

**EYFS Policy**

**Rationale**

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting with high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. (Introduction - Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017).

The Life Nursery must ….. work in partnership with parents and/or carers, to promote the learning and development of all children in their care, and to ensure they are ready for school. The learning and development requirements are informed by the best available evidence on how children learn and reflect the broad range of skills, knowledge and attitudes children need as foundations for good future progress. Early years providers must guide the development of children’s capabilities with a view to ensuring that children in their care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them (1.1 Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017).

At The Life Nursery, children can join us for up to 30 hours per week, during term time, the term after their second birthday (depending on places available).

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

* A Unique Child
* Positive Relationships
* Enabling Environments
* Learning and Development

**A Unique Child**

At The Life Nursery we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

*Inclusion*

* We value the diversity of individuals within The Life Nursery and do not discriminate against children because of ‘differences’. All children at The Life Nursery are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within The Life Nursery.
* At The Life Nursery we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children’s range of life experiences when planning for their learning.
* At The Life Nursery we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs and abilities, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

* planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
* using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
* providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
* providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
* using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
* planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
* monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
* It is important to us that all children at The Life Nursery are ‘safe’. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, however, need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.
* We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)

*Welfare*

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.”

The Life Nursery understand that they are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

* promote the welfare of children.
* promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
* manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
* ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
* Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
* Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
* Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the The Life Nursery and to meet the needs of the children.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

**Positive Relationships**

At The Life Nursery we recognise that children learn to be strong independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

*Parents as Partners*

* We recognise that parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.
* We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.
* We do this through:
* talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our nursery;
* the children have the opportunity to spend time within the nursery before starting;
* Stay and play sessions which are run half termly in The Life Nursery;
* offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child’s progress at our parent consultation sessions and allowing free access to the children’s ‘Learning Journey’;
* encouraging parents to talk to the child’s key person if there are any concerns.
* including parents as part of the 2 year old progress check;
* arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, nursery and parents: stay and play sessions, Easter and Christmas events, graduation ceremonies etc;
* providing space in the children’s ‘Learning Journey’ for parent to leave comments relating to their child’s achievements;
* newsletters
* termly learning summary sheets detailing their child’s progress;
* parent questionnaires – termly
* Home link books for children with additional language and for parents/carers who work
* All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.
* At The Life Nursery, all staff act as a ‘key person’ – each member of staff being responsible for a number of children;

**Enabling Environments**

At The Life Nursery we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children’s learning.

*Observation, Assessment and Planning*

* The Planning within the EYFS follows The Life Nursery’s ‘in the moment planning’ which follows the children’s interests at the time capturing learning opportunities. We also use ‘what we have learnt about our children’ forms – observing what we see and planning further activities to enhance children’s learning.
* These plans are used by the Manager and staff as a guide for weekly enhancement planning.
* The staff make regular assessments of children’s learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation. These observations are recorded in a child’s individual ‘Learning Journey’. They also contain information provided by parents.
* At The Life Nursery, progress and achievement is assessed and observed against the EYFS learning outcomes and developmental age-bands. These are monitored closely and analysed at the end of each term.

*The Learning Environment*

* The Life Nursery environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The room is set up in learning areas, where children are able to explore equipment and resources independently.
* The Life Nursery have their own enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children’s development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for children to explore in different ways, use their senses and be physically active. The Life Nursery plan activities and resources for the children to access both indoors and outdoors to support children in developing in all 7 areas of learning.

**Learning and Development**

At The Life Nursery we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are inter-connected.

Features that relate to the EYFS are:

* the partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at nursery and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
* the understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
* the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
* the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
* the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
* the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
* the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
* the good relationships between The Life Nursery and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our nursery;

*Play*

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules and boundaries. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

*Active Learning*

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

*Creativity and Critical Thinking*

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the nursery to extend their learning.

***Areas of Learning***

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning (prime and specific areas)

Prime Areas

* Personal, Social and Emotional Development
* Physical Development
* Communication and Language

Specific Areas

* Literacy
* Maths
* Understanding the World
* Expressive Arts and Design

Prime areas of the EYFS are the most important in the first few years of a child’s educational life. Unless the prime areas are supported the child will fail to thrive and learn. The prime areas form the basis for teaching and learning at The Life Nursery. However, none of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Learning Outcomes that define the age expected level of development for most children to reach, by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

* It is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure the delivery of the EYFS
* The Manager will discuss EYFS practices with practitioners regularly and provide feedback
* The Manager and Deputy Manager will monitor each child’s level of progress through analysing data at the end of each term and share with staff
* Any areas where children are deemed to not be making progress will be reviewed and strategies put into place for children

Reviewed by Louise Gray, Nursery Manager and Fran Edwards, Deputy Manager – September 2020

Policy read and agreed by:

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