

## **Learning and Development Policy**

**Name of Responsible Person: All staff**

### **Policy:**

At Tigers Day Nurseries we support children's learning by providing a wide range of opportunities, experiences and activities linked to the principles underpinning high quality early education as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). To support every child's learning and development children are valued for who they are, the knowledge, skills, interests and experience they have and the contribution they make.

Our ethos is supporting individual children to learn through 'in the moment planning', ensuring staff are aware of the children's own interests and can support these when the child indicates this. All children are active learners in the correct environment, enabling them to explore, create and find out more through their own actions, supported by engaged, well trained and interested staff. Our 'pedagogy' (method of teaching) is based around the individual child, their interests and experiences as well as ensuring we provide engaging and interesting activities which are age appropriate and which challenge and support each child to progress to their full potential.

The Statutory Framework for the EYFS is used to guide planning across all seven areas of learning and are detailed as: Prime Areas for all age groups; Personal, Social and Emotional development, Physical development and Communication and Language development which lead into Specific Areas; Understanding the World, Literacy, Mathematics and Expressive Arts and Design. The main focus for staff when planning activities to promote and progress the child's development and learning is their individual needs, taking into account what the child already has achieved and the stage they are already at, and building upon this. We do this by using the characteristics of effective learning, ensuring all children are given opportunities to play and explore, be active within their own learning and be able to create and think critically. The children's interests are taken into account and are used to plan activities and opportunities so learning is fun and inclusive for every child. Children are encouraged using positive praise and reinforcement and targets set for each child are realistic and achievable for them whilst being challenging and an aid to their learning. Staff are trained to understand child development and the children's next steps and ongoing training is provided to ensure this information and knowledge is kept up to date. Workshops are provided when required to support staff in understanding new legislation and guidelines around the EYFS and provide fresh ideas for them to support their children.

All areas of the nurseries are used to their fullest extent and children will have opportunities to take part in outside play, language, dance, drama and sport activities throughout their week. High quality resources and equipment are provided and storage is made accessible so

children of all ages can self-select and make independent choices. We focus on building children's confidence and resilience so they can become independent and interested learners.

Information on every child's learning and development is shared with and contributed to by parents and carers using their observations and photographs provided by the nursery.

## **Procedures**

*Planning of activities*

*Observation and recording children's progress and development*

*Sharing of children's progress and development*

*Procedure for using computers and tablets in the nursery*

*Resources procedure*

*Access for staff training*

*Monitoring the effectiveness of provision*

## **Planning of Activities**

- Staff use activities based around individual child's needs and are trained to respond to children's learning opportunities in the moment. This includes extending the children's interests, adding more resources or sometimes just leaving the children to engage and explore their own ideas and interests.
- Planning of activities includes all areas of the setting including outside areas and ICT
- The activities provided are a balanced mix of adult led and child-initiated opportunities and experiences so children are encouraged to become independent and inquisitive learners.
- Sufficient time and regard is also given to promote and extend child initiated activities.
- Staff are able to request resources in advance to be suitably prepared for activities if planning is carried out competently.
- The routines for the children give great opportunities for the children to engage in their prime areas of learning, learning how to be social with others, managing their own behaviours and emotions, communicating with the adults and their peers thus developing language, and opportunities for using and practicing their fine and gross motor skills. Staff extend these routine activities to support the children's specific areas of development.

- Children are always offered malleable and tactile materials daily such as dough, sand, water and have opportunities for free painting at the easel.
- We will ensure activities and learning experiences are adapted where required, and within reason, to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Resources such as magazine articles, books and internet access are provided on site to allow staff to research ideas and materials for planning.

### **Observing and Recording a Child's Progress and Development**

- Each child's allocated key person is responsible for setting up and maintaining their children's online learning journals on iConnect.
- Observations on children are taken and recorded by all staff, and various types of observations are used to ascertain a child's progress in all the specified areas of learning and development.
- Staff are expected to update their child's observations at least once a week providing the child has attended.
- Children's online learning journals are not accessed out of the setting by staff due to safeguarding regulations. If under exceptional circumstances this is requested, this must be approved by the Operations Manager and regard given to safeguarding and data protection guidance.
- Parents/carers have access to their child's online learning journal and observations with ParentZone.
- Senior staff check every child's online learning journal weekly to ensure they are up to date and accurate.
- Observations stored in 'draft' on the iConnect system are not complete, those stored in 'pending' will be read and published by the Management Team asap.
- Any staff member who has a concern about a child's progress or development must first speak to the Senior staff member within the room who will then pass these onto the Nursery Manager/SENDSCO.

