

**CHELSEA OPEN AIR NURSERY SCHOOL
& CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

Learning, Teaching & Assessment Policy



Drafted September 2008

“A place of questioning, where you must ask the question and the answer questions you”.

Anon.

Introduction

Our starting point for learning is the child within the learning environment. Adults build upon what the child brings to the learning situation by encouraging positive learning attitudes and by extending the child's involvement with the enabling learning environment.

Each child's learning needs are met both through providing on going discussion with parents and maintaining a high level of quality interaction with the child supported by a stimulating learning environment. This helps to create “a can-do learning culture”.

Our understanding of the child's learning is informed by continual observation and development of our own learning. It is also supported by updating our understanding of child development through training, educational research and government documentation. Through encouraging the adult's vision of the child we are best able to observe, record and respect the child's learning. We record the child's achievements from induction onwards in a documentary form in the “profile”. The profile serves to give a snap shot of the child at significant moments during the learning process. We gather ongoing observational based examples about the child throughout their learning time at COA to their next steps into reception class and their family.

In drawing up this Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy the following were consulted:

- The staff team
- The governing body sub committee
- A sample group of parents/ carers

It was approved by the governing body on:

Signed:

Chair of Governors:

Head teacher:

Aims

We believe the child

- is a natural learner who wants to learn and develop where the nurturing environment enables their learning supported by the community (school, families, business and local community)

- effectively learns when he/she is given space to take ownership as an individual who learns in their own unique, developmental way
- learns independently and in partnership with peers and adults
- needs time to consolidate, reflect and revisit their learning
- needs to experience risk, to be challenged but to feel safe to ask questions and learn from mistakes
- talks with us about how best to meet their needs
- should have their learning celebrated and displayed to inform and raise ongoing achievement
- can self assess his/her own abilities within a sensitive context
- learns best through play, talk and real life experience of problem solving, thinking alone and in small groups

Adults provide for children's learning by:-

- planning and assessing learning opportunities for the diverse range of abilities both formally and informally and recording them accessibly in the profile
- providing opportunities for enjoyable, creative, self expressive and enriching experiences indoors and out throughout the year
- open-ended questioning
- providing comfortable "home from home" environments for their personal, social and emotional development
- observing, building upon and extending a child's individual learning
- being a positive role-model by modelling language and learning
- enabling children to voice opinions, share ideas and wishes, assert themselves appropriately and accept other's ideas and opinions
- by providing challenging and stimulating learning opportunities
- co-constructing learning together with children/parents and valuing those experiences at home
- visitors and expeditions into the local community as a special means of extending learning
- fulfilling our roles and responsibilities as educators whilst teaching children about their roles, responsibilities and rights
- display and celebrate children's learning in a positive, interactive style following the Display Policy
- sharing ideas, strategies and activities which are successful to support children's understanding of what "good learning" looks like e.g. listening, sitting, looking etc

To achieve these aims, adults will

- create a culture of learning
- encourage, inspire and challenge
- see themselves as co-learners alongside the child
- be clear about their expectations of learning
- have high standards of achievement which are attainable

- be expert providers of resources to construct the learning environment
- further develop children's learning
- be reflective
- have a wide range of learning strategies to call upon
- inform practice through training
- develop and role model the learning process
- celebrate through actions and verbal prompts, questioning etc, a can-do/learning culture
- see themselves as learners
- see parents as first educators of the child and share practice with them
- induct children into COA and support their transition to their reception class
- observe and assess children through ongoing observation
- use the observations to inform planning, learning, teaching and other assessment.

