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UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL - PRESCHOOL AND NURSERY CLASS

Planning, Observation and Record Keeping Policy

At the United Reformed Pre-School, we plan experiences to meet the learning intentions that cover the three Prime and the four Specific areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

PRIME

Personal, Social and Emotional development
Physical development
Communication and Language

SPECIFIC

Literacy
Mathematics
Understanding the World
Expressive Arts and Design

In addition we aim to make sure the EYFS principles are put into practice on a daily basis. These principle themes are:

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well Being

It is recognised within our pre-school that children become receptive to different kinds of learning at different stages of their development. In order to meet our children's diverse needs, we plan to build on and extend their knowledge, experiences, interests and skills.

Our curriculum is carefully structured to address a child's individual needs. There will be opportunities for the children to engage in adult planned activities, but many of the experiences on offer enable children to plan and/or initiate activities themselves.

Planning is crucial to ensure that the full range of children's development and learning is supported and extended. Staff use observations and assessments of the children to build on the children's existing knowledge skills and understanding.

In our planning we support children to develop by:

- positive approaches to learning and finding out about the world around them.
- confidence in themselves and their ability to do things, and valuing their own achievements.
- their ability to get on, work and make friendships with other people, both children and adults.
- their awareness of and being able to keep to the rules which we all need to help us to look after ourselves, other people and our environment.
- their ability to dress and undress themselves and look after their personal hygiene needs.
- their ability to expect to have their ways of doing things respected and to respect other people's ways of doing things.

Children are encouraged to:

- build friendships with each other and adults.
- develop their own skills of caring and helping each other, working co-operatively to solve problems.
- learn to share and take turns.
- take responsibility for their environment and for themselves.
- concentrate and persevere on individual tasks and ask for help when needed.

Communication, language and literacy

Our curriculum supports children to develop:

- conversational skills with one other person, in small groups and in large groups to talk with and listen to others.
- their vocabulary by learning the meaning of and being able to use new words.
- their ability to use words to describe their experiences.
- their knowledge of the sounds and letters that make up the words we use.
- their ability to listen to and talk about stories.
- knowledge of how to handle books and that they can be a source of stories and information.

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- knowledge of the purposes for which we use writing and
- making their own attempts at writing.

Children are:

- given opportunities to talk about their experiences and to listen to others.
- encouraged to express their own ideas in ways that can be understood.
- given opportunities to listen to stories, rhymes, poems and songs, joining in when confident. Books are always available, valued, shared and handled in the appropriate way.
- shown that printed words carry meaning.
- encouraged to use mark-making tools with opportunities to explore these, whilst becoming aware of the purpose of writing.

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Our curriculum supports children to develop:

- understanding and ideas about patterns, the shape of objects and parts of objects, and the amount of space taken up by objects.
- understanding that numbers help us to answer questions about how many, how much, how far and how big?
- understanding and ideas about how to use counting to find out how many?
- early ideas about the result of adding more or taking away from the amount we already have.
- an awareness of sequence through the use of songs, rhymes and games.

Children are

- offered many different activities to enable them to match, sort, sequence and count everyday objects.
- encouraged to develop a mathematical vocabulary, identifying objects by shape, size, position, number and volume.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Our curriculum supports children to develop:

- knowledge about the natural world and how it works.
- knowledge about the world and how it works.
- their learning about how to choose and use the right tool for a task.
- their learning about computers, how to use them and what they can help us to do.

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their skills on how to put together ideas about past and present and the links between them.

- their learning about their locality and its special feature.
- their learning about their own and other cultures.

Children are given opportunities to:

- explore and experiment with a range of natural and man-made materials.
- to compare and identify the features of different objects, recognise similarities and differences and share their experiences with both other children and adults.
- explore and try to understand their environment within the group, the wider community where they live and the world beyond.
- use equipment such as magnifying glasses, technology and other resources.

