



## **Rationale**

At Greenbrae Nursery we believe that learning should be an enjoyable experience for all and promote a play-based approach to learning. We believe that children learn most effectively through play-based activities, which allow them to develop their interests and make choices, and which recognise that children's learning styles and pace of learning are individual. Through a play-based approach to learning, we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to achieve their full potential.

## **Aims**

Whilst adhering to the national curriculum, A Curriculum for Excellence, our aim at Greenbrae Nursery is to provide a safe, happy, nurturing and stimulating environment, where all children are able to learn through play and can develop at their own pace. We aim to create an environment that consistently provides innovative and challenging approaches to learning through play, both indoors and outdoors.

## **Our Principles of Teaching and Learning**

We will:

- Support every child to achieve their full potential
- Create an environment in which children feel safe, happy and nurtured
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to support children's learning and well-being
- Ensure that learning opportunities are personalised, creative, challenging and fun
- Ensure that learning opportunities are differentiated to meet individual children's needs
- Establish what children already know and build upon it
- Value children's previous experiences and achievements and work with parents/carers and other partners to ensure children's continued learning and wellbeing

- Enable children to become active participants in their learning
- Observe children and meet their learning needs
- Support and develop child-led learning
- Create an enabling learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that responds to children's interests and is developmentally appropriate

## **The Learning Environment**

At Greenbrae Nursery, we strive towards creating an enabling environment, both inside and outside, for all children. An enabling environment is one which provides a rich, varied and safe space in which children can play, explore and learn. It places the child at the centre of their learning and supports them to become Successful Learners, Effective Contributors, Confident individuals and Responsible Citizens, the four capacities of A Curriculum for Excellence (see Curriculum Policy). We understand and value the importance of building warm, nurturing relationships with children and their parents/carers so that they feel welcomed and supported within the Nursery environment.

We will provide a range of interesting and familiar objects and resources for children to explore independently. These resources, as far as possible, will be open-ended and will represent real-life, will encourage an element of risk in play and will serve a variety of purposes. Children will also have opportunities to choose where they play, as well as what and who they play with. Through close observation of the children, staff will also expose children to new activities and resources which they can choose to explore.

Through observation and discussion, staff will ensure that the environment and resources available support the individual needs of children. They will ensure that the resources are easily accessible to children and easily movable across a variety of contexts within the Nursery. By carrying out formal and informal observations of children, staff will adapt the environment as appropriate to incorporate children's individual interests into activities. Children will be involved as much as possible in the selection and organisation of resources within the Nursery environment.

A cosy, quiet space will be available in both the indoor and outdoor environments, to allow children a place for quiet time and reflection.

At Greenbrae, we also recognise and value the benefits of outdoor play. Children will have daily free-flow access to the outdoor area and will take part in regular visits to our Wee Green Space in the woods, where they will have the opportunity to play and explore in a natural environment that is part of the local community. In addition to this, the children will also participate in regular cycling activities, through the Play on Pedals initiative, and will have regular opportunities to explore the local area through community walks and visits.

In all aspects of teaching and learning within Greenbrae Nursery, children will be supported and encouraged in their independence.

## **Observation and Assessment**

Observation and assessment are central to learning and teaching at Greenbrae Nursery. We follow a 'Planning in the Moment' approach, which focuses on learning that children initiate themselves. Practitioners will observe and assess children while they are engaged in learning activities that they have chosen for themselves, supporting and extending the learning where appropriate, through 'teachable moments.'

Following these observations, practitioners will amend the learning environment if necessary, will intervene in the activity to support or challenge, and will evaluate the depth of learning that has taken place, setting next steps for that individual's learning and development. Where new or significant learning has taken place, staff will record this in a child's Learning Journey.

Throughout the year, children will also be involved in a minimum of 3 'Focus Week' observations, where they are tracked for a week across the Nursery environment. The children, along with their parents/carers, will be invited to share current events and interests from home, which are shared with their peers at Nursery and, where possible, will be incorporated into the Nursery environment. Observations from 'Focus Week', along with next steps for learning and development, will be sent home for parents/carers to review with their child. Parents/carers will also be invited to set next steps for their child and to come and discuss these observations with a member of the Nursery team.

Practitioners are observing, both formally and informally, throughout the daily Nursery session. All observations of children will be used to extend and enhance their learning and development. Written observations will be kept in children's individual Learning Journeys and will be regularly shared with parents/carers. Parents/carers and children will also be invited to contribute to Learning Journeys. Examples of children's learning are also displayed on the class Learning Wall, linked to the appropriate Experiences and Outcomes.

Children will also be tracked in their learning and development by Nursery staff, against the Curriculum for Excellence Experiences and Outcomes. Termly meetings between the Nursery staff and Nursery manager aim to highlight any barriers to learning and development for individual children, and will ensure that all children are progressing to their full potential. Key workers will track children's learning and wellbeing needs on an ongoing basis, in partnership with parents/carers, to ensure that all needs are being met appropriately and in a timely manner.