

Early Years Foundation Stage, Learning & Development Policy

Aim:

To describe the Early Years Foundation Stage and the preschool use the framework to support the learning and development of young children in our care.

Method:

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS is the national curriculum guidance for early years' settings caring for children up to the age of 5 years, and/or the end of Foundation stage (first year at school).

The curriculum is divided into two sections, Development Matters, and Statutory Framework.

The Statutory Framework outlines the principles that all early years' settings must abide by in order to obtain registration with official bodies and maintain high standards of safeguarding and welfare.

The Development Matters is a non-statutory guidance on children's development through the stages of their first five years of age and how early years' practitioners can guide and support them through these stages.

Development Matters

There are four overarching principles that shape early years' settings. These are:

1. A Unique Child – Every child is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Positive Relationships – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
3. Learning & Development – Children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Development Matters is divided into 7 areas of learning and development. Each area is broken down into age related stages culminating in the Early Learning Goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all children should have gained by the end of the foundation year. The seven areas of development must shape educational programmes provided in the setting. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial, especially in the first three years of age, for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are called the prime areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language

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- Physical Development

There are a further 4 specific areas, through which the early stages of the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art & Design

No one area of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and dependent upon each other to support a rounded approach to child development. All the areas must be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities.

Children are competent learners from birth and develop and learn in a wide variety of ways. All practitioners should, therefore, look carefully at the children in their care, consider their needs, their interests, and their stages of development and use all of this information to help plan a challenging and enjoyable experience.

All relevant EYFS documents and guidance can be found on the Foundation Years website (link in further information).

How this affects Playday's Preschool

Playday's Preschool is bound by the EYFS to deliver the statutory framework. We welcome audits and support from Plymouth City Council Early Years team to ensure we are delivering this effectively and guide best practise.

Playday's Preschool also use the non-statutory Development Matters, to help plan activities for the children in our care and ensure we are delivering a personal and effective approach for them to thrive.

Learning Journey

We also use the Development Matters to track children's development and this enables us to highlight, at the earliest opportunity, if children require additional support to thrive. This is evidenced by staff carrying out observations on children's learning and development during their time with us. The observations and evidence of the child's work is collated into an online Learning Journey. This is a digital scrapbook of your child's time at preschool, the stages of learning they have achieved and a collection of memories for them to take through to school. At Playdays we use the online system Tapestry.

Additional Needs

When children are highlighted at risk of delayed development and learning, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator, will work with your child's keyworker to identify areas of need. Together they will devise an action

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plan to support the child or they may decide, with your permission, to seek advice from supporting agencies e.g. speech therapy.

Further Information

<http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework/>