To achieve these aims, parents will be encouraged to

- learn in partnership with adults working at COA to support children's learning and assessment
- sharing important family information such as a bereavement, loss or change of circumstances at home
- ensure children are punctual for sessions and arrive punctually to collect them
- respond to requests for help for expeditions, reading stories etc if at all possible
- if time allows, involve themselves in nursery activities

In achieving these aims, the child will be encouraged to:

- question, think, do, problem solve, be creative, imaginative, co-operate etc
- feel confident in themselves and others
- show they know what is expected of them e.g. being a good observer, listener and thinker
- join activities that will extend their ability through a range of stimulating activities
- be encouraged to acquire positive learning attitudes
- show respect to all

Curriculum Organisation

The curriculum starts with the child's interest and is fully supported by government document in the form of the Early Years Foundation Stage and our COA long term scheme of learning which includes these areas of learning: Communication, Language and Literacy, Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Information Communication Technology, Physical Development, Creative Development and Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

In each area of learning there are co-ordinators whose responsibility it is to produce and lead the staff team in the development of policies and add to the COA long term scheme of learning. In planning the curriculum there is whole staff involvement. This ensures progression and continuity across the whole curriculum for all children regardless of their developmental starting point.

The planning, organisation and assessment develops to meet and challenge the interests and needs of each child.

Planning

Adults plan in accordance with areas of learning, by following the child's interests, motivations, needs and the EYFS, our COA scheme of learning and other curriculum documentation.

The plans reflect both adult led and child led activities. Planning is created over a two week period for story/ group times and adult led activities which are covered by targets and core language in order to personalise and differentiate learning for individuals and groups. A daily plan of free flow activities is supported by our long term scheme of learning.

Assessment

The tradition of COA's assessment is based on descriptive observations, learning samples and photographs which are records of the child's significant achievement. These observations are placed in a profile which is gradually added to as the child moves through COA. The profile forms the child's ongoing assessment and is the responsibility of all adults that work with the child. The profile is given to the parents and they are asked to share it with the child's next school.

At the end of the nursery years, a report is written to inform the family and the child's future school. Leavers are also encouraged to complete their own self assessment. We place observations in the profile according to their significance, not the curriculum subject matter in order to include behaviour, schema, attitudes and dispositions to learning, plus the need for adults support and language.

Individual Responses to Learning

Children are identified by the family, the COA team, and/or outside agencies with full discussion when it becomes apparent they need further support to access the curriculum. No child is identified without full discussion with the family. Support is given when necessary in order to meet the child's needs and where necessary, further professional support is sought.

Resources

The adult tries to ensure a range of appropriate accessible resources relevant to all children. The nursery has a bank of resources suitable for the needs of 2-6 year olds and a balance of inside and outside provision. Children have access to a wide range of I.C.T. facilities (including supervised internet and e-mail access) to support their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

The use of resources is incorporated into planning.

Co-ordinators have the responsibility for regular auditing of their policy and equipment needs.

Expeditions and visitors are often used as resources to stimulate and challenge. Parents are also encouraged to help by accompanying children on expeditions, in celebrating festivals, special events and fund raising.

Children are encouraged to be independent and responsible in the choice and use of resources and to be aware of safety aspects. Co-operation, respect and care of equipment are encouraged.

We recognise adults are COA's most valuable resource. Many people are involved in school life e.g. musicians, physiotherapist, Phillip the Fire Poet.

Nursery Parents as Helpers

Staff need to ensure the helper is planned into the daily routine and the helpers are fully aware and supported in their role and responsibility.

It is important that there is good communication between all parties for the benefit of the children and in terms of organising the nursery day and making people aware of any health and safety issues which may occur. An understanding of confidentiality is also important.

Achievement

We expect and encourage the child to achieve to their full potential. Individual and collective achievement is acknowledged and celebrated in a variety of ways e.g. certificate, newsletter.

Progress is reported to parents through informal chats, 4 year old interviews and parent meetings with key worker. In the case of some children this may also be via a home/school book daily. Individual targets are set on a twice termly basis and progress is reviewed by the whole staff once the child has been inducted in. Individual assessment of a child is used to inform planning and support further development.

Wall displays are used to celebrate the children's achievement in all areas of learning and are varied, interactive and progressive. The newsletter also celebrates achievement and keeps the parents informed of curriculum matters and events.

Monitoring

The learning, teaching and assessment policy is monitored by the whole staff team, School Improvement Advisor and governing body. It is reviewed regularly as a part of our cycle of policy review or when there are curriculum changes nationally.

"We cannot consent to creep when one feels the impulse to soar." Helen Keller