



**Dorothy Gardner Centre  
Mary Paterson Nursery School  
Queens Park Children's Centre**

**Teaching and Learning Policy**

As a federation we believe that high quality learning and teaching in early childhood enables children to become life-long learners and will assist them in reaching their full potential. We follow the curriculum as set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, September 2012 (DfE) and shape our practice to the four guiding principles detailed in the document:

- Every child is a unique individual, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates,

When planning and guiding children's activities, we expect practitioners to reflect on and take account of the different ways that children learn, referred to in the Statutory Framework as the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which are detailed as:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

'Play is the child's means of living and understanding life...'

The Educational Value of the Nursery School. Susan Isaacs, 1954

'It gives children choice and ownership over their actions and reactions and provides concrete experiences, which provide the foundation for later more abstract thinking'.

The Foundation Stage Teacher in Action: Teaching 3, 4 and 5 year olds, Third Edition, Margaret Edgington, 2004.



## Rationale

We believe that in order to learn children need: • To feel happy, healthy and secure (Leavers 1992) • To make relationships with other children and adults (Katz/Malaguzzi)

- To be autonomous and independent – making decisions and choices for themselves
- To be respectful of themselves, others and the resources and environment they share
  - Opportunities to be active and inquisitive learners with the confidence to explore and take risks
- Opportunities to be challenged
- A balance of child initiated learning and adult led first hand experiences such as cooking, gardening and going on outings
- To be at the heart of conversations that affect their leaning and progress as next steps in their learning

We believe that in order to develop interests and skills the environment should:

- Be clean, safe, familiar, friendly and inviting
- Be accessible and organised to facilitate independent and confident action
- Be attractive and stimulating
- Positively reflect and promote individual children's interests, abilities and the wider communities to which we belong
- Support fundamental British Values

We believe that in order for adults to teach they need to:

- Be nurturing and responsive to the needs of the children, families and communities they work in and with
- Be knowledgeable about child development and eager to extend their own learning
- Be confident to share their knowledge and expertise with others
- Recognise and value each individual child's experiences, interests and abilities



## **Aims**

We want children to be:

- Excited, enthused and motivated to learn
- Confident to communicate their needs, ideas and feelings
- Inquisitive and independent in exploring and experimenting
- Confident in taking risks so that they can learn from the challenges they set for themselves

We will provide an environment which:

- Fosters independent, self-regulated learning by giving children the freedom to choose from a wide range of high quality resources
- Changes to reflect the diversity and interests of the children
- Has space for all children to move freely together with space to be cosy and secure
- Supports the delivery of both prime and specific areas of the curriculum indoors and outside
- Is warm and friendly for all

We will expect adults to:

- Be responsive and sensitive to children's needs and motivations
- Be reflective and willing to learn
- Value each other, all children as individuals and their families
- Provide opportunities that promote independence, appropriate challenge and confidence

## **Our Practice**

The children will be supported in:

- Moving freely and confidently around the environment choosing and sustaining activities
- Working alone and with others, sharing and cooperating
- Persisting and concentrating to achieve their goals
- Respecting themselves, others and their surroundings



We will manage the environment by:

- Ensuring it is easily accessible to children • Keeping it safe, clean and attractive
- Always ensuring that safeguarding is of paramount importance
- Encouraging and helping all children to use and care for resources
- Continually evaluate and make changes to ensure it reflects the interests and communities we work within

The adults will:

- Plan and evaluate all activities to ensure we are meeting children's needs and following their motivations
- Listen and respond to children's talk and ideas
- Observe record and assess children's progress, development and achievements
- Work closely and cooperatively with each other, parents and other professionals
- Evaluate the impact of our practice as part of our school monitoring process to ensure all children make sustained progress

“Education is not filling a bucket; it's lighting a fire.” Yeats

Approved by the FGB – September 2018

Review date: September 2020