Teaching & Learning Policy **Spring 2025** **Review: Spring 2027**

"ALL DIFFERENT, ALL EQUAL, ALL ACHIEVING"

Introduction

We believe in the importance of lifelong learning. Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. We aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to become competent, confident learners who achieve well. We believe that appropriate learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Aims and objectives

We aim to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. Outside learning is valued as much as indoor learning.

Through our teaching and our learning environment, we aim to:

- Provide a welcoming environment in which all feel safe, secure and ready to learn.
- Build on the learning a child has already achieved.
- To engage in first-hand experiences playing, exploring and active learning.
- Encourage children to be creative and think critically, essential characteristics for effective learning.
- Equip children with the key knowledge, skills and understanding which they need for further learning.
- Be responsive to individual children's needs and ensure they can access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Provide a language rich environment.
- Listen to children and respond to children's interests.
- Enable children to access resources and equipment independently and at their level enabling them to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners.
- Encourage creative thinking.
- Foster children's self-esteem and resilience.
- Give children opportunities to learn outdoors.
- Ensure that children develop a self-image of themselves as capable learners who have a 'can do' approach to learning.
- Offer an environment with rich activities that supports and encourages playing and learning together.
- Help children build positive relationships with other people encouraging children to respect the needs, ideas and feelings of others.
- Enable children to understand their community, and help them feel a valued part of it.
- Develop a working partnership with all parents/carers valuing the knowledge, skills and experience they have to offer.

- Promote learning for all, adults and children.

Effective learning

Children learn most effectively when they are happy and when we enable them to develop their self-knowledge and self-confidence. We aim to ensure the best possible environment and relationships for learning by developing a nursery in which children feel safe and feel they belong.

Each child is allocated a keyworker. The keyworker's role is to: -

- Ensure that every child's care and learning meets their individual needs.
- Work with parents/carers to support their children's development at home.
- Observe children's development and record key moments in their learning journeys.
- Contribute to a quality learning environment.

Play is an essential part of all children's development and learning. Tunstall Nursery School follows the play-based Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. Through play children have first-hand experiences playing, exploring and active learning. Children are encouraged to be creative and think critically, essential characteristics for effective learning.

Practitioners follow children's interests as this is when children are most engaged in their learning. We understand that some children prefer to learn outdoors. Children's learning is best supported when they have opportunities which allow for movement and action, creativity and imagination, independence and collaboration.

We create an enabling environment that enables learners to learn holistically inside and outside, to enjoy challenges and not be afraid to 'take a risk' in their learning. Open-ended resources enable children to access and combine processes of development and learning. Within an enabling environment, knowledgeable practitioners optimise the development and learning potential of every child.

Within the setting children learn from each other. During the session there are opportunities for the two-year-old children to learn and play alongside older children in the nursery class. Older children develop empathy, confidence by sharing their skills with the younger children.

Effective teaching and learning

We do not test children. We observe children to find out what they can do and support them in the next steps of their learning. Adults act as role models, modelling thinking, language and behaviour. We understand that learning is in the process not in the finished product. Practitioners value the children's efforts giving specific praise for their achievements, building positive attitudes towards learning.

Practitioners play alongside children, tuning in to their interests, joining in their play, observing what they can do and helping them achieve their next steps by sensitively scaffolding their learning. Children are supported to use the nursery appropriately and to care for resources. They can revisit areas as often as they wish; in this way, they master skills that form the foundations of future learning.

Focus/support activities may be linked to children's interests, seasons or festivals. Parents and carers may be asked to become involved sharing their skills and expertise.

Children have the opportunity to learn at Forest School, in our garden next to the family room and some sessions in a local woodland environment. Forest School allows children to explore and experience the natural world through child-led, practical, hands-on experiences. This enables them to develop in all areas of learning, particularly self-confidence, self-esteem, social skills and language skills.

Progress is reviewed for each child at the end of every term. This assessment is used to plan next steps for the children which are used to inform the planning and are shared with their parents/carers. When children leave here to go to school a comprehensive end-of-year report is given to parents/carers highlighting their child's achievements and stating next steps for learning for the following academic year. Two-year-olds have a 'Two-Year-Old Check' before their third birthday. Children's achievements are celebrated in their learning journeys, which are regularly shared with parents and they get to keep these when they leave.

Practitioners reflect daily together evaluating each session and using observations of children to inform future planning and practice.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways.

