

Physical Environment Policy

Rationale

At the Pre-School Centre, we are committed to providing a welcoming and caring environment that provides for the children's safety and wellbeing and supports them in their development and learning.

We believe that the organisation and layout of the environment should enable children to be active and involved in social and individual activities and experiences. Physical Development is one of the three prime areas which are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The Pre-School Centre will:

Provide a welcoming and friendly environment for children and parents.

Provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for the children's care, health and wellbeing, as well as their development and learning.

Provide both indoor and outdoor activities and experiences.

Ensure that all parents and children, including those with disabilities, have easy access to the premises.

Ensure that all aspects of planning, design and building observe local control requirements.

Implement specific local control requirements with regard to health and safety, planning and building requirements, provision of equipment and the use of staff.

Space within the Pre-School Centre

We provide appropriate space for children, including those with disabilities, to move freely and safely around the Pre-School Centre.

We organise the space to allow a wide range of play experiences, including whole group activities.

Toilet facilities

We provide appropriate and sufficient toilets and washing, as well as separate toilet facilities for adults.

We ensure that facilities are always clean and hygienic.

We provide the appropriate Toilet Training Policy.

Is your child ready?

Toilet training will only commence when your child is fully settled into Pre School, their rooms and when a good relationship has been established with their key worker.

Common signs include:

- Pulling at a wet or soiled nappy.
- Hiding to soil their nappy.
- Shows interest in the potty and others using them
- Having a dry nappy for a longer period
- Awakening dry from a nap.
- Telling you that they have just been or are about to, in their nappy.

Children will be encouraged not forced. Toilet training is a self-care skill that children will be given the opportunity to learn.

It is paramount that each child's self - esteem and confidence remains high and we will work alongside parents and carers to ensure this.

Accidents will happen and this is an important part of the child's learning process. Your child may just be absorbed in play or just caught up in the excitement of the day.

As accidents are inevitable, we ask that you bring daily a supply of spare clothes. We suggest 3 or 4 complete outfits, not forgetting shoes, (Crocs or similar washable shoes are ideal) to start with.

The child's Key person will support your child through the process in our setting and will also be happy to talk and advise parents on toilet training, if needed. The key person will also keep parents and carers up to date on the Childs progress.

What to wear

Please dress your child in clothes that they can quickly take down, e.g. leggings and joggers.

Children will find tight fitting jeans, dungarees dresses and skirts difficult to remove. We also suggest wearing a vest without poppers underneath.

Here to help

Working in partnership is so important for your Child's development, toilet training should be consistent and home and, in the setting, so parents and practitioners need to work together to support the child.

If a child is having lots of accidents and their keyworker thinks the child is not ready for toilet training, they will speak with you and advise you to wait a little longer and try at a later stage.

Although we have potties in our setting, you are welcome to bring in your own child's potty for them to use, likewise if you prefer them to use the toilet and have a toilet seat, we are happy for you to bring that in to encourage children to be independent.

Kitchen facilities

We provide snacks and meals for children in the Pre-School Centre at mealtimes.

We ensure that kitchen facilities comply with environmental health and food safety regulations.

We identify specific procedures for the safety of the children relating to the kitchen facilities, including risk assessment and supervision.

Premises

We provide comfy areas for the children's needs, as well as separate rest/break facilities for the staff.

We ensure that all areas of the building are clean, and well maintained.

We ensure that there is an operational telephone on the premises to contact outside assistance, as well as to receive incoming calls.

We have efficient systems for contacting parents, support services and other agencies.

We ensure that all the children have easy access to drinking water, toilet facilities and eating facilities.

We provide an environment that reflects the children's learning and development and has relevance for local cultures, communities and beliefs.

We ensure that the premises are well lit and have natural light.

We ensure that the premises are kept at a comfortable temperature throughout the year.

We ensure that the premises are for the sole use of the Pre-School Centre when the children are there.

