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Busy Fingers- Little Downham

Curriculum Policy September 2019

Related Policies – Health and Safety, Positive Behaviour, Safeguarding, Special Educational Needs and Equality of Opportunity, Tapestry Policy and Agreement

Internal Policy- Curriculum planning and record keeping – ensuring all staff members are involved and aware of the commitment to provide a reflective, evaluative and forward thinking practice.

Busy Fingers is a Community Pre-School that is run by a Parent Committee who have appointed the Manager as the Registered Person. Our setting serves Little Downham and the surrounding villages. Our Ofsted rating by her Majesty’s Inspectors in 2018 was awarded ‘Good’. We are progressive settings who are committed to raising standards and enhancing the provision by including parents and carers as true partners. Our curriculum is balanced, inclusive and accessible for all.

The aims of this policy is to provide an insight into the ethos of our practice and how it changes to meet the needs of children, we will be using philosophies such as Forest School, Emilio Reggio and High Scope, Frobel etc. It is our intention to provide a well-rounded Pre-School experience for all of the children and families attached to our setting by facilitating:

* A broad based and balanced curriculum
* Constructivist play based activities
* Valuing the child/children’s family
* Connecting with the local and wider community

**Shared Visible Plans**

All of our plans are visible to parents and carers through our website and sent via our parent mail system. We have copies displayed in the setting too.

**Long Term** – This gives an idea of activities that might take place over the Academic Year. It is not rigid because we adapt according to the cohort of children and where their interest take us.

**Medium Term** – This enables parents and carers to be involved or provide items that may support their child’s learning from home. The medium plans expand on the Long Term Plans and accordingly, they may be adapted.

**Short Term** – The short term plans are living, changing documents which will become a reflective journal covering the academic year. All of the skilled practitioners in our setting are able to add ideas to enhance the themes in the Medium Plan, they can reflect on activities, they can evaluate and mention ‘What went well?’ and how they adapted an activity to go with the child/children’s line of enquiry; also, what could be done to make an activity better? or how to extend it?

**The Framework** – The Early Years Practitioners at Busy Fingers are proficient in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 and understand that children do not learn in ‘straight lines’, moreover, they learn and develop holistically. The framework we use is set out by the Department for Education and we are monitored by- Cambridgeshire Local Education Authority, Ofsted and Ourselves. The Framework comprises of:

**Three prime areas of learning and development :**

* Personal, Social and Emotional
* Communication and Language
* Physical Development

**Four Specific areas:**

* Mathematics
* Understanding of the World
* Literacy
* Expressive Arts and Design

**Characteristics of Effective Learning:**

**Playing and exploring** – Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know, being willing to ‘have a go’.

**Active Learning** – Being involved and concentrating, keep on trying, enjoying what they have set out to do.

**Creating and thinking Critically** – Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things.

**A brief description of the areas of learning**:

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development** - helps children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

**Communication and Language development -** gives children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

**Physical Development -**  provides opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

**Mathematics** - presents opportunities for children to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

**Understanding The World** -guides children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**Literacy development** - encourages children to link sounds and letters and to 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.

**Expressive Arts and Design** - allows children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in Art, Music, movement, Dance, role-play and Design and Technology.

**Supporting the Framework** – regular in-house and out-sourced training to enhance Pre-School Practice through the Cambridgeshire Local Authority or Accredited Trainers. Peer on Peer staff observations provide us with opportunities to celebrate what we do well and how we can improve. This is achieved through detailed observation and assessment. On-balance, all assessment help to form an evolving and reflective practice.

**The role of the key-worker**

At Busy Fingers each child is allocated a key-person to be the first point of contact for individual children. Key-workers have a responsibility to forge good relationships with the child and their family in order to build a culture of trust and genuine care to support the child’s individual development and educational needs.

The main duties of your key person

* To provide comfort and reassurance whilst settling the child and support the family through transitional times
* To pay particular attention to the child’s learning and development needs including Special Educational Needs
* Celebrate the characteristics of the child and ensure that their culture, beliefs, language, religion and family values are considered and included in our curriculum
* Be the first point of contact for the parent/carer
* Meet and briefly chat to the parent either at the beginning or at the end of a session – The Manager and Deputy Manager will be on hand in the absence of your keyworker
* Conduct shared meetings relating to the learning and development of your child/children
* Liaise with other settings – for transitional purposes
* Always consider the welfare of the child; when necessary, work with the Manager (Designated Person) and other agencies
* The keyworker will listen to your concerns; be respectful and confidential

The keyworker may not always be the person that provides observations for your child because all of the Early Years Practitioners within our setting have a duty to know all of the children. Therefore, we will share in the record keeping to ensure that we all understand our cohort.

**Tapestry** – The staff work in partnership with parents to build a learning journey that marks the child’s progress. This is done by:

1. observing children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities, child-initiated activities and adult-led activities, and learning from and sharing with parents about what the child does at home

2. observing what children can do and identify their next steps in development

3. considering ways to support the child to strengthen and deepen their current learning and development

4. considering the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care. This information is then effectively used to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development .

We use the ‘Development Matters’ section of the EYFSP for assessment guidelines.