### **Assessment of children**

- When children first join us at the setting we complete an entry profile with parents and will observe and assess the children in their first month to identify their strengths and any areas where they need additional support and this is recorded in a short assessment report available to parents on iConnect
- In accordance with the EYFS guidance all children will have a two year progress check at the age of two. This is completed once the child is settled within the nursery environment and we aim to complete it at around 2 years 6 months for the majority of children. There may be exceptions to this based around significant

events or changes happening in the child's life but all checks will be completed by the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

- The two year progress check is completed by the child's keyworker on the understanding they know the child best.
- The check is completed using professional judgement and careful observation, the voice of the child, the views of the parents and any other professionals involved with the child.
- The progress check at two must cover the three prime areas of learning but it is also expected there is a brief overview of the specific areas of learning included.
- The key person completing the check must discuss the progress check with the child's parents and a record of this retained. Keyworkers would be expected to guide parents as to how they can support their child's learning and development at home.
- If any additional needs or concerns are identified there should be a plan put in place, in co-operation and agreement with parents, as to strategies and activities that will be put in place to support the child. Keyworker will report directly to SENDCO.
- If additional support is required for children's individual needs consent must be obtained from parents to share information with other professionals.
- Parents should be encouraged to share the information on the progress report at two years with other professionals including their Health Visitor and any others involved in the child's care.
- When children progress onto the next base room we complete transition forms and a detailed handover is carried out between Senior staff from each room to ensure all information on that child, including their progress, their developmental stage, allergies, likes/dislikes etc is handed over in preparation for their move. Parents will also complete a parent transition form so they can add any information they feel may be relevant. Transition meetings for children with SEND or with a risk assessment in place will also include input from the SENDO and/or Health and Safety Officer. Parents are also given the opportunity to attend if they wish. Transition forms are monitored by the management team to ensure they are being completed and used appropriately in the best interests and safety of the child.
- Tigers Day Nurseries staff complete a formal assessment report on children who are leaving us for school, detailing all their prime areas and specific areas using evidence gathered from observations on the child which are recorded on iConnect. A copy of this assessment is available to parents on the app and we aim to send a copy onto the child's school before the end of the summer term.

## **Sharing and Child's Progress with Parents/Carers**

- Parents/carers are the first educators of their child and staff respect this at all times.
- Parents are informed of areas staff are working on with their child through iConnect and are welcomed and encouraged to contribute to these with their own observations and photographs.
- Opportunities to share a child's progress are held regularly and staff will consider convenience for parents to allow them to meet with their child's key worker.
- During any progress meeting between the child's key worker and parent/carer, they are invited to give written feedback on whether this was valuable and worthwhile for them to attend.
- A requirement of the EYFS is the 'Two Year Old Progress Check' which parents/carers are requested to complete alongside the child's key worker. We will ensure this is held at a convenient time to allow parent/carers to attend either in person or online if more suitable. The child's key worker will ensure they know the child really well and the child is not experiencing any transitions which may affect their well-being before the check meeting is organised.
- Parents/carers are requested to give permission for the nursery to share information with any other agencies involved in the child's care as without this we are unable to divulge any information to support the child's extra care.
- In the case of a 'Looked after child' under the care of a foster parent or the Local Authority, we will ensure the child's progress and development records are shared with the corporate parent. If necessary we will develop a care plan in order to share this information with other professionals involved in the care of the child.
- We will ensure, if appropriate, that a family with separated parents, will both have the same opportunities to access the child's observations and records. There may be some restrictions on this but we will engage with families on an individual basis to ensure we are supporting both parents.

## **Procedure for using computers and tablets in the nursery**

- Currently we use three types of tablets in the nursery settings. 1. Large portable tablet screen for the children to use. 2. Small hand held tablets for the children to use. 3. Tablets for staff to use to record the iConnect system. As well as this we have programmable toys for the children to use such as bee bots etc.
- The large portable tablet screens are for use by the children under the supervision of staff. These are locked to only enable suitable children's applications to be accessed. The screen is portable and can be used with all groups of children. If screens need to be transported upstairs the maintenance team must carry this out. When not in use the screen should be stored in a suitable area. Some of the screens are hired under contract so maintenance is completed on these by the hire

company so staff should let the Manager know as soon as possible if there is a malfunction. Screen time for children is limited to half an hour per day as there are ample opportunities for children to also access these devices within their home life.

