



Childcare at its best

Children's Learning and development policy

Mission vision statement

At Greenacres, we believe that building a child's self-esteem and confidence is of the utmost importance. If children believe in themselves, they will tackle each new exciting challenge, thus learning from experience. Our team of dedicated staff are committed to creating a secure and loving environment for your child to learn and develop. Each room has been appropriately equipped and the curriculum carefully planned to make learning fun and exciting for each age group.

Every child is unique and every child is special. Therefore, the child's key-worker will welcome interaction from parents and look forward to regular consultations to inform them of their progress and to highlight any early intervention required. The profiles and development records of each child will help illustrate their growth, understanding and skills.

The EYFS statutory framework, which all registered providers caring for children must put into practice, has a play based approach which starts with the child. It is essential that all practitioners and professionals get to know the babies and young children in their care very well and use an observational approach to enable them to plan activities and experiences which support the child's emerging interests. It is through the use of observations that practitioners can reflect, make decisions and judgements about where babies and young children are in their learning and development and so make meaningful assessments.

The EYFS sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep the children in our setting safe and promote their welfare.
- The 7 areas of learning and development which guide professionals' engagement with your child's play and activities as they learn new skills and knowledge.
- Assessments that will tell you about your child's progress through the EYFS.
- Expected levels that your child should reach at age 5, usually the end of the reception year; these expectations are called the 'Early Learning Goals' (ELGs)

Enabling Environments- 'The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning 'EYFS principle'

Greenacres believes that every child is an individual that has their own interests and needs and will develop at their own pace.

We provide a stimulating and fun environment in which the children can explore and practise their skills in a safe atmosphere. At Greenacres we use The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework to support the children's learning through planned and impulsive activity. We believe that if a child is happy and secure that their confidence and self-esteem will develop naturally. A child's play with us is exciting and full of experiences within a free flow environment with lots of opportunity and choice; they have times in their room age groups, small group time and time with their allocated key person. A keyperson is the member of staff that parents & their child can build a strong relationship with from the start. They observe the children in their work & play, transferring these personal achievements & progression into a profile of learning. This document is shared with parents to inform them of progress and plans for the next exciting stages of development, ensuring every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Each child's development is tracked on an individual development record (IDR) which shows an overall progress. These feed into our key

group, room and setting overviews, giving us valuable information to evaluate our environment and practices.

Just a few activities included in our everyday curriculum are;

- Imaginative and role-play opportunities
- Exploration and heuristic play with natural resources
- Outdoor activities and exploring nature
- Small world play and imaginative learning
- Art, craft and creative work
- Sensory rooms, music, dance and drama
- Outings and special visitors
- Cooking and other extra-curricular activities
- Understanding and Developing skills in communication, literacy and numeracy

Our Commitments are to Learn and Develop using the Characteristics of Effective Learning

- **Play and Exploration-** as mentioned earlier the focus of the EYFS is that children learn through play, especially play that they have initiated themselves and play that follows their interests. It is our role to encourage children to play, but it is also important that we know when to step back from children. We can record this information to help us to plan activities to expand their experiences.
- **Active Learning-** we all learn best if we are actively involved and learning at our own pace, making discoveries for ourselves. This of course takes time, and can be difficult to plan for, especially in group settings, but careful, logical recording of learning and skills will help with planning.
- **Creative and critical thinking** – creativity is not about producing an end product, it is a process and we should record the steps that children take along their journey. The environment we create and the relationships we build with children are all

essential parts of the creative process.

Within EYFS the children will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through 7 areas of learning and development.

Children should mostly develop the 3 prime areas first. These are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal, Social and Emotional development

These prime areas are those most essential for children's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them develop skills in the 4 specific areas. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

We have a Preschool programme in which we work towards a successful transition to school by building on children's self-esteem, resilience, independence and social skills. This is implemented the year before they move onto 'big school.'

Greenacres Blueprint for Every Child's Success (which can be found in 'How my child learns at Greenacres' booklet)

For the ease of informing all of those interested; new staff, parents and carers, Greenacres has designed a Blueprint to Success. This is a way of staff ensuring nothing is left to chance and we can make sure we take all variables into consideration to do the very best for each and every child in our care.

- We start at the beginning when parents first make contact with us and from that moment on we gather as much as possible to

put in place the best possible care/learning plan for your child. This would include registration, medical and settling in forms. Discussions with parents about particular likes/ dislikes and interests are invaluable. Parents complete an 'All about me' pack which gives us vital information, we also have discussions with parents.

