty of opportunities for children to practise these skills. Practitioners are aware of the progression of skills in specific areas and will introduce new skills to children as and when they are ready. For example, a child who is confident using glue and tape for joining materials could be introduced and taught to using the glue gun, building on his/her knowledge of what joining method is most successful for a particular purpose – this will lead to being able to make independent decisions about the best joining methods for future projects he/she plans.

8. Providing opportunities for enrichment

We like to provide opportunities for enrichment – these are experiences over and above what we are able to plan for nursery from day to day. They could come from children's interests or they may be linked to the time of year or they could be used to spark a new interest. They include local visits (e.g. to the local park or shop or post box); community visits (e.g. to the farm or fire station or art gallery); inviting visitors (e.g. people in different occupations or parents who come to read stories in their own language); working in partnerships

(e.g. with South London Gallery); and focus weeks (e.g. Science Week). We also provide opportunities such as watching eggs hatch in the Spring and butterflies emerge in the Summer.

9. Ensuring children have experiences in all areas of learning

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that children have opportunities across all seven areas of Learning and Development. Whenever we plan for or teach these areas, whether it is in the moment or pre-planned, we consider:

- **Intent** – the aim or purpose of the learning, focusing on different skills and knowledge;
- **Implementation** – how we are going to provide the opportunities for children to learn these skills and knowledge; and
- **Impact** – the outcome of this learning and how each child develops in response to this learning opportunity.

The Prime Areas include:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – which focuses on children learning how to manage their feelings and behaviour as well as build relationships and develop confidence.
- **Communication and Language** – which focuses on children developing competence in speaking, listening, attention and understanding.
- **Physical Development** – which focuses on children developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in the indoor and outdoor environment; and the children developing their independence and awareness of health and self-care.

The Specific Areas include:

- **Literacy** – which focuses on children's first steps towards becoming readers and writers.
- **Mathematics** – which focuses on children's first steps in exploring number, problem solving, shape, space and measure.
- **Understanding the World** – which focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world including technology.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – which focuses on the development of the children's imagination and their ability to communicate and express ideas and feelings in a creative way.

10. Focusing on how children learn as much as what they learn

We focus on *how* children learn as well as *what* they learn in our curriculum. The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn. To learn well, children must approach opportunities with curiosity, energy and enthusiasm. Effective learning must be meaningful to a child, so that they are able to use what they have learned and apply it in new situations. The abilities and attitudes of strong learners will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development. The Characteristics of Effective Learning include:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulty and enjoy achievements.
- Creativity and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Inclusive Practice

We embrace and celebrate every child's uniqueness and ensure our provision, activities and resources are inclusive and reflect the diversity of our community and society. It's important that all children see representations of themselves within the nursery through the displays, books and resources that we use.

We are actively anti-racist and anti-discriminatory in our practice and we are proactive at addressing any barriers to inclusion including negativity, conscious or unconscious bias or stereotyping. The Federation is committed to promoting gender equality and eliminating gender discrimination.

We support children and staff to explore equality and diversity within the nursery without fear of making mistakes and with the confidence to find out more if they do not know. We support each other as a staff team to learn. We take those teachable moments where children show curiosity and develop those into teaching opportunities. For instance, if children ask questions or comment on skin colour this can lead to an activity where we create self-portraits and look at ourselves in a mirror. There are opportunities throughout the year for children to learn about different communities and cultures, our families are often our best resource, we welcome parents and carers to share the special things they do at home and in the community. This helps children develop a strong sense of identity and respect each other which is at the heart of our curriculum.

All children have consistent access to Quality First Teaching and our provision is adapted to meet the specific learning requirements of children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities as appropriate. We work closely with parents and carers and partner agencies, such as Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, the Southwark Autism Team and the Visual and Hearing Impairment Teams to implement and secure the very best outcomes, utilising a Team Around the Child approach wherever possible. Across the Federation, we are also able to support children's sensory development, with designated Sensory Rooms and opportunities for Soft Play. We also utilise a Whole Communication approach, across both schools, to support the development of children's expressive and receptive language. Our staff are trained to deliver a range of evidence-based interventions that support the development of joint attention and social skills.