

# Hemingford Grey Playgroup

## Policy: Observation, Assessment and Planning

March 2016

### Introduction

At Hemingford Grey Playgroup we observe, assess and plan for all children as part of a continuous cycle. We work within the statutory framework of the EYFS (September 2012) and recognise that knowledge of development matters; looking, listening and noting, and planning and resourcing all combine to give practitioners a view of where the children are in their learning, where they need to go, and the most effective practice to support them in getting there.

The curriculum is delivered through our continuous provision (which refers to everything Playgroup has to offer), our staff, our planning and interactions. Each child's key person will plan activities to interest every individual child for whom they are responsible.

### The Curriculum

The EYFS framework has moved away from activities which are very adult-led and require a predetermined result, providing a greater number of opportunities for the children to exercise their creativity, thinking and learning. The curriculum encourages lots of questioning and conversation through play-based activities where the child is learning but perhaps doesn't realise it.

There are 3 parts to the EYFS curriculum, which are all inter-connected:

1. Characteristics of effective learning
2. Prime areas
3. Specific areas

#### 1. Characteristics of effective learning

*Playing and Exploring - Engagement*

Finding out and exploring

Playing with what they know

Being willing to 'have a go'

*Active Learning - Motivation*

Being involved and concentrating

Continuing to try

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

*Creating and Thinking Critically - Thinking*

Having their own ideas

Making links

Choosing ways to do things

2. Prime areas

*Personal, Social and Emotional Development*

Making relationships

Self-confidence and self-awareness

Managing feelings and behaviour

Toileting skills

Following routines

Interactions

Being able to express themselves

*Physical Development*

Moving and handling

Health and self-care

Toileting

Running

Moving around the room

Gross motor skills and then fine motor skills

*Communication and language*

Attention and listening

Understanding

Following instructions

Language and communication skills

Understanding social concepts

Speaking

3. Specific areas

*Literacy*

Reading

Writing

## *Mathematics*

Numbers

Shape

Space

Measurement

## *Understanding the World*

People and communities

The World

Technology

## *Expressive Arts and Design*

Exploring and using media and materials

Being imaginative

## **Observation**

At Hemingford Grey Playgroup we undertake a mixture of informal (spontaneous) observations and formal (planned) observations. This enables us to build up a reliable and accurate picture of what the children know, understand, feel, are interested in and can do. We observe children in a range of contexts and across all areas of learning in order to identify their needs.

### *Informal (Spontaneous) Observations*

- Recorded on 'post it' notes
- Occur at least twice per week

All observations are kept in the child's folder, which is kept on Playgroup's premises until the child leaves Playgroup. Annotated examples of work and photographs supplement written observations.

## **Assessment**

Each term, it is the responsibility of the child's key person to make assessments of the children within the three parts of the curriculum. This information is used to determine the next steps for that particular child. These are then incorporated into planning. Assessments are always available for parents to look at. Permission is sought to share with other settings the child attends.

An assessment (Early Years Foundation Stage Summary) of each child is also provided to Hemingford Grey Primary School, or other school that the child will attend, where relevant and with permission from both parents, in the term before the child starts school.

## **Planning**

Good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. It enables practitioners to build up knowledge about how individual children learn and make progress. It also provides opportunities for practitioners to think and talk about how to sustain a successful learning environment. This process works best when all practitioners working in the setting are involved.

The EYFS emphasises that planning needs to start from what the child can do, the child's next steps and their interests. At Hemingford Grey Playgroup all staff meet weekly to review activities and discuss next steps and generic developmental needs. Short-term planning is completed on a weekly basis. This planning includes specific resources and activities that are to be laid out for children. In rotation, children are planned for individually and in small groups, to ensure that their specific needs are being met. These plans are flexible, and staff adapt them in response to children's actions and to events which take place.

At Hemingford Grey Playgroup we have embedded continuous planning which covers all the areas of learning and development. This is displayed around the setting next to the relevant resources. Incorporated within our continuous planning are key questions and vocabulary.

All planning is sent out to parents/carers on a termly basis and is displayed daily.

## **Involving Children and Parents**

At Hemingford Grey Playgroup, our assessments are based on observations of the children and their responses in a variety of situations. We aim to share observations with the children, and use photographs of the children in action, or look together at some of their work to help discussion here. We understand the need to talk with the children about what they enjoy doing and what they find difficult. This ensures that the planning includes the children's own views and responses.

The involvement of parents and carers in this process is central and needs to be seen as a two-way process where parents and practitioners both contribute. Parents and carers know their children best and have views about what is right for them, which must be respected. Their own observations of what their child is doing at home are an important part of the complete picture of the child's development and achievements, upon which practitioners need to build. We work with parents to gain a full understanding of their child's particular strengths and interests and invite parents to termly meetings to discuss assessments and their child's next steps.

We also ask parents to share with us all activities which the child may undertake and other settings which the child attends in order to build up a complete picture.

**Adoption of the Policy**

This policy was reviewed, revised and approved at a meeting of Hemingford Grey Playgroup Committee, held on 25th February 2013 and reviewed again at a meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Signed by the chairperson, on behalf of the Committee:

..... (Chairperson's name - block capitals)

..... (Chairperson's signature)

..... (date)