Physical development

Our curriculum supports children to develop:

- increasing control over the large movements that they can make with their arms, legs and bodies, so that they can run, jump, hop, skip, roll, climb, balance and lift.
- They will be supervised as appropriate to ensure safety, increasing control over the small movements they can make with their arms, wrists and hands, so that they can pick up and use objects, tools and materials. Using tools such as pencils, crayons, brushes, pens and playdough enhances fine motor skills.
- Tools such as scissors are available to develop control, care and precision.
- their understanding about the importance of and how to look after, their bodies.

Creative development

Our curriculum supports children to develop:

- the use of paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play to express their ideas and feelings. Activities to encourage creative play are always available. e.g. pencils, crayons, glue, cutting materials etc.

Children are encouraged to:

- use imaginative role-play individually and as a group.
- listen to and respond to music.
experiment with a wide range of musical instruments.
- make choices, exploring colour, shape and textures.

Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, research has shown it to be the means by which young children learn to think. The URC uses the practice guidance Early Years Foundation Stage to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities' children decide how they will use the activity and in others an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activity's information from the practice guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Assessment

Our curriculum is based largely on children's interests combined with activities to help them develop specific skills. There is a continuous cycle of observing a child in a play situation, to assessing what this is telling us about the child, their abilities and interests and then deciding what comes next when planning learning opportunities and experiences or the next steps for the child to take. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing Learning Journals. These form part of the children's records of achievement. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as times of transition, such as when a child moves into a different group or when they go on to school.

Working together for your children

All parents and carers are asked to fill out an 'Initial Profile' of their child. This is a short questionnaire, which provides information about favourite activities, toys, songs, games and people and about likes and dislikes. Every parent and child is invited to an induction day where the Keyperson can spend time with the family. This allows us to respond to the children's interests by providing activities and experiences to match and extend learning.

In our setting we maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set through the Welfare Requirements. This helps us to:

- give time and attention to each child.

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- talk with the children about their interests and activities.
- help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.

Following on from this, parents/carers have regular contact with the child's Keyperson at the start and the end of each session attended. On a formal basis, the pre-school is committed to providing written information about a child's progress based on the EYFS, at the beginning of each term. If a child has a carer/child minder, a home/school book is offered as a link between school and parents. Your child's keyperson will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the keyperson to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the keyperson will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

Observations

Each member of staff is allocated 'Key children' who are their specific responsibility. The staff observe their children and record them. These observations highlight the children's interaction, their level of 'involvement' in activities and describe the learning that is taking place. The staff also take photos and observe the children in general, recording significant achievements.

The information gathered is used to inform planning by incorporating what's next for the child. We operate the triangular system of planning – observation – what's next? – planning etc. Our plans are child initiated following the children's interests and needs whilst ensuring that all areas of learning are covered.

Planning

Planning takes place on a daily basis at the end of each session. The keyperson from each group will consider the needs, interests and what's next for their individual children and plan accordingly providing child-initiated experiences. It shows the main areas of learning and the key learning intentions. An evaluation of all the activities are recorded to ensure that the activities are appropriate, that they allow differentiation to include all the children's needs and abilities and how we may extend the children's learning. Our daily plan for child – initiated learning details our use of equipment and ensures a full range of choice and variety covering all the areas of learning both in the Prime and Specific sectors.

Future planning

We are aware at the URC Pre-School that firstly new ideas, guidelines and thinking is continually being introduced into Early Years and secondly, we as practitioners sometimes need refreshing in our views on working with young children. In order to account for these needs, we aim for all staff to attend training each year. Some of this will be covered by county led courses, or by receiving workplace training from visiting specialists, or our own staff members reporting back on their own recent learning experiences. In this way we aim to keep our planning for the children in our care at the URC Pre-School up to date and stimulating.

EYFS key themes and commitment

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
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1.1 Child development 1.2 Equality & diversity 1.2 Early support	2.2 Parents as partners 2.3 Supporting learning 2.4 Key person	3.1 Observation assessment and planning. 3.2 Supporting Every child. 3.3 The learning Environment	4.2 Active learning. 4.4 Areas of learning and development
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Last Reviewed: September 24