



# Teaching, Learning and Play Policy

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## Introduction:

This Teaching, Learning and Play policy aims to ensure that the children at our nursery school are provided with enriched, high quality learning experiences that lead to a high level of pupil achievement. Children learn through hands on stimulating experiences. This policy guides what children do, what practitioners do and what the school as an organisation does to create an effective and well-managed learning environment, in which the individual needs of the children are met.

## Aims:

**Stoneygate Nursery School aims to:**

- Provide an environment where children feel secure, happy and valued.
- Provide an atmosphere where children develop self-confidence to build relationships.
- Provide a challenging and stimulating environment for children to enjoy a wide range of play experiences.
- Develop independence in all children and give them a sense of individual responsibility.
- Encourage children to be motivated and develop a love for learning.
- Encourage children to be inquisitive, experimental and investigative in their own learning.
- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum both inside and outside the classroom through a balanced mix of teacher led activities, taught skills and 'In the Moment' responses.
- Encourage children to respect their nursery environment and be supported to appreciate the wonder of the world in which they live.
- Be sensitive to the individual needs and background of each child and provide pastoral support where this is needed, based upon the individual child and how they present on a daily basis.

## Children's learning:

We believe that effective, purposeful learning will take place when children:

- Feel safe, secure and confident
- Are encouraged to follow their own interests through child-led play opportunities supported by 'In the Moment Planning'
- Engage in open ended learning opportunities
- Have a nurturing relationship with their Key Person
- Are highly engaged and focused through their play as a result of an in-depth knowledge of the children and well-planned, enhanced activities that meet their interests and need.
- Are able to work independently using their knowledge and skills relative to their ability.
- Take increasing responsibility for some aspects of their own learning
- Are given opportunities to consolidate and practise their learning via regular revisiting of prior learning, e.g through use of floor books/ Lines of Enquiry/Working Walls
- Respond positively to success and show pride in their achievements
- Interact positively with adults and peers
- Are able to develop their communication skills to articulate their needs, wants and ideas.
- Ask questions to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding
- Have free-flow access to both the indoor and outdoor classrooms
- Show a love for the natural world

## Characteristics of teaching:

We believe that effective teaching will take place when:

- All staff have clear teaching aims, linked to an in-depth knowledge of children's ages and stages of development.
- Practitioners know when to step back to allow learning to flourish and facilitate children in being able to make their own mistakes and learn and adapt from these.
- Staff plan and deliver learning experiences, based on this knowledge, and know how to support children to make progress (overseen by the Teacher).
- Adults provide high quality interactions that support children's individual development and learning, building their self-esteem, confidence and communication skills.
- Practitioners keep up-to-date records of their Key Children to inform planning, contribute to report writing and to build up a personalised and detailed picture of each child's interests, their learning and rates of progress.
- Teachers provide differentiated learning opportunities, through levels of support and targeted resources, to support children's individual needs and provide appropriate challenges.
- All practitioners use a variety of teaching methods and strategies and there is a consistent balance of both adult-led and In the Moment Planning, where children's needs are responded to immediately .
- Practitioners endeavour to manage time, resources and classroom support in response to meeting children's interests and developmental needs.
- Practitioners work in partnership with parents/guardians/outside agencies, communicating regularly with them, on the child's development and rates of progress.

## Teaching and Learning environment:

We believe that the teaching and learning environment is most effective when it is organised to facilitate teaching and learning in a positive, attractive and stimulating way and is reflective of the children's interests.

### At Stoneygate Nursery School, we believe that:

- Everyone, including children, should take pride in the indoor and outdoor learning environments and have responsibility for maintaining high standards of provision at all times.
- Open-ended and natural resources should be easily accessible to children within the continuous provision to facilitate them in becoming as independent as possible during their time in nursery.
- All children's achievements should be valued. The environment reflects and celebrates the process of learning that takes place for children through the use of child-led Working Walls, Lines of Enquiry, and displays relevant to the children's achievements.
- The environment should be easily accessible, well organised and resourced, so that children are provided with learning opportunities that excite, challenge and support their learning and development.
- The environment should always be a happy, calming, nurturing and welcoming place for all children.
- Awe and wonder will be inspired through harnessing the children's interests and making this the core to inform future planning.

## How we promote good teaching and learning:

### The following systems are in place to support teaching and learning:

- A Key Person system is in place so that children are enabled to form good, supportive relationships with nursery staff, in which they are encouraged to **play and explore** and 'have a go'.
- Staff observe children during their nursery sessions and record their achievements in a variety of ways, using these to monitor children's progress, plan their future learning opportunities and identify next steps and targets.
- Practitioners extend children's learning by encouraging them to **think critically** and by facilitating high quality interactions that support the development of vocabulary and other communication and language skills.
- We have a carefully designed, **skills-based curriculum** that is taught through various themes and topics; these are adapted to engage specific cohorts/groups of children, dependent upon their interests at any particular time.
- Learning is planned for by building on children's individual interests and experiences, while incorporating seasonal and cultural events, so that children have access to a broad and exciting curriculum.
- Continuous provision areas are reviewed at least each half-term to support the ongoing skills development of children, including providing **active learning** opportunities and enhancements that match their developmental and learning needs, while incorporating challenge.
- Professional discussions and communication between staff are held on a daily basis, enabling both a good knowledge of the children to be shared and to facilitate the review and adaptation of children's individual targets, where appropriate.

