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| Policy: | THE ROLE OF LITERACY |
| Reviewed: | January 2016 |
| Next Review: | Three years, or as legislation may require |
| Responsibility: | Nursery School Teacher |
| Category: | Curriculum Policies |

"Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest"

Statutory Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012, Pg 5

(In the EYFS, Literacy includes reading writing).

■ Centre Aim

The centre aim is to give all children the best opportunities for effective development and learning. This is achieved through:

- Effective planning based on children's needs and interests, which takes into account each individual's learning style.
- The opportunity to develop literacy skills through a wide variety of developmentally appropriate activities.
- Use of a variety of teaching methods and resources.
- Ensuring that literacy development is planned across the curriculum and that books and other written signs/labels/materials are available in all areas of continuous provision.
- Ensuring that children are given opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books. This is to include children linking language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences such as cookery and gardening.
- Creating environments that reflect the importance of all languages through signs, notices, and books – including bi-lingual displays, books and posters.
- Planning opportunities for children to become aware of languages other than English, and communication systems such as signing and Braille.
- Early identification of and response to any particular difficulties in children's literacy development.

■ Effective learning

- Allowing children to use their experiences to develop their language of story through various play situations. Allowing them to imagine and recreate

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experiences, improve their language through social interaction and re-tell their experiences to peers and adults.

- Using literacy in every part of the curriculum.
- Being immersed in an environment rich in print and possibilities for communication. This should include a variety of media from labels, lists, posters, books, signs and notices. It is also important to make links with children's everyday experiences and use everyday print around the room, e.g., food labels in the home corner, road signs outside.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop their reading and writing skills through 'Letters and Sounds' Phase One. From a young age children can begin to develop the skills needed to link letters and sounds, this needs to be encouraged throughout daily sessions with short listening and sound activities, e.g., going on a listening walk outside, making appropriate sounds when playing with the small world playground.
- Providing an emotionally secure environment where creativity is valued and respected. This will allow children's mark making to increase and develop.
- Providing opportunities for children's mark making in all areas of the setting, both indoors and outdoors. This is especially important in the instance of boys, as their mark making tends to flourish when the pressure is off and they have their own clear purpose.
- Providing opportunities for children to represent their ideas through mark making. It is important that children have access to mark making materials throughout the environment so that they can begin to make marks to represent their thoughts and ideas in all areas of learning.
- Providing opportunities for children to make marks to communicate with each other, giving it a social purpose.
- Providing mark making resources that are carefully chosen, well-organised and attractively presented. This will encourage children to decide independently how they want to represent their ideas and which medium would suit their purpose.
- Providing a wide variety of books and a quiet, comfortable and print rich environment for children to begin handling and looking at books of their choice.
- Providing a wide range of resources linked to stories through which children can re-tell stories, e.g., puppets, magnetic pictures for sequencing, story

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sacks. This will give children the opportunity to develop their sequencing skills and develop the language of stories.

■ Effective teaching

- Practitioners teach children literacy in many ways and in a number of different styles. Each aspect – reading and writing – needs to be planned for, so that practitioners know how to respond to children both in activities led or initiated by children and those directed by adults.
- Practitioners observing children and planning for the contexts (this includes children's interests and experiences) in which they best develop their understanding of reading and writing.
- Planning that is flexible and informed. Plans need to focus on all aspects of literacy. Planning needs to outline learning activities in the whole learning environment, indoors and outdoors, for individuals and for small and larger groups.
- The effective use of 'Letters and Sounds.' Practitioners need to use the document through their planning to develop children's listening and sound making skills at their own level. It is important that children are involved in short listening activities throughout each session, for example singing nursery rhymes, sounding out their name, and that practitioners observe and assess children's skills and move them on to phase two at an appropriate time.

■ Monitoring and Evaluation

The methods of monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning in the area of literacy include:

- Monitoring of the planning, assessment and coverage of 'Letters and Sounds' in all services. Including moving children through the phases appropriately.
- Assessments completed by Key Persons on a termly basis and these inform the summative assessments.
- Assessment data analysed each term by the Headteacher and teachers and passed on to the Key Persons.
- Observations (on i-connect) and Learning Journeys reviewed termly by Team Leaders/teachers.
- Photographs and examples of children's literacy work displayed in each service.

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Planning

Literacy is prominent in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Children all communicate, if this is through language, signing or any other form of communication. It is important that opportunities for reading and writing are available throughout all areas as this gives children the opportunity to pull on their own experience and real life situations. Language is key to learning, and it is important that teachers, team leaders and practitioners plan carefully across the curriculum, picking out key language and questions and opportunities for children to read and write.

Medium Term Planning (Continuous Provision)

Using the Early Years Foundation Stage, observation and assessment data, teachers and team leaders write a summary of next steps, which is used to review the continuous provision.

Short Term Planning (Enhancements)

Learning experiences are planned for each week/daily, based on the observed needs and interests of the children. These are designed to build upon and extend children's knowledge, understanding and skills in this area and promote positive attitudes to learning.

Individualised Planning (In the Moment Planning)

Each child will be a 'focus' child for one week each term. Through this planning process the Key Person will plan for activities after speaking to the parents/carers and observing and talking to the child. Each day the child will be observed/supported by their Key Person and any interests or next steps will be planned for through the short term planning process.

