



CURRICULUM POLICY – EARLY YEARS

At Little Wonders Nursery, we pride ourselves on providing a welcoming, caring and nurturing learning environment for our children with an Islamic ethos at the heart of it all. We actively promote fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

Our curriculum is how we achieve our objectives of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need to lead fulfilling lives. Our setting curriculum is underpinned by our principle value of providing high quality educational experiences that are focused on continued improvement in whole setting standards and the development of independent and responsible learners.

These are the core values of our setting, upon which we have based our curriculum:

- We value the way in which all children are unique, and our curriculum promotes respect for the views of each individual children, as well as for people of all cultures and faiths;
- We organise our curriculum so that we promote co-operation and understanding between all members of our community;
- We respect each child in our setting for who they are, and we treat them with fairness and honesty. We aim to enable each person to be successful and provide equal opportunities for all children in our setting;
- We value our environment, and we aim, through our curriculum, to teach respect for our world, and how we should care for it for future generations, as well as our own.

We know that children develop quickly in the early years, and our early years practitioners aim to do all they can to help children have the best possible start in life. We agree children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.

Our Approach to Learning

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be how young children learn to think. Our setting uses the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance to plan and provide a range of play activities, which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities, children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities, information from 'Development Matters' the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.



Staff follow the interests of each child, by planning a natural but stimulating environment with a balance of adult guided and child led activities. We believe in the importance of outdoor as well as indoor play. This allows children the opportunity to explore and develop a desire for learning, solving problems and thinking critically.

We aim to provide the highest quality education for all our children and so will introduce enjoyable, varied learning experiences from an early age to develop confident and independent individuals.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS framework sets out guidance on how and what children will learn during their time in early years. The framework sets out 7 areas of learning which are split into two groups:

<u>Prime areas of learning</u>	<u>What we will do</u>
1. Communication and Language	Give children opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves.
2. Physical Development	Provide opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children are supported to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
3. Personal, Social and Emotional development	Actively support children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others to form positive relationships and develop respect for others, to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities.

<u>Specific areas of learning</u>	<u>What we will do</u>
1. Literacy	Encourage children to read and write, both through listening to others reading, and being encouraged to begin to read and write themselves. Children have access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
2. Mathematics	Provide children with opportunities to practise and improve their skills in counting numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shape, spaces and measures.
3. Understanding the World	Guide children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.



4. Expressive Arts and Design	Support children to play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, role play and design and technology.
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Spiritual, Moral, Social Cultural Development

Alongside the 7 areas of learning we are consistently developing each child's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development. This is evident throughout the day and can be seen through our themes and activities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Development Matters the Early Years Foundation Stage. We will use these to learn more about the child by focusing on their interests, learning styles, schemas - their personality and unique set of skills and ways of doing things. The characteristics are:

- Playing and exploring - engagement;
- Active learning - motivation; and
- Creating and thinking critically - thinking

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected.

We believe the ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment, playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically underpin learning and development across all areas. This will support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The Setting's Timetable and Routines

We believe that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children.

The routines and activities that make up the day in the setting are provided in ways that:

- Help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the setting;
- Ensure the safety of each child;
- Help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
- Provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.



Learning Journals

Each child has their own personal learning journal which is a record of their achievements. This is stored and viewed electronically in an application called Tapestry. It is gradually filled up with photos, examples of their work and records of observations carried out by their keyworker. These journals are used to evidence the learning and identify areas where the child could use more learning. This is in accordance with the government guidelines: Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2014. Parents are encouraged add any photos or pieces of work they do at home to Tapestry via phone / tablet or PC.

Assessments

The EYFS also sets out how children will be assessed and the expected levels that a child should reach at the age of 5 / the end of reception year. These are called the Early Learning Goals.

We assess how children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents / guardians know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they, as parents, are supporting development.

Prior to the end of reception, assessment is ongoing throughout the EYFS through keyworker observations and through working closely with parents / guardians. The EYFS is broken down into four age bands, called Development Matters bands:

- 16-26 months;
- 22-36 month;
- 30-50 months;
- 40-60 months.

Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. For each age band there is a series of statements relating to a child's development. These are not fixed age boundaries but suggest a typical range of development.

Within each age band there are three separate levels of achievement which will be used to assess progress of the child:

- Expected: child is working at the expected level for his age;
- Emerging: child is working below the expected level;
- Exceeding: child is working above the expected level.



When a child joins our setting we will:

Day 1-2

Invite parents to meet the keyworker and complete a baseline interview,

- What can the child already do?
- What areas do we need to focus on?

After 5 weeks

Invite parents to a baseline meeting

- Discuss the child's "characteristic of effective learning";
- Share baseline results with parents / guardians after spending time with the child;
- Discuss our own assessment of how the child likes to learn.

How Parents / Guardians Can Take Part in the Setting

Our setting recognises parents / guardians as the first and most important educators of their children. All the staff are partners with parents / guardians in providing care and education for their children.

There are many ways in which parents / guardians can take part in making the setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents / guardians, such as:

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff;
- Contributing to the progress check at age two;
- Helping at sessions of the setting;
- Sharing their own special interests with the children;
- Helping to provide and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- Being part of the management of the setting where appropriate;
- Taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting;
- Joining in community activities, in which the setting takes part; and
- Building friendships with other parents / guardians in the setting.