



The Early Years Centre Nursery Planning and Assessment Policy

2024 - 25

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Review period | Annually

Lead Reviewer(s) | Nursery Manager

“Empowering today, for a limitless tomorrow.”



**Limitless
Learning**



**Limitless
Solutions**



**Limitless
Possibilities**

1. Introduction

Having a policy for planning and assessing progress helps ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum and learning programme. In order to effectively plan and evaluate learning experiences, we need to carefully observe and assess children's development. This helps us ensure that the learning experiences we provide are meaningful, relevant, and appropriate for each child. This helps to promote positive learning outcomes and supports children's overall development. Assessment, planning, and evaluation involve input from the entire staff team and are part of an ongoing cycle. Each team member can provide insight into the specific needs and interests of the children as well as offer observations of children's behaviour and interactions in the learning environment.

2. Aims and Objectives

We aim to:

- gain a holistic understanding of children's ability and potential, progress and attainment;
- identify children who are not making progress commensurate with their ability or age-related expectations, or who are experiencing learning difficulties;
- support the planning and implementation of intervention or enrichment strategies that overcome barriers to learning;
- enable the collaborative planning of future learning strategies;
- provide parents with meaningful and helpful feedback of their children's progress and attainment;
- provide information for the recording and evaluation of learning;
- provide data for the Nursery's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

3. Reggio meets EYFS Curriculum Outcomes



The Reggio Emilia approach is a self-guided curriculum with no set outcomes. Children's development is observed based on the EYFS curriculum, with the main focus being on Communication & Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development as well as Physical development to ensure that children have the opportunity to fully meet the non-statutory EYFS Development Matters 'Observational Checkpoints'. Development Matters (July 2021) states that:

The observation checkpoints can help you to notice whether a child is at risk of falling behind. You can make all the difference by acting quickly. By monitoring a child's progress closely, you can make the right decisions about what sort of extra help is needed. Through sensitive dialogue with parents ('parent' is used throughout this document to refer to parents, carers, and guardians), you can understand the child better and offer helpful suggestions to support learning at home within the family.

Since our Primary School is a NCFE setting, not a Reggio setting, we need to ensure that children are prepared for the transition to the Foundation Stage years. We therefore believe that observation of children against the 'Observational Checkpoints' will ensure that no child has gaps prior to their transition to EYFS pedagogy. Where we observe that children are not meeting checkpoints, we will first review the environment to encourage self-discovery through play. Where this is not successful, we will intervene, in partnership with parents, to provide more deliberate and targeted support.

4. Reggio meets EYFS Assessment

All assessment will be observational through play. Teachers will assess children and report to parents on the principles underpinning Reggio practice, i.e.:

- To what extent the child engages in child-led discovery and play
- How the child uses symbolic language as a means of expression and to create
- The connection each child makes with the surrounding environment
- How the child interacts with others and how they show respect for everyone
- How the child shows individual and shared responsibility, including independence and self-management
- How the child interacts with the community, including cooperation and collaboration with peers and known/unknown adults
- How well the child solves problems, working both as an individual and as part of the Nursery community

In preparation for the EYFS curriculum, we will also observe children against the Development Matters 'Observational Checkpoints' and share our observations with parents. Some examples of these checkpoints can be found below:

- Around the age of 2, can the child understand many more words than they can say – between 200–500 words? (*Communication and Language*)
- Between the ages of 2 and 3, does the child start to enjoy the company of other children and want to play with them? (*Personal, Social and Emotional Development*)



- Around their second birthday, can the toddler run well, kick a ball, and jump with both feet off the ground at the same time? Around their third birthday, can the child climb confidently, catch a large ball and pedal a tricycle? (*Physical Development*)

Learning assessed the EYFS checkpoints will be included in the child's individual online Seesaw pages to help parents understand how children progress through the EYFS curriculum. Both will be reported to parents regularly via informal discussions and more formal parents' meetings and written reports.

Teachers maintain an assessment tracker to identify where any child is not making the expected progress in relation to the EYFS curriculum. Expected attainment levels are referenced in the grid below:

	Baseline	December	March	June
Nursery (2-3 years old)	0-3 Developing	0-3 Developing	0-3 Developing / 0-3 Secure	0-3 Secure

The Teaching Team discusses and analyses students' attainment levels at the beginning and end of each term, including the moderation of judgments as well as planning individualised next steps where needed.

If we feel a child is not meeting these milestones, we will initially adapt the learning environment to close the gaps through the child's self-led play. Where this does not have the intended impact, our inclusion team will carry out an initial assessment and an individualised intervention plan will be created in agreement with the Nursery Manager, inclusion teacher, teachers and parents. This will be reviewed half termly to ensure that each child makes accelerated progress.

Assessment is overall an integral part of teaching and learning. The Key Teachers adapt children experiences based on children interest, knowledge and skills. Teachers are trusted to know their key children and use their professional judgement. Assessment should not entirely rely on extensive written observation and assessment notes.

Assessment Documentation may include:

- Learning Displays: documenting individual and group learning via photos, anecdotes, utterances and work produced by children (e.g. marks on paper)
- Online Portfolio (Seesaw): Evidence of child work, thinking and voice through visual, audio and video documentation. Teacher notes will allow parents to understand the long-term goals in relation to the Reggio approach and EYFS journey into FS1 and FS2.
- EYFS Progress and Attainment Record: student profiles and attainment in the EYFS Prime Areas.
- EYFS Termly Attainment Evaluation: Evaluation of children's summative attainment in the EYFS Prime Areas, individualised steps where needed.

