

## **Curriculum – St-Anne’s college nursery**

### **Introduction to the Curriculum**

This curriculum is inspired by nature and focuses on guiding children towards being active and fascinated learners.

Our aim is to gift children with a love for the natural world while teaching them to understand their place in it.

Our practice and principles focuses on:

- Child led learning
- The outdoors: with a focus on forest school and connecting children with nature, growing and understanding not just where food comes from but enjoying it and how it tastes.

We have a free flow system in place all year round making sure that children can always be in touch with nature.

We want to create enthusiastic learners who are independently curious and ask not only staff but themselves questions. Then we can move onto the good bit - discovering, and finding the answers.

We would like to give children foundations skills for life.

It is very important that as the child grows into their own skin that we start to add elements to their daily routine that will make them “school ready”; prepared for the next part of their life in education.

### **Language and literacy**

We understand the importance of a language rich learning environment and its foundation to developing literacy skills. We aim to provide quality interactions with our children, modelling language and asking open ended questions. We have fun with language – singing nursery rhymes, rhyming words, using alliteration and oral segmenting and blending in an informal fashion. We strive to incorporate it in to our everyday learning experience as an ongoing unstructured principle. We extend vocabulary by modelling language, children are listened to and understand the importance of listening to others.

We love sharing books with our children and have multiple copies, bi-lingual favourites and a monthly feature book that we encourage parents to buy or borrow. We talk around books, use quality questions whilst sharing a book, recall prompts when re-visiting an old favourite and story predictions. Our children share books together in various places in the nursery and we encourage an early love of books by always being ready to share a story or look together at a non-fiction book.

## The six advantages of the curriculum

Within our setting and in the immediate area we take advantage of a wealth of resources to enrich our curriculum and the children's overall learning. Staff experience, knowledge and willingness to learn also factor in these 6 sections.

<p><i>1. Adult Influence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When planning we encourage strong use of the 3 I's: Intent, Implementation, Impact.</li> <li>Maintaining a safe but challenging environment for the babies and children in order that they can pursue their own agenda.</li> <li>All adults at the nursery are urged to <i>watch, wait</i> and <i>wonder</i> what is going on before intruding on children's play and destroying potentially brilliant thinking.</li> <li>With a developing experience of Children in permaculture (CIP) staff think about the three ethics as they approach activities, these are Earth care, people care and fair share.</li> <li>Forest school is dear to our hearts, staff are on a never ending learning journey to make sure that we are presenting the outdoors in the best possible way. We want to offer what has been referred to as "quality forest school" or "full fat forest school."</li> </ul> <p>Being a small setting with a committed group of staff we do not stop to hold a forest school session. Instead we've woven our forest school ethos and The FSA (forest school association) principles through the curriculum so children have access to meaningful experience in the outdoor every minute of every day.</p>	<p><i>2. Peer Influence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children spend the majority of their day as a family group, choosing to move freely to activities according to personal choice and not exclusive to age.</li> <li>Children are encouraged and praised to take on a nurturing role within the group to benefit their own self-esteem and inspire younger members of the group.</li> <li>Dealing with an international community of people, children who have English as a second language (EAL) is common. After years of experience supporting children to discover English we have discovered that the best tool is the other children in the group. Staff focus on the well-being and the comfort of the child while surrounding them with language and interaction. Confident speakers in the group will teach a child with EAL to start using English far more successfully than an adult.</li> </ul>	<p><i>3. Continuous provision</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our continuous provision is subtly adapted regularly according to the influence and interest of the children and our own self-evaluation.</li> <li>Supporting children in their efforts towards achieving a goal – the process as well as the end product.</li> <li>Providing the opportunity for the children and babies to wander into the nursery garden whenever they choose – come rain or shine! The nursery has invested in waterproof clothing to keep children warm and dry. The value of playing in rain, snow, ice and the dark is high and we want to make sure that the children can enjoy these experiences in comfort.</li> <li>Meal times can be set up indoors or outside depending on the weather and the desire of the children.</li> </ul>
<p><i>4. Nature</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our curriculum is nature based, and we have developed a separate handbook devoted to our work in the outdoors.</li> <li>As an urban setting we understand the value of having a good sized green space in the middle of a city. We aim to make children feel like they are part of a strong connection with the natural world</li> <li>Babies and children are able to explore the natural environment in their own way.</li> <li>We have a focus on birds, insects and all creatures that share the nursery gardens. Feeding routines to care for the birds are daily and staff focus language on how we can help them. We want to achieve respect, care and love for all creatures. Flowers start to grow in the garden and the children naturally want to pick and use them in their play. But staff remind them to "pick and be happy, but save some for the bees" when currents and berries start to grow children are praised to pick and enjoy what they have grown. But staff remind</li> </ul>	<p><i>5. Local environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We expand children's learning and life experiences with trips on the bus to the local library, walks in the park and visits to the local markets.</li> <li>The immediate area is very important to us, as part of the college community staff and children can build close relationships with people who visit regularly as a representative of the college.</li> <li>We have been fortunate enough to build a relationship with a nearby college who have given children permission to use a strip of land on the bank of the Cherwell River. Here we have access to huge trees and new and wonderful wildlife such as Canada geese, swans and ducks. Walking to this neighbouring college takes us through the university parks, through wonderful flower gardens.</li> </ul>	<p><i>6. Partnership with families</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We value the support we receive from parents and the children's wider families. Their involvement and ideas can enhance our practice.</li> <li>We understand that the main carer's role in the child's life is primary. We are here as extended members of their community to support the child's wellbeing and development through their early years.</li> <li>Family members are welcomed into the nursery to take part in day to day activities, help with maintenance or celebrate festivals, colour and culture.</li> </ul> <p>As part of Oxford university we have the great gift of being surround by diverse and fascinating culture. Families visit from all over the world and spend time with us. Each of these families arrive with new ideas, attitudes and fascinating languages that we can use within the nursery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being a small setting we are able to talk with parents at length about their children. Learning what's been going on at</li> </ul>