- During the first weeks, information parents have given us is invaluable and we use this alongside observations to discover each child's personality and nurture their interests, extending their motivation to learn. This also helps us to understand their current level of development and provide the opportunities to extend their learning. We use Observation Checkpoints to assess if a child is meeting their developmental milestones.
- Information we gain from observations and parental feedback enables us within the framework of the EYFS guidelines to evaluate how we can best support and extend each child's learning to the next level. The staff member's role is to promote opportunities and resources to explore and extend activities. Children who struggle or excel in certain areas can then gain individual support at their own level and early intervention can be gained where applicable.
- Through observation and parental information, we then map into create an Individual Learning plan for each child. This plan creates a working record that specifies targets to aim for and the types of activities steps and resources necessary to achieve these. Ideas on how to achieve these goals are then integrated into our individualised planning. The individual plans are also updated at regular intervals alongside each child's progress.
- Partnership with parents is central to learning about each child. By developing our relationships with parents, it enables us to know more about each child's background and understand their personalities to give them what they need to develop. At Greenacres we try to achieve this in many ways- just a few

include; nursery officer for the day, monthly liaison letters, open evenings, forums, newsletters, questionnaires and consultations, home language sheets and home visits.

- The settings curriculum is a combination of child initiated and adult led activities. Each practitioner uses the information from observations to feed into the weekly planner, creating a full curriculum which covers all 7 areas of learning. The replies from liaison letters and 'wow moments' are very helpful to add in your child's interests from home. Each key person also has a specific time during the day where they create group time activities for their key children. This time incorporates perfect opportunities to consolidate recent discoveries and explore them further.

And so the cycle continues with observation knowledge, feeding into plans to evaluate each child's next stage in their very exciting learning journey.

An Inclusive Environment- All children are very welcome at our facilities and will be given every opportunity to maximise their full potential and enjoy their day. We recognise each child's individual needs without discrimination and enable everyone to celebrate their individuality positively. Our nursery ensures each child is fully integrated into their environment and respects and gains from diversity of the group. The setting and activities are regularly reviewed and adapted to ensure we continually meet the needs of every child's rights to access a full programme appropriate to them. Each of our settings employs a 'SEND' person who has relevant training to support each child's individual needs. The nursery and staff will work closely with parents and outside professional agencies to ensure the best individual care and learning programme for each child. We support children with English as an additional language (EAL) by learning key words in their home language. We use visual cues and timetables to aid effective communication.

Parents as partners- Greenacres acknowledges that parents and carers are children's first and most influential teachers and that it is critical

to involve them in supporting children's development. Only through regular sharing of information and discussion with parents, can children be properly supported to gain knowledge and skills at home and in the early years setting. Greenacres staff are expected to secure strong working relationships with parents. The key person is considered crucial to the successful achievement of these commitments. Promoting respect for parents and their children forms the basis of improving learning outcomes for children. Parents should gain access to the 'Parents as partners' and 'How I learn at Greenacres' booklets and spider graph boards to keep up to date and involved in all we do. These show how topics and activities have evolved on a journey of learning. We commit to teaching parents, giving them the confidence to carry out activities at home. We have a range of sharing bags that we send home to promote home learning- with practical ideas.

The display approach- at Greenacres we understand that displays play a huge part of children's visual environment and should reflect a setting that is diverse, inviting and representable of the children's backgrounds. They should also be informative and stimulating for everyone e.g. parents, children, staff and visitors. Therefore, staff should bear in mind the notes below when planning displays;

Think about every display, are there:

- A variety of displays that cover all areas of the curriculum?
- Is it labelled with the children's names?
- Have you added photos of how they made their display or what inspired it?
- Is there a written explanation of why the display is up?
- Are half the displays at the children's level?
- Is the display made up of the children's work and not pre cut?
- Have you added captions?
- Are there elements of 3D- including real things?
- Captions and observations?
- Quotes of anything the children may have said?
- Photos- Of the activity/outing happening?
- EYFS references?

- Parents Partnership/ Comments?
- Some can be interactive
- Not being limited to the board

When doing a display, let it be informative and reflect the children's learning, is it stimulating and promoting language and discussion and most importantly, did you all have fun making it and do you feel proud/and want to share it with others? With all these elements in place. A display will catch the eye and attention of all the adults and children who come into your room and will be a fun learning experience for all.