



Play, Learn and Grow Together – Our Passion is Their Future

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Observation, Assessment and Planning Procedure

Good planning is key to ensure that children's learning is effective and that they make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

We believe that the themes, principles and practice from the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Statutory and Non-Statutory documents are key to our work with young children and these are the foundation on which our observation, assessment and planning are based.

Core requirements:

- Every child has a nominated key person who will develop indepth knowledge about the child and family
- Every child and their family will be welcomed, included and valued
- Experiences and opportunities provided will build on what the baby/ young child already knows and can do.
- Children will be closely observed, listened to and their ideas valued
- Positive attitudes and dispositions to learning will be encouraged at all times
- The process of learning will be given more importance than the content
- Resources will be organised and labelled to encourage independence, choice and development of learning dispositions e.g. taking an interest, being involved, persisting with difficulty or uncertainty, communicating with others, taking responsibility.
- Well planned play that is both challenging and fun will be central to the child's learning
- Activities and experiences will be planned and organised to incorporate all seven areas of learning, concentrating on the development of learning strategies e.g. opportunities for children to be creative, enabling children to be able to choose resources, encouraging children to see themselves as a resource for others, enabling children to take the initiative in seeking information, finding help and interacting with others.
- The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning will be encouraged and developed through understanding how and why a child is learning and not just what a child is learning.
- New children's learning will be focussed on achievements in the Prime Areas of learning and then extended to incorporate the Specific areas.
- A balance between child-initiated and adult-led learning activities will be provided according to the child's age and stage of development.

Learning through play

We believe that play is vital for children. It is through play that children learn, grow and have fun. It helps them to understand the world and to develop socially and emotionally. It also helps their confidence and resilience.

We believe that all children should be able to play and learn in a fun environment with well qualified and experienced adults who understand and can care about them. This ensures that every child is learning through high quality play that is tailored to their individual needs and interests. This will allow each child to develop at their own pace, have fun, make friends and learn as they play, helping them to reach their potential.

Observations (see OAP flow chart and staff guidance)

Observing children is a vital part of each early years practitioner's role. Observations tell you part of what you need to know about a child, how they interact with the surrounding environment, the resources being used and offer a variety of other important information, e.g., the interpersonal relationships developing between children and their peers.

Practitioners will: -

- Share information with parents/carers about their children, using
- Identify children's progress, needs, interests, and abilities
- Identify what they are ready to learn and where they need help
- Give children encouragement and positive feedback
- See how children use space and resources
- See how children cope with routines, activities you have facilitated and unplanned events
- Identify possible schemes or ways in which children learn.
- Provide information about where the child is at – during this particular moment in time
- Share information with other practitioners and professionals if needed

You can only plan the environment and adult support once you have observed:

- What the child can do
- What areas they excel at, and what areas they need support with
- What schema(s) they may have
- What their current stage of development is
- What their interests and perceived interests are
- What areas of the environment (including resources and activities) they prefer
- Which adult/children they prefer/navigate towards
- If they have any additional needs or requirements

Procedures (see OAP flow chart and staff guidance)

- All observations inform provision, resourcing, organisation and planning.
- All observations should be assessed both in the 'here and now' as well as for forward planning, provision and resourcing.
- Observations are to be carried out on a regular basis by all staff members, on all children within the room, not just your key children.
- Practitioners are responsible for completing a weekly observation for parents, which identifies the learning opportunities their child has experienced during that week, any achievements they have made, along with how the parents can continue supporting their child's learning within their home environment.

OAP Procedure

- All observations and assessments that are carried out on children within St Helen's Pre-School are recorded on Footsteps, and shared with parents via parent portal. Parents are also encouraged to input into these on a regular basis.
- Practitioners will need to assess children's engagement within the Pre-School continuous provision. If a child is not engaging i.e. showing lack of engagement, interest or poor behaviour, practitioners will reflect and adapt, and look at new ideas for teaching and consider how you can re-engage the child.
- Practitioners should use a number of different tools to support them with their observations.
- On occasion staff may carry out formal observations, when there are specific concerns about a child's learning or development in order to gather specific information; these may be shared with other professionals. These observations need to be completed on observation sheet. (see SEND and Positive Behaviour policy)
- All observations inform each child's individual Learning Journey Assessments

There are two types of assessments which are:

- Formative assessment – these are ongoing assessments that you do on a day-to-day basis and include:
 - ❖ Observations and evaluations
 - ❖ Photographs
 - ❖ Evidence of work
- Summative assessments – these are assessments carried out at set times of the year and are usually:
 - ❖ Children's starting points
 - ❖ Two-year progress checks
 - ❖ Identify children's starting points
 - ❖ Assess children's development across the areas of learning and development
 - ❖ Identify where children are at risk of delay, developing as expected or ahead
 - ❖ Meet requirements around identifying children's starting points and tracking children's progress and development to support the Pre-School self-evaluation
 - ❖ Identify where resources may be limited to support particular areas of learning and development
 - ❖ Identify where practitioners may require further training to support children's learning and development.

Each child will have their own on-line Learning Journey file which will be with them from the day they start with us at St Helen's Pre-School to the day they leave. Each Learning Journey should have in it:

- Information for parents about what the child has been doing in Pre-School, and how this can be supported at home, along with photographic evidence.
- Communications with parents
- Next Step report (see next step example) will be sent to parents in relation to how they can help and support their child's development at home.

All of this information can be uploaded onto each child's individual section within the online tool. All parents will have access to their child's individual file so will be able to update any achievements at home, or photo's etc. (see Footsteps and Parent Portal procedure for further details on how to use the system)

Planning (see OAP flow chart and staff guidance)

When planning, practitioners should consider the following:

- The balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities appropriate for each individual child
- The characteristics of effective teaching and learning
- Possible lines of development to support individual interests
- Stage of play
- The resources you provide to support development of first-hand experiences
- Integration of care and learning
- Inclusion, respecting cultural differences and meeting children's individual needs
- A holistic approach
- A play-based curriculum
- How children learn (e.g., schemas)
- The environment, indoor and outdoor and the role of the adult

Planning process:

When a child starts Pre-School, they will be observed for the first 2 weeks to ascertain their interests.

These interests will then be used along with the starting points provided by their parents to inform planning.

The planning board identifies experiences, celebrations and the children's interests, staff will then use their observations of the children to plan what activities they are going to do with their children in specific areas, using their interests.

The staff will then use the half termly planning board to plot this information onto, ensuring that all children have at least one activity planned for them each week. Staff will be planning for children in different areas of the Pre-School on different days, so therefore are responsible for the area planned for that day. Staff will be monitored by the leadership team to ensure that all areas of learning are being covered regularly.

This activity will be available for the children to access, and revisit throughout the day for all children to enjoy. If this activity is not working for any reason, then it is the staff who is looking after that area's responsibility to change or enhance the activity.

This activity can be repeated the following day, or on a different day, with further enhancements to enable the child to develop the required skills.

If the children are not enjoying the activity provided, then staff must ensure that they try to engage the children in this activity. If there is no interest from the children, then staff should remove the activity and get something out that the children enjoy.

Children should be made aware that they can experience all of the equipment that is available within the room, and transport it from area to area if they so wish.

From this staff must be observing the children's interactions and learning opportunities and use this knowledge of the child to continue the process of planning for children's individual development.