5. Communication of assessment to parents/carers

Teacher assessments will be communicated through formal written reports (mid-year and end of year). However, the emphasis is on providing daily updates for parents via Seesaw and informal conversations at drop-off and pick-up times. Staff will have an open dialogue with parents of each family to ensure that they are always fully aware of their child's achievements, next steps and whether they are meeting tracked milestones. Families with children using the school bus will receive monthly phone calls to update



parents on their child's progress and wellbeing. The Education Team will ensure that initial teacher assessment will be communicated within the first 2 weeks on entry to provide an overview of the starting point for their child's learning journey.

6. Planning

Based on the close collaboration within the Nursery, planning is considered a collaborative process. The key teachers meet on a regular basis (weekly) with their Teaching Assistants to reflect on students' observations. Key teachers reflect and discuss observations during weekly meetings to tailor future activities and experiences to the needs of their students.

Involving the entire staff team in assessment, planning, and evaluation processes can enhance the effectiveness of learning activities and experiences. Each staff member brings unique perspectives and expertise that can contribute to identifying children's needs, planning next steps, and evaluating the effectiveness of learning experiences.

The Education Team is planning at the following levels:

Yearly overview planning divided into terms: detailing possible project themes (which may change based on the children's interests and needs), including ideas for provocations, triggers and context stories; parental workshops, engagements/events.

Yearly calendar including events, holidays, and parental engagements/workshops/events.

Generic Timetable: outline of the day; daily routines; use of common areas, Arabic/Music/PE classes.

Long term Planning – Routines: The teaching team plans together the routines that the classes follow and link these to the Areas of Learning and Milestones (DM).

Long Term Planning – Continuous Provision: The teaching team plans and prepares an enabling environment. Each area is linked to the Areas of Learning and Milestones (DM).

Consideration is given to provision for ELL and EAL including challenges for the more Able, Gifted and Talented as well as the resources that will be needed. The Teaching Team will include next steps for English Language Learners and children with English as an Additional Language in their planning.

Activity Planner – Project Theme: Teachers will take turns in preparing an Activity Planner with a bank of ideas related to all areas of learning, from which the Team can then draw when planning for their individual key groups. The plan will include ideas for activities and experiences as well as provocations to trigger the children's curiosity in the planned project theme. Ideas for activities and experiences need to be connected to a narrative that provides the context for shared explorations.

Weekly Planning Document: This specifies daily interactions and interventions by the adults, as well as specific resources and environmental features that contribute to the children's planned learning journey. This document is filled out by the Key Teacher based on her students' individual needs, interests and development. Planned interactions need to cover all areas of development holistically and support the Characteristics of Effective Learning. When planning interactions, the key teacher needs to reflect if these are enquiry based, challenging, enjoyable, multisensory, physical and interactive. 'Research questions' provoked by the teacher are interlinked and build upon one another. After the introduction of a new project theme, the teacher will develop creative triggers and provocations to maintain children's intrinsic motivation to explore elements of the project theme, which will lead again to further considerations and planning about what the students want to discover or what they need to do to solve the problem.



Learning Intentions should be differentiated to meet the abilities of each child in class. This could mean that the intentions are differentiated or the activities are adapted to meet the same learning intention. Differentiation will include extensions and key vocabulary to be addressed.

Projects and the environment are planned to include the following areas of learning as per the EYFS:

1. Communication and Language
2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
3. Physical Development
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

(See appendix 1 [ad pages from Curriculum – descriptor of all dev areas as an appendix](#))

Department for Education (2021)

Activities should preferably be planned to address multiple Developmental and Learning Areas simultaneously to ensure a holistic approach and authentic experiences. Projects could include themes related to the children's own life experience, such as their daily routines, shopping, going to the beach, pets, cars, etc. In addition to children's interests and preferences, the Education Team will adapt planning to show the following characteristics:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Department for Education (2021:16)

7. ELL and EAL

The Academy is a broadly multilingual school where dozens of languages may be in use at any one time. While English is the language of instruction and communication throughout the school, children use their mother tongue to communicate with the parents/carers and friends. Our setting will encourage constant real-life talk, including adults narrating actions throughout the day and mirroring the children's utterances to encourage rapid language development. Adults will use daily stories, non-fiction texts, rhymes, poems and songs to develop early language skills. Parents will be encouraged to do the same at home in the child's native language.

Guiding Principles for Language acquisition:

- Places importance on language learning, including mother tongue, host country language and other languages.
- The entire Education Team at the Nursery is responsible for language development of children.



- Affirms children's identities in order to promote self-esteem, international-mindedness and cultural understanding.
- Promotes the appreciation, understanding and analysis of symbolic expression, listening, speaking, viewing, presenting and literature.
- Explores language as a means to understand multiple perspectives.
- Addresses child language needs, including those for children learning in a language(s) other than mother tongue.

Mother Tongue:

Maintaining and developing mother tongue language is important for the following reasons:

- To develop and maintain language and literacy skills in the mother tongue for continuous cognitive development.
- To use the mother tongue language as a base for learning the second language.
- To develop cultural identity.
- To understand the language and literature and culture of home countries.
- To re-adjust to life in home community and/or education system upon return to the home country.



References:

Department for Education (2021) *Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2> (Accessed: 22 November 2021).