**Strategies** – The staff will ensure they enrich the Pedagogy by employing different methodologies in order to meet the needs of individual children and it is always our aim to ensure that they progress in partnership with parents and carers.

**ECAT- Every Child and Talker (Cambridgeshire Local Authority)** – This valuable strategy helps support Communication, Language and Literacy in the Early Years. We also, monitor progress each half term.

**Other Agencies** – We work closely with other agencies e.g. Speech and Language, Family workers and Early Years Advisor etc. The setting will develop strategies through interactions and dialogue. Ultimately, we believe that positive lines of communication and working together will benefit the child and the family, who will be at the centre of the decision making process.

**Enabling Learning Environments and Personal Development**

Busy Fingers will provide opportunities for children to :

* Develop self-esteem and self confidence
* Form positive relationships with their peers and the adults around them
* Start to have a growing awareness of their needs and the needs of others
* Play alongside and eventually co-operatively with peers and adults
* Develop strategies in order to take risks within the boundaries of safety – Risks with benefits
* To be given the opportunity to learn through the curriculum
* Have an understanding and respect for the natural world and their local environment
* Adopt a positive attitude to learning

**The Local Environment**

Busy Fingers will be using the local Woodland and Nature Reserve in order to deliver a rich and varied outdoor curriculum. The children will go in small groups to ensure they get the very best opportunities for learning. Through regular visits we hope to achieve:

* Rich imaginative play where children can have a sense of freedom
* Building an awareness and promoting care and respect for the environment and wildlife
* Looking at the weather systems and changes of the seasons
* Stimulate and enhance creative and wider thinking

**Appropriate Clothing**

We will use the outdoor facilities in our setting and beyond in all weathers, therefore, parents/carers will need to supply appropriate clothing. It is our intention to build a supply of wellies and waterproofs over time.

**Resources**

We ensure that resources are safe, stimulating and accessible to all. We make changes to our physical environment in order to accommodate children according to their needs.

**Learning through play**

Busy Fingers are a play based learning Pre-School, that is to say we allow children to explore, develop and grow, socially, emotionally and physically by making choices, sharing ideas and sharing discussion about their views.

We promote:

* Independence – which raises their self esteem
* Time to think and talk – listening and not talking for the child
* Making choices
* Be encouraged to be freely expressive
* Helping themselves
* Helping their peers or younger members
* Celebrating their differences

**Being Expressive and Discussing their feelings**

Children will be heard, the setting is committed to the UN convention of rights 1998. Accordingly, we believe children should have the right to express their feelings and what they say matters. We also want them to understand (in time) that with rights, come responsibilities; to be good citizens in their actions, words and deeds. We endorse the idea that:

* Each child is unique in their capacity to play
* The freedom to play is vitally important
* The integrity of childhood is their own right
* Family and extending family are vitally important
* Staff can encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging children to know their views count, value each other’s views and values; talk about their feelings, for example, when they do or do not need help.
* When appropriate demonstrate democracy in action, for example, children sharing views on what the theme of their role play area could be with a show of hands.
* Staff can support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration.
* Children should be given opportunities to develop
* Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability.

**Mark Making Matters – Department for Education Strategy 2008**

Mark making comes in many forms and therefore, we provide a variety of media in order to ensure that the children can freely access and express their creativity. Children will be encouraged to understand that marks have meanings; although adults will not draw for children, they will write letters, words and numbers. Adults will also model writing in role-play and be seen writing observations or lists in order to value the idea of mark making.

**Phonics – As set out by the Local Education Authority – ‘Playing with Sound’**

The children will be provided with an awareness of phonic sounds and adults will share in creative ways of playing with different sounds, making phonic sounds and promoting the idea of blending sounds.

**Reading**

The children will have access to stories throughout the sessions, books are transportable therefore, they will be told in the woods, at the nature reserve and outside. Children will have the opportunity to talk and/or express how they make sense of a story. Pre-reading will be encouraged 1:1 or in small groups; age/stage appropriate.

**Technology**

Children will have the opportunity to view their key-working on Tapestry and make a comment. Through role-play they will use everyday items of technology.

**Healthy Eating**

We encourage healthy eating and will promote the idea of making healthy choices. The children will have to opportunity to cook with fresh ingredients.

**Self-Care**

We work with parents and carers to enable the child/children to gain independence e.g. telling staff or indicating what their needs might be - going to the toilet, washing/drying hands, dressing/un-dressing and putting on footwear etc. Laces are not suitable for children in the Early Years, furthermore, they are a trip hazard, therefore, Velcro or slip-on’s are highly recommended.

**Transitions** – We make the following provision :

* Offer a home visit prior to the child/children attending our setting
* Share settling in ideas with parents and carers
* The Key-worker will contact the child’s previous setting and or the setting they will be going to and exchange information
* Maintain two way communications with childminders
* Arrange school visits so that the children have smooth transitions into Primary School
* Help families that Home School by providing them with information from the Local Authority
* Ensure that when the child’s records are exchanged and the information provided has been moderated (by the Manager), thus, ensuring that this reflects the individual child

This Policy was adopted at a Committee Meeting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson/s Signature and print \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:--------------------------------------------

This policy will be reviewed yearly.