These include:

- opportunities for involvement in a wide range of social contexts
- opportunities to communicate affectively and make sense of the world around them
    - collaborative work
    - independent work
    - whole-group sessions
    - focus activities
- sharing books and stories
- helicopter stories (children's stories are recorded and then acted out by the children)
- singing rhymes and songs
- imaginative role play including small world play
- cooking
- ICT, interactive whiteboard, programmable toys
- loose parts
- playing and exploring
- exploring and investigating
- problem solving
- designing and making
- creative activities
- transitional art
- using tools
- malleable materials, playdough, clay
- water play
- sand play
- construction toys
- block play
- puzzles and games
- gardening
- woodwork
- real-life experiences
- music/dance
- painting/mark making activities
- listening and responding to music or audio material
- visits/trips

- participation in a range of physical activities, bikes, climbing and balancing, bats and balls
- Forest School
- opportunities to consolidate and extend learning in the indoor and outdoor learning environment

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers have a fundamental role to play in supporting their children's education. Parents/carers are the first and continuing educators of their children and we support the transition from being an effective learner in the home culture to being an effective learner in our school community.

We work in partnership with all parents/carers by:

- Either a virtual or home visit and a stay and play prior to children starting nursey school.
- Welcoming and listening to parents.
- Speaking informally at the beginning and end of each session.
- Termly consultation evenings with parents/carers
- For children going to school an end of year report, where their children's achievements are celebrated and their 'next steps for learning' shared.
- Inviting parents into the nursery to share, learn about and support their children's learning. e.g. Welcome Wednesdays, visits, maths week, book week and art week.
- Opportunities for parents to share their children's learning and achievements outside of nursery school.
- Workshops explaining to parents how they can support their children's learning at home.
- Inviting parents to use the sharing library with their children.

We ask parents/ carers to:

- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible.
- Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend nursery school.
- Inform nursery if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school.
- Promote a positive attitude towards nursery and learning.
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home/nursery school agreement.

The role of the Head of school and senior leaders

The Head of school and other members of the senior leadership team have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the school. This will be achieved through:

- Performance management and observation of practitioners.
- Collaborative practice and working alongside colleagues, helping develop the learning environment.
- Supporting practitioners with planning, observing and assessing children's learning.
- Evaluating Learning Journeys.

The role of Governors

Governors monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from the Head of school, senior leaders and practitioners, including performance data for each group of learners, and a review of the continuing professional development of staff.

Monitoring and review

Senior leaders and the Governing Body review the Teaching and Learning Policy regularly and are informed by new initiatives, research and changes to the curriculum. This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner as appropriate.

child's attention on the activity, for example, might **support** the child to consolidate ideas and refine skills. Or it may be the moment to **extend** the learning through introducing a new idea or resource, some new information or a new challenge, and finding opportunities for sustained shared thinking.

Learning together with adults and with other children is important across all contexts.

Carefully tuned interaction with skilful adults makes a difference all the time – when supporting children engaged in their play or other child-initiated activities, and also in adult-led activities. When adults plan experiences with particular learning objectives in mind, it is important to remember that learning occurs when a child makes sense of information and links ideas to existing understanding. Direct instruction of material with no meaningful link in the mind of the child is likely to result at best in shallow recall, without the child being able to use the knowledge. Instead, adults can support the way a young child learns. Starting with information from physical, real-world experiences, a child then shapes and sharpens their thinking as they represent ideas through playing, talking, drawing or other graphics, and finally forms a clear mental image that makes sense to the child.

Through tuning in to the child's thinking and working together to find the links to what is already known, the skilful adult can provide a bridge as the child steps into new ideas. It is the way that the learning opportunities are tailored in the moment to meet the needs of each child

Children are not just learning in collaboration with adults. Playing and interacting with other children in all types of activities are opportunities to find themselves stretched, and sometimes pushed out of their comfort zones, by other children's ways of thinking, communicating and behaving. Adults can ensure children have opportunities to engage together, to collaborate, or just to play alongside each other and learn from each other's support and stimulation. Adults also support learning by planning for opportunities for children to learn by themselves, as they engage with the world around them in a well-resourced environment.

Within an enabling environment, knowledgeable practitioners optimise the development and learning potential of every child.

Knowledgeable practitioners:

- • consider the environment from a child's perspective, supporting a broader understanding of the real world around them and their own community
- • consider all locations available to children with equal priority -- indoors, outside and beyond the setting -- and value the time that is spent on journeying
- • understand that their role includes facilitating an enabling environment, rather than prioritising specific activities
- • consider the messages conveyed within the environment, questioning what the space is inviting children to do
- • support children's autonomy, explorations and risk-taking, confident that much is within the children's capabilities, with assistance if necessary.

Key points:

Children thrive within environments that support their individual and diverse development needs.

Enabling Environments offer children security, comfort, choice, engagement and opportunity.

Children's learning is best supported when they have opportunities which allow for movement and action, creativity and imagination, independence and collaboration.

Time outdoors benefits children by offering unique opportunities.

Open-ended resources enable children to access and combine processes of development and learning.

Inclusive spaces are nurturing and supportive of all children.

Within an enabling environment, knowledgeable practitioners optimise the development and learning potential of every child.