We provide safe storage facilities for all types of equipment: care and hygiene facilities and play and learning equipment.

We provide an area of privacy where parents, staff and other agencies can speak confidentially.

Indoor provision

We create defined areas for different play activities, thus supporting the children in all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We use the available space creatively and flexibly to provide opportunities for the children's imaginative play, movement and large-scale play activities.

We provide opportunities for both floor play and table activities.

We create opportunities for children to access equipment and materials independently, and choose for themselves, by using low-level open-storage shelves and boxes.

We encourage the children to care for their environment by making some cleaning equipment brushes, dustpans, cloths available for them to access and use independently to clean and tidy up play areas.

Build on and develop physically from their previous experiences at home and in the community.

Have the opportunity to experience a wide range of activities that will challenge and support their fine and gross motor skills (large and small muscles).

Have free access to indoor and outdoor play activities each day and in all weathers

Become confident, independent and happy in their physical skills.

Develop an awareness of their bodies and the need to care for and respect themselves and each other.

Develop an understanding and positive awareness of the importance of keeping healthy and factors which contribute to this.

Explore, experiment and refine their movements and actions unhurriedly.

Have time for practising and consolidation and space and time for exploring.

Learning

Physical development takes place across all areas of learning.

Examples of learning opportunities at our Pre-School centre are:

Developing gross motor skills:

- fixed or moveable climbing frame, low balancing bench, transporting logs
- skipping ropes, goal posts, basketball nets, kites, streamers, parachute
- logs and fallen tree trunks, designated trees to climb at Forest experiences
- everyday objects for transporting e.g. tyres, crates, blocks, bricks, large boxes balls, bats, beanbags
- opportunities for self-expression through physical activity, music, dance, small world and role play

Developing fine motor skills:

- construction, e.g. clay, Lego, threading, tweezers, hole punch, wooden blocks and small

world toys

- threading, stacking and screwing toys, peg boards, puzzles
- clay, dough, cooking and woodwork activities, drawing/painting/collage/model making materials and tools, wind-up and mechanical toys

Developing health and self-care skills:

- preparing and sharing healthy snacks
- managing own clothing, e.g. putting on wellington boots and coats
- looking after our own bodies, e.g. visits from dental hygienist, climbing in forest.

Outdoor provision

We offer continuous opportunities for children to play in a natural environment of grass, trees and bushes.

We have daily opportunities for children to play outside, providing open space where they can run, as well as using fixed or other play equipment.

We ensure that there are areas of shade and shelter.

We use the outdoor environment to offer a wide range of learning opportunities for investigation and exploration, thus developing all the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Display

We create a rich and stimulating environment by using visual and interactive displays.

We provide display areas for children's own work, including pictures, drawings, writing and

models.

We ensure that displays are informative, and relevant to all families within the local community.

Babies and children under 2

To meet the specific care needs of babies and children under 2, we have a separate base area for babies.

This area includes designated sections for:

Changing, feeding, playing & exploring, sleeping.

We ensure that all health and hygiene measures, and all safety and security measures, apply to the above areas.

We have separate play spaces for mobile and non-mobile babies.

We provide an area that offers an appropriately stimulating play and sensory environment for babies by using colours, textures, light, sounds and movement.

We provide appropriate play and sensory toys and materials, heuristic play (including both natural and manufactured materials) for babies to explore and handle.

We provide comfortable seating for staff to enable them to hold and feed babies appropriately, and with care.

We also encourage babies to develop their social interaction with older children.

We use appropriate play or routine activities to introduce babies and children under two to older children.

We consider the individual needs and stage of development of babies and children under two when supporting their interaction with older children.

We make sure that parents are aware of the Pre-School Centre's plans and strategies for integrating the babies with older children.

OFSTED must be notified if any changes are made to the premises or their use.

Reviewed 05.05.2022- By Lisa Best/Saskia Gregory

Next Review: 05.05.2023