Observation and Assessment

Observations may take different forms:

- A practitioner may note a child's interest in a specific activity or resource.
- Observations may be made during an adult-led or focused activity.
- Parents are encouraged to share their own observations and assessments of their child's progress.

Achievements and progress will be noted through i-connect, assessment grids and summative assessments (spreadsheet).

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A child's achievements and interests will be noted through i-connect, In the Moment Planning and in their Learning Journeys. Parents will have the opportunity to meet with their child's Key Person once a term during the In the Moment Planning week.

For further details on observation and assessment, see the 'Observation and Assessment' Policy.

■ Roles and Responsibilities of the Senior Teacher (Nursery School/Day Care)

The Coordinator will carry out the following responsibilities:

- Monitor planning of appropriate activities to promote literacy.
- Monitor planning across the EYFS curriculum to ensure that literacy is being developed throughout the curriculum.
- Monitor planning to ensure that all aspects of Phase One of 'Letters and Sounds' is being planned. Also, monitoring the assessment taking place to ensure that children are being moved on at the appropriate time.
- Monitor the environment in all services and throughout the Centre to ensure an appropriate print rich environment.
- Audit staff training needs in literacy.
- Discuss with staff their views on the use of literacy and the available resources to promote language across the centre.
- Observe practitioners in their teaching of literacy and agree any training and development needs.
- Review the Literacy Policy.

■ Roles and Responsibilities of all Practitioners

- Ensure that all children have equal opportunities to access literacy.
- Refer to the planning before each session in order to understand the learning intentions of all activities.
- Carry out ongoing observations and assessments of children in order to inform future planning.
- Ensure that resources are adequately cared for and safe to use.
- Inform the Literacy Coordinator of any loss or damage to equipment and resources.
- Inform the Literacy Co-ordinator of any training needs they have.

■ Roles and Responsibilities of all Parents

- Attend the termly parents meetings to discuss their child's achievements and targets.
- Share their observations and assessments with their child's Key Person.
- Input into their child's Parentzone (i-connect) profile and share achievements with nursery and their child's Key Person.

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- Support the Centre by taking opportunities at home to promote the development of literacy skills and knowledge.

■ **Supporting Parents with Developing Literacy Skills:**

Practitioners can support parents in developing their child's early literacy skills through the following strategies and tips:

2-5 years:

- **Sing to them** – Make up some simple words to go with familiar tunes. Personalise other songs to include your child's name and describe any activities you're doing together. However, make sure you always sing songs and nursery rhymes slowly. Your child will learn many words and actions if you keep things at their speed.
- **Get reading** – Look at books together, but make sure it's at your child's level. Let your child turn the pages and choose the pictures they want to talk about, rather than feel obliged to read every word from cover to cover.
- **Special time to talk** - Have a special time to talk together about the day. This will help your child to develop their memory skills and to talk about things that are not there or that happened in the past.
- **Let's Pretend!** – Join your child in pretend play. Let your child take the lead – it will encourage the development of both their language and creativity. Talk about what they are doing and give lots of commentary rather than asking too many questions – try to keep it to one question to four comments.
- **Opposites** – play games, read stories or talk about opposite eg big/small, up/down.
- **Sequence** – use objects, numbers and days of the week to sequence and talk about sequences and patterns.
- **Have fun with words and rhymes** – having lots of fun with different stories, silly sentences, rhymes and songs will help your child in developing key skills for reading and writing.

■ **Special Educational Needs**

We aim to cater for the individual learning needs of every child, recognising the need for specialised provision to ensure access to all aspects of literacy. See 'Policy for meeting Special Educational Needs' for more information.

The Centre/Nursery School has a named Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO links with external agencies such as the Educational Psychologist, the special needs team, the Early Years Behavioural Team, speech therapists and health visitors. The SENCO, Practitioners and outside agencies work together with parents to form Targeted Learning Plans (TLPs) for children.

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Parents and carers work with practitioners, the SENCO and outside agencies in supporting the child's progress at the Centre. Information about the child's development may be shared with other settings attended by the child, with parental consent.

■ Gifted and Talented

We aim to provide for the needs and interest of all our children through the observation, assessment and planning process. This process enables us to identify those children who are high achievers in any or all areas of learning and development. Practitioners, supported by the Teachers where appropriate, ensure that activities are suitably challenging to enable children to reach their full potential.

■ Equal Opportunities

All children and families are encouraged to take part in all activities at the Centre. We actively celebrate cultural differences, and recognise the importance of treating children equally and with respect. Boys and girls are treated equally and encouraged to take part in all aspects of communication and language.

■ Managing Resources

- The Practitioners and Literacy Coordinator will, through planning, observation and assessment, identify new resources which will support teaching and learning.
- Any loss or damages must be reported to the Literacy Coordinator, who will then identify resources that need replacing or repairing.
- The asset management file contains a complete list of resources that we have within the Centre and this should be updated when new resources are purchased.

■ Dissemination

This policy is available for all parents, Governors, staff and prospective parents.

■ Review Procedure

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Literacy Coordinator, the Headteacher/Head of Centre and the Governors.