

A Policy for

Expressive and Aesthetic
Development

Cowgate Under 5's Centre

Rationale

The importance of expressive and aesthetic development in the early years cannot be underestimated and has an impact on all areas of children's development and learning.

This policy has been developed by all staff to ensure that high quality learning and teaching opportunities are offered consistently to all children. The policy provides helpful guidance to staff and information for parents in this key aspect of the curriculum.

This policy takes account of national guidelines, *A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 - 5* and *The Child at the Centre*.

Centre Aims (relevant to policy)

- The centre is committed to offering high quality learning experiences which take account of national and authority guidelines
- We aim to build partnership with parents and to value their contributions.
- We aim to create a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment.
- The centre is committed to equality and inclusion
- The centre is committed to providing a programme of staff development and review

Key aspect: expressive and aesthetic development

In expressive and aesthetic children should learn to:

- investigate and use a variety of media and techniques such as painting , drawing, printing and modelling with fabrics, clay and other materials
- express thoughts and feelings in pictures, paintings and models
- use role play or puppets to recreate and invent situations
- use verbal and non-verbal language in role play
- listen and respond to sounds, rhythms, songs and a variety of music
- make music by singing, clapping and playing percussion instruments
- use instruments by themselves and in groups to invent music that expresses their thoughts and feelings
- move rhythmically and expressively to music
- participate in simple dances and singing games

Features of learning A Curriculum Framework for Children 3-5

The early years setting should be a place where all of the children's senses are engaged and stimulated. It should be an environment where children's creations contribute to displays and decoration. Children should have opportunities to enjoy role play and music in all its forms.

A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 - 5

Expressive and aesthetic development is important for:

- expressing and creating ideas, feelings and imagination
- stimulating and engaging the senses
- designing and making
- investigating a variety of materials and techniques
- promoting confidence and self-esteem
- promoting role play, movement, music, dance and drama

Cross curricular links

Expressive and aesthetic development is linked closely to other aspects of children's learning. The programme for expressive and aesthetic development may incorporate the following features of learning from the five key aspects of the curriculum.

Emotional, personal and social development

- develop confidence, self esteem and a sense of security
- express appropriately feelings, needs and preferences
- play co-operatively, take turns and share resources

Communication and language

- listen to other children and adults during social activities and play
- pay attention to information and instructions from an adult
- listen and respond to the stories, songs, music, rhymes and other poetry
- use their own drawings and written marks to express ideas and feelings
- use talk during role play and retell a story

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- ask questions, experiment, design and make, and solve problems
- understand some properties of materials, for example, soft/hard, smooth/rough
- develop an appreciation of natural beauty and a sense of wonder about the world

Physical development and movement

- develop increasing control of the fine movements of their fingers and hands
- be safe in movement and in using tools and equipment
- explore different ways in which they can use their bodies in physical activity
- use their bodies to express ideas and feelings in response to music and imaginative ideas

A Curriculum Framework for Children 3 - 5

Learning and teaching

The importance of play.

Staff see play as the major vehicle to support children's development and learning. Play opportunities enable children to develop creativity, imagination and self-esteem. Play supports the development of music, drama, role-play, art and craft.

Refer to appendix

The learning environment

The learning environment is stimulating and challenging and reflects children's interests and experiences. It takes account of different stages of development and allows for choice, offering a good balance between free play and directed activity. High quality resources support learning.

Staff facilitate expressive and aesthetic development and movement by:

- planning for a wide range of creative opportunities
- providing stimulating equipment and materials
- ensuring daily access to play contexts which stimulate creativity and imagination
- sharing and promoting simple safety rules
- providing a range of opportunities including:
 - a well resourced and stimulating art and craft area
 - investigating new techniques and materials
 - playing instruments, singing, creating and listening to music
 - moving rhythmically and expressively
 - multi-cultural experiences
 - dressing up
 - a range of role play experiences including small world and block play
 - puppets and props

Staff child interaction

Staff have a sound knowledge about the processes of children's development. Staff interact effectively to support and extend children's confidence and skills.

Meeting children's needs

Staff take account of the different stages of development of children when providing for expressive and aesthetic development. The pace of learning, appropriate resources and experiences are well matched to the needs of individual children. Staff take particular account of the needs of the younger child when planning play experiences.

The assessment process

The assessment process consists of three revolving aspects: planning, recording and reporting.

Planning

- Staff plan effectively to promote children's learning
- Planning establishes clear goals for learning, matching the needs and achievements of individual children
- Planning ensures that staff are clear, confident and well prepared for what they are trying to achieve in children's learning
- Planning is flexible to respond to learning experiences and to allow learning to develop spontaneously
- Planning information is shared with children and parents to assist the learning partnership
- Staff use observations to plan next steps in learning

Assessment keeping records and reporting

- An effective system for assessing individual children is used by all staff
- Staff use observations of the child at play for assessment purposes
- Focused observation and assessment identifies particular goals for learning
- Contributions from parents are included in the assessment profile
- An effective system ensures relevant information is passed on at transition points and this promotes continuity of learning

Monitoring and evaluation

Managers and staff monitor and evaluate provision using the *Child at the Centre, A Curriculum Framework for Children 3-5* and the *Guidelines Towards Good Practice*.

Staff are committed to further developing their skills through relevant training.

Resources

The centre provides a wide range of high quality resources, well matched to the needs and interests of children.

Resources are well organised, easily accessible and well maintained. Staff parents and children are consulted when purchasing new resources. Effective use is made of the outdoor play area and good use is made of the local environment to support all aspects of expressive and expressive development.

Refer to appendix

Health and safety

Staff adhere to current health and safety and child protection guidelines provided by the City of Edinburgh Council (these are available on the egfl website: <http://www.egfl.net>).