- The small handheld tablets for the children's use are owned by the nursery settings so staff should immediately report any issues with them to their Manager who will arrange repair or replacement. These tablets are blocked so only free and suitable applications can be downloaded onto them. Staff should ask for support from Joshua Blunt if they are unsure of how to download suitable apps. The tablets must be kept in their cases at all times and it is the staff teams responsibility to ensure they are fully charged ready for the children's use.
- Staff regularly discuss internet safety with the children during media use and we have posters around the settings to promote safe use.
- The other tablets are for staff use only and not for the children's use. These are in place to allow staff to access the iConnect system of registers, observations, assessments, daily record sheets and accident forms. Each room is allocated one or more tablets and each one will be named so staff know which belongs to which room. Each staff member will have their own account set up so they can complete observations, assessments and records on their key worker children. Each staff member will be provided with a password and a set of security questions. The cases must be kept on the tablets at all times and staff should take responsibility for taking care of the tablets. Some children are not permitted to be in other children's observations and senior staff have a list in their room, which they update regularly to identify and protect these children.

## **Resources**

- The nursery settings share resources and equipment.
- Resources only suitable for the children's age and stage of development are used and regard is always given to ensure the children are safe.
- Resources and equipment are checked regularly by staff to ensure they are safe and not broken.
- Any broken or unsafe toys and equipment are removed immediately and either disposed of or passed onto the maintenance team for repair.
- Resources and equipment are sourced from professional suppliers of nursery equipment to ensure they are safe for large groups of children to use them.
- Resources and equipment are bought with safety features and within safety standards e.g. kite mark.
- Resources and equipment are stored in such a way that children can access them independently.

- Resources and equipment are cleaned weekly and a rota is kept for these. Dressing up clothes and fabrics are washed regularly.
- Where possible the nurseries are members of the local library and toy library.

### **Staff Accessing Training**

- The nurseries have a clear ethos in maintaining and promoting staff training and their continual professional development (CPD).
- All staff complete an EYFS induction within their first 3 months where they are shown how to complete quality observations on their key worker children and taught how to use the iConnect system. They will work under the guidance of more senior staff in their room with completing these until they reach the required standard. All observations are checked by Managers/Senior staff to ensure they are accurate and appropriate.
- Within all new staffs three month induction period, they will undertake training in safeguarding, health and safety and special educational needs and disabilities.
- Staff are offered opportunities to access short workshops and updates to keep their knowledge current and valid.
- Professional qualifications such as Childcare Level 2, 3, 4 and 5, First Aid and Food Hygiene are offered to staff in order to maintain high standards within the setting and are held in house at Tigers Training Centre and updated as required.
- Regular training is held during staff meetings to ensure standards are maintained and staff are invited to share knowledge and ideas regularly.
- All staff have access to an Educare account which has short, online workshops to support staff to maintain their CPD. Any staff member without access to a computer will be supported to use the Training Centre to complete these. Managers ensure all staff access this facility regularly.
- All risk assessments and other documents including staff contracts, staff newsletters etc, are downloaded and distributed on our Atlas Citation system which all staff have access to.
- Some settings may sign up to the subscription program offered by the Local Authority to access regular bespoke training. The training requested is planned by the Management Team based on the current needs of the setting.
- Training needs of staff are monitored by the Management Team during regular assessment of staff knowledge and skills through supervisions, observations and assessments.
- The Nursery will negotiate with staff and the Local Authority to meet outside training costs for staff who wish to complete a course not provided by us or a Degree.

## Maintaining the Effectiveness of Provision

- As a setting we are very proud that we look at the effectiveness of our provision in an objective and clear manner, with regard that the families and staff within our setting have constantly changing needs and requirements which we see is our duty to adjust to.
- The management team regularly complete observations on each room of the setting and these are recorded and fed back to the room seniors with targets for adjustments or improvements and monitoring of standards to maintain consistency across the setting.
- Managers and Senior staff are responsible for quality management in the settings to support good practice and help to identify any staff training needs.
- Annual questionnaires are sent out to parents/carers to ascertain their views of the service the nursery provides. This can be given anonymously or parents can request a personal reply. A special newsletter outlines the findings of this and is shared with all parents/carers.
- Children's views of the nursery, what happens here and what they like to do are regularly sought and recorded through photographs, observations and displays.
- The nurseries individually complete an action plan to look objectively at the provision and improvements we are looking to make. This is updated every six months and all staff are involved in this.
- Management Team meetings are held monthly with the Nursery Director to discuss the general running of the setting and plans for the future.
- Senior Team Meetings are held regularly to feedback to the Management Team how the setting is progressing and to resolve any issues which may need to be addressed.
- All staff have a regular supervision session every 3 months with their room Senior to discuss their day to day work and any training needs they may have. This is also an opportunity to support staff well-being, their work/life balance and their progression.
- Managers complete 'stay interviews' with staff to monitor their personal feelings about working at Tigers.
- Staff have annual appraisals with the Management Team to discuss their professional progress and development and any opportunities which may be available to them.
- Exit interviews are completed with all staff leaving us to get feedback on any improvements we can make for our staff team.