- Weekly group plans are created and reviewed to ensure children have opportunities to consolidate and practise their developing skills and learning.
- Children’s current learning development bands and next steps targets are available within the classroom for all staff to access; this enables any member of staff to be in a position to support the children and facilitate in consolidating and/or moving their learning on.
- Core stories are mapped out in the curriculum and used to promote a love of reading.
- Where identified, targeted learning is planned for children’s specific learning needs, in partnership with teaching staff and other professionals.
- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator provides support for early identification and access to interventions for individual children. Interactions are planned separately and implemented by staff within the continuous provision offer.
- The school works in partnership with other agencies involved with children, including Health Professionals, SALT and Children’s Social Care.
- An inclusive approach to all cultures and backgrounds of our children and families.
- Regular parent partnership opportunities for parents to engage in their child’s learning in partnership with nursery, at home and in the community (e.g. Stay and Play sessions, Class Dojo).
- Predictable interests/celebrations and enrichment opportunities are considered and mapped out within our curriculum offer.
- Regular review of our curriculum offer to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the cohort needs.
- Group Time sessions are regularly reviewed and adapted; children are organised to reflect readiness to learn. Where necessary, smaller teaching groups are made.

**Indications of effective teaching and learning:**

**Pupil Outcomes:**

At Stoneygate Nursery School, every child matters. We hold a shared vision that by the time our children leave Stoneygate, no matter the length of time spent with us, they will be:

- C – Confident
- H – Happy
- I – Imaginative
- L – Lifelong learners
- D – Determined
- R – Resilient
- E – Excellent communicators
- N – Nurturing

**We also aim for:**

- Evidence of sustained progress and achievement
- Children’s ability to play/explore independently
- Positive attitudes towards school and learning
- High levels of engagement, self-esteem and confidence
- Motivation and a willingness to learning
- Good behaviour (linked to our behaviour policy)
- An increase in skills development

- School readiness
- Good attendance

**Teacher/school outcomes:**

- Positive attitudes and ethos
- High quality training that provides effective Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all staff
- The quality of teaching is continually being evaluated and improved upon
- Positive approach to assessment and self-evaluation
- Positive attitude to the performance management cycle
- Good teacher/parent relationships
- Team work

# Play Policy

**At Stoneygate Nursery, we believe that all children and young people need to play.**

**Children have a natural need to play that cannot be halted; it is how they make sense of the world around them. Play enables children to learn and practice skills and to create bonds.**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Article 31 states that child have the right to play and relax:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (2017) Statutory frame work requires all childcare providers to consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

**We aim to produce lifelong learners by enabling children to;**

- Learn through play experiences and make choices about their play.
- Ensure that play opportunities are always built on what they know and can do.
- Access safe, quality play; both indoors and outdoors, in a child-centred environment.
- Experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live, through the seven areas of learning.
- Access play in an environment that is underpinned by British Values.
- Develop their social skills and form meaningful relationships.
- Express their emotions through play.
- Play and learn in different ways which change and develop as children grow and learn.
- Explore, investigate and use all their senses.
- Practise and develop ideas, knowledge, concepts and skills.
- Think creatively and imaginatively.
- Develop communication and language and early literacy skills through imaginative and creative play.
- Have time and space to develop their own play experiences; building upon their own interests, which is effectively supported by skilled interactions with practitioners.
- Make sense of their own and others' cultural experiences through their play.
- Relive experiences through their play.
- Be active learners, demonstrating curiosity and imagination.
- Develop confidence and self-esteem through play.
- Become independent learners and make decisions about their own learning.

## School and Community

We value parents as partners and as the child's first educator by;

- Promoting an 'Open Door' policy.
- Completing "getting to know you" sheets, alongside parents of Seedling children, to obtain information on what the child can do before starting nursery.
- Encouraging parents to attend stay and play sessions with their child
- Having a flexible, buildable settling in period, led by the needs of each child.
- Providing information for parents to support their children's play and learning at home.
- Holding termly progress meetings/drop-in sessions, to discuss children's achievements.
- Inviting parents in to our setting on a regular basis for both focused sessions e.g. Stay and Play/ Parental Workshops and for celebratory/community events such as Harvest or Christmas Nativity.
- Encouraging families to use good quality resources for children to play with at home, including encouraging use of the nursery's book library resources.
- Attending meetings with parents and other professionals where needed, such as SaLT or Specialist Teachers, to enhance and accelerate learning.
- Working in partnership with parents and Health Visitors to complete 2 year old developmental assessments.
- Visits to local places of interest, such as children's library, train station and community garden.