children – “We must save some for the birds to eat.” We are aiming for a wildlife garden that is as biodiverse as possible.		home, skills they have achieved outside the nursery environment, and the other way round.
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Planning

Long term planning

Autumn	Winter
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Spring	Summer
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Medium term planning

<div>Assessment sheet</div> <div>Child's name -</div> <div>Prime areas</div> <div>Underpinning areas</div> <div>Months covered -</div> <div>Notes-</div>	Communication and language
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Personal, social and emotional development

Physical Development

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world	Expressive arts and design
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#### Short term planning

- Each member of staff takes planning responsibilities for no more than 3 Key children.
- The medium term assessment sheets (above) are filled out for each child every 3 months to make sure that staff are up to speed with the child's current interests and passions.
- While filling out these sheets staff are mindful of what children have achieved, what they are working towards and what can be extended in the future.
- Our curriculum is changeable and organic, it doesn't end. Skills will not be ticked off by staff as achieved, instead consideration will be given to how activities and the skills within them can be developed to further challenge the children.
- Staff look at the medium term planning on a daily basis picking ideas from the notes to turn into 'in the moment' plans and experiences based on the needs of the children.
- Notes and observations are kept to a minimum so staff are able to respond to each interaction with their full attention. Any notes or plans that are taken are put into a hand written learning journal.

## School Readiness

<u>Dressing and toileting</u>	<u>Playing and turn taking</u>	<u>Written and verbal skills</u>	<u>Following simple instructions</u>	<u>Concentration skills</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff take on a group of key children. Part of this role is to work in line with the family to make sure that intimate needs of the child are met such as toilet training.</li> <li>All children are asked to try putting on shoes and socks and other clothes before staff step in and help.</li> <li>A member of staff is always on hand to help children in the bathroom with pulling trousers up and down etc. until their self-help skills developed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The bulk of the curriculum and daily activities is child led. However we do introduce the children to turn taking games such as dominoes or catching and throwing.</li> <li>Turn taking is also an important skill during sharp tools activities such as wood work where for safety reason children must participate one to one with staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are always mark making and doing this on a large scale to help children develop the skills needed for pen/pencil control in later life. Other skills introduced at an early stage to develop these skills and muscles for writing and drawing include playdough, the movements involved in squeezing and palming dough are key.</li> <li>Language. It is key for the children to access all areas of learning. If language is not fully developed then other areas of learning will suffer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children are tasked with helping to tidy up activities that they have been involved in and helping their friends where they are willing to do so.</li> <li>Staff strongly encourage children to be helpful and care for others. They might give children simple instructions to follow such as “please put the ball on the shelf” Staff will skilfully change these requests based on the age, confidence and how well a child is understanding. Children are praised for their help.</li> <li>We also encourage and model positive interactions between children making sure that they can leave us with the skills to play, chat and be kind within a larger group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have designed a curriculum where children are able to lead their own learning and follow their own interests. Following what children are interested in will mean they will be engaged and happy for longer because they are learning on their own terms.</li> <li>We actively promote language and literacy. Books have a special place in the nursery and we think the power of books is enormous! All children sit for long periods of time listening to stories read from a book or told from someone’s imagination. Children often take on the role of the storyteller.</li> </ul>

#### Seven areas of learning Development

<u>Personal, social, emotional development</u>	<u>Physical Development</u>	<u>Communication and language</u>	<u>Literacy</u>	<u>Mathematics</u>	<u>Understanding the world</u>	<u>Expressive arts and design</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-regulation</li> <li>• Managing self</li> <li>• Building relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gross motor skills</li> <li>• Fine motor skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening, attention and understanding</li> <li>• speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehension</li> <li>• Word reading</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number</li> <li>• Number patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past and present</li> <li>• People, culture and communities</li> <li>• The natural world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating with materials</li> <li>• Being imaginative and expressive</li> </ul>

#### Characteristics of effective learning

<u>Playing and exploring-engagement</u>	<u>Active learning-Motivation</u>	<u>Creating and thinking critically-thinking</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding out by exploring</li> <li>• Playing with what they know</li> <li>• Being willing to 'have a go'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being involved and concentrating</li> <li>• Keeping trying</li> <li>• Enjoying achieving what they set out to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having their own ideas</li> <li>• Making links</li> <li>• Choosing ways to do things</li> </ul>