Effective procedures are implemented to ensure that staff child ratios are maintained at all times.

The centre is committed to promoting health and fitness.

Appendices

The ten bedrock principles
Tina Bruce 1996

The 12 features of play
Tina Bruce 1996

Resources

Reference books

Relevant Performance Indicators from *The Child at the Centre*

Relevant National Care Standards

The ten bedrock principles

Tina Bruce 1996

1. The best way to prepare children for their adult life is to give them what they need as children.
2. Children are whole people who have feelings, ideas and relationships with others, and who need to be physically, mentally, morally and spiritually healthy.
3. Subjects such as mathematics and art cannot be separated; young children learn in an integrated way and not in neat, tidy compartments.
4. Children learn best when they are given appropriate responsibility, allowed to make errors, decisions and choices, and respected as autonomous learners.
5. Self-discipline is emphasised. Indeed, this is the only kind of discipline worth having. Reward systems are very short-term and do not work in the long-term. Children need their efforts to be valued.
6. There are times when children are especially able to learn particular things.
7. What children can do (rather than what they cannot do) is the starting point of a child's education.
8. Imagination, creativity and all kinds of symbolic behaviour (reading, writing, drawing, dancing, music, mathematical numbers, algebra, role-play and talking) develop and emerge when conditions are favourable.
9. Relationships with other people (both adult and children) are of central importance in a child's life.
10. Quality education is about three things: the child, the context in which learning takes place, and the knowledge and understanding which the child develops and learns.

The 12 features of play

Tina Bruce 1996

1. In their play, children use the first- hand experiences that they have in life.
2. Children make up rules as they play, and so keep control of their play.
3. Children make play props.
4. Children choose to play. They cannot be made to play.
5. Children rehearse the future in their role-play.
6. Children pretend when playing.
7. Children play alone sometimes.
8. Children and/or adults play together, in parallel, associatively, or co-operatively in pairs or groups.
9. Each player has a personal play agenda, although they may not be aware of this.
10. Children playing will be deeply involved, and difficult to distract from their deep learning. Children at play wallow in their learning.
11. Children try out their most recent learning, skills and competencies when they play. They seem to celebrate what they know.
12. Children at play co-ordinate their ideas, feelings and make sense of relationships with their family, friends and culture. When play is co-ordinated it flows along in a sustained way. It is called free-flow play.

Area of learning	Opportunities, experiences and resources
Art and craft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting easels with a range of brushes and other implements • A variety of paint • Experience in investigating various techniques • Opportunities to experiment and to make choices • Junk model resources - sorted and accessible • A wide range of sticking and glueing materials • Selection of paper and card - well sorted and available • Scissors and cellotape
Drawing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well resourced drawing table • Opportunities to draw and create in areas such as the construction area
Malleable and sensory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dough and clay • Gluck • Finger painting
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality instruments • Song books • CD / tape player • Selection of tapes and CD's reflecting a multi-cultural world and different music styles
Role play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home corner (or area which reflects current interest) • Dressing up clothes, including items which stimulate imagination • Small world, including, farm, house, train
Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puppets and props • Visitors to centre • Outings to theatres

Reference books
Expressive and aesthetic development

1. Dramatic Play
Mind Stretchers
2. The Primary School Designers Manual
Rude Mechanicals
3. Spinning Inwards
Maureen Murdoch
4. A Corner to Learn
Neil Griffiths
5. Reflections on Early Education and Care
(inspired by visits to Reggio Emilia, Italy) BAECE
6. Singing Games and Rhymes (CD)
National Youth Choir of Scot
7. Creative Music Resources for Early Years
Caber
8. Not Just Pictures
BAECE

Key Area: Curriculum

Performance Indicator 1.1 Structure of the curriculum

Theme:

- breadth and balance of the learning opportunities offered to the children

Level 4 Illustration

- The curriculum has breadth and balance across the key aspects. It provides individual children with a variety of high quality experiences balanced according to their needs.
- It is fully in keeping with local and national guidance.

A performance broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would merit a Level 4 award.

Key Area: Curriculum

Performance Indicator 1.2 Quality of the programmes

Themes:

- links to national and local curriculum guidelines
- balance and relevance of learning experiences
- design and evaluation of programmes
- support and guidance for staff

Level 4 Illustration

- Programmes take full account of national and local curriculum guidelines.
- Programmes ensure balanced and relevant learning experiences.
- Programmes are well designed, flexible, responsive to children's needs and interests and ensure progression in their learning development.
- Staff receive clear guidance on programmes, learning and teaching, support for children and assessment and recording.
- Programmes are designed to enable learning activities to be continued in extended day care provision.

A performance broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would merit a Level 4 award.

Key Area: Curriculum

Performance Indicator 1.3 Quality of planning

Themes:

- planning of programmes and day-to-day activities
- effective use of assessment information
- responsiveness of planning procedures

Level 4 Illustration

- Plans are carefully linked to the key aspects of the curriculum and provide clear statements about what is to be done and what children are expected to learn.
- Staff make effective use of assessment information to identify needs and plan next steps in learning. Plans are evaluated regularly and adjusted as necessary to meet changing needs.
- Plans take appropriate account of the varied attendance patterns of children. Parents are kept fully informed of the programmes and daily activities. Opportunities for planning with colleagues are effectively used.
- Planning for the curriculum, play and leisure activities, and care routines are well coordinated to take full account of the needs of all children.

A performance broadly equivalent to that illustrated above would merit a Level 4 award.

Note: This indicator refers to planning of programmes and day-to-day activities and covers the links between assessment, planning and evaluating in the centre. Account should be taken of:

- *weekly, monthly and annual plans*
- *planning undertaken in collaboration with all staff*
- *planning undertaken in collaboration with other agencies*
- *individualised programmes for those with special educational needs*

