

Curriculum Policy

The children at Westwood Preschool are safe, happy, nurtured, and eager to participate in their development. Young children need to form a secure attachment to their key person from the outset of their time in any Early Years provision. It is our priority and our children's entitlement, to settle comfortably into our environment. Supporting children's social and emotional development is fundamental to our practice. We recognise that each child is different, with their own interests, abilities and developing view of the world. We respect the many different forms of family life that children may experience as well as their social and cultural backgrounds. Crucial to this is our focus on developing effective working relationships with each other (the Westwood Preschool practitioners and the Committee) and the strong collaboration with parents and care givers. We want our families to feel part of our community, no matter how much their child attends the setting.

Our curriculum fulfils the statutory requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage documentation and non-statutory guidance Development Matters. These documents are used to help us design an effective early year's curriculum, building on the strengths and meeting the needs of our children. Our curriculum provides children with opportunities (indoor and outdoor) to thrive in all areas of development.

We provide two rooms at Westwood Preschool – Caterpillars (age 2-3 years) and Butterflies (age 3-4 years). Fundamentally, our curriculum is planned around both the children's interests and sequenced around their developmental steps. The learning of children in the Early Years is complex, adaptable, multi-faceted and sometimes chaotic! Development Matters is non statutory guidance, which sets out the pathways of children's development in broad ages and stages - it does not replace the professional judgement of our highly qualified, skilled and experienced team. Our team (the Westwood Preschool practitioners and the Committee) consists of Early Years Practitioners, Early Years Teachers, practitioners with Qualified Teacher Status, a Doctor of Education, all working in close partnership with our parents.

Our curriculum consists of everything we want children to experience, learn and be able to do, in preparation for their transition into school settings. Pedagogy (how children learn) is as important to our practitioners as what the children learn (curriculum). Planning is organic and flexible to accommodate the children's interests as well as their developmental priorities. This is why we run a two weekly planning cycle, which focuses on a theme derived from our children's interests. This enables us to provide learning experiences around foundational concepts, in line with the children's ages and stages, but also to provide greater opportunity for depth and challenge through the continuous observation, direct teaching and guided learning and the enhancement of our continuous provision. Direct teaching and/or guided learning opportunities are formatively evaluated by our practitioners, individually and as a room team, to ensure each activity has a purposeful intent, age/stage appropriate pedagogical implementation and impact is recorded, consolidated and/or further challenge is provided. Adaptive teaching is at the heart of our curriculum. If a theme or intent is not capturing our children's interests or development priorities, we adapt to ensure maximal engagement and where required, personalised learning.

Our children have opportunities to develop their independent exploration through play but also through our practitioners direct teaching (modelling) and guided learning (scaffolding) the children's learning; all approaches enable the development of characteristics of effective learning. Practitioners

carefully organise the continuous provision (learning environment freely accessible by the children) as enabling language rich environments for high-quality play; this is an important aspect of our pedagogy.

Early Communication and Language is at the heart of our curriculum. We have a highly successful partnership between our practitioners and Westwood First School's early years teaching practitioners. This provides our children with a seamless move into a school setting. Practitioners work collaboratively to promote continuity in the programmes for synthetic Phonics, which is coordinated by a trustee on the Committee who is a Qualified Teacher in the school, along with our Butterfly Room Lead. We have an array of specialist teachers in other areas to enhance our curriculum provision.

Our Early Years practitioners' focus is continuously upon accurate and proportionate assessment strategies, which enables them to make informed decisions about what your child needs to learn and be able to do next. In the Early Years, assessment is about observation and noticing what children can do and know, rather than data and evidence. Depth in learning matters much more than learning in a linear and sequential way, with the intention of maximising coverage. Appropriate holistic and assessment information is discussed with parents prior to their child starting in the setting and this continues throughout the children's time with us, both of a formative and summative nature.

The Committee and Management team are focused upon ensuring practitioners are highly reflective and reflexive. At Westwood Preschool, reflection involves our practitioners looking back on their practice, examining the strengths of learning opportunities and planning for how to enhance them further. Reflexive opportunities are for our practitioners to consider how the implications of their practice can impact the broader context in which they work in. Due to this, we ensure our practitioners are given appropriate time, which does not detract away from their time with the children, to work both independently and collaboratively with other professionals on individual, team and wider developmental priorities. We work in partnership with the Early Years Alliance and other agencies to ensure our provision is accessible, supportive and inclusive to all.

Our kids club, which is available to Westwood First School children, before and after school times, is designed to provide extended learning opportunities planned around their interests, in a more informal environment than school. The nurturing and holistic approach of the practitioners in Westwood Preschool, carries through to the club and is managed by the Butterfly room Lead.

We are committed to enabling that every child has a happy and safe upbringing. Should any concerns exist then advice will be sought from outside agencies. Everyone associated with this setting is expected to uphold this principle.

Every family can support their child in making progress with the right support. Children learn and develop more from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives. At Westwood Preschool and Kids Club, our ambition is to establish a lifelong love of learning from the outset of our children's education.