



Chelsea Open Air Curriculum Policy



CURRICULUM POLICY FOR THE REVISED EARLY YEARS FOUNDATIONS STAGE

Introduction:

Children develop, learn and play in different ways and at different rates. At COA we see all the areas of learning and development as equally important and interconnected.

Aims:

- At COA we recognise the importance of a strong basis of Personal, Social and Emotional Development (in particular wellbeing and dispositions) alongside Communication and Language plus Physical Development in determining children's future outcomes in learning.
- Through our enabling environments indoors and out and supportive positive relationships each child can develop, learn and play individually.
- We are committed to the principle of learning through play embedded in continuous provision to build young children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.
- Children and adults engage in exploratory and active learning with a rich array of child initiated and adult led activities to ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm, where creativity and critical thinking are developed, and are supported and extended through the implementation of all areas of learning and development.
- At COA we believe that children should have real and interactive opportunities to experience adventure, risk and challenge both indoors and out.

Four Guiding Principles:

A Unique Child:

- At COA we recognise each child is an individual and competent learner.
- We encourage children to become capable, resilient, confident and self assured by ensuring each individual is valued for their unique character, abilities, interests and cultural heritage.

- We believe that every area of children's development is equally important and take into account children's range of life experiences when planning their learning.
- By working closely with their parents, staff are available to meet each child's needs and support their development.

Positive Relationships:

- Parents and carers are a child's first and foremost enduring educators.
- Young children are eager learners and all adults have an important role to play in sustaining this eagerness.
- Each child has a key worker who respectfully acknowledges and supports their learning, needs and feelings, and those of the family. This helps us provide an environment where children learn to be strong and independent through the formation of secure, warm, trusting relationships with each child and their family.
- We also believe that working as a team with external agencies and professionals is essential and benefits the children significantly.
- There is a strong partnership between staff, parents and carers which supports children in being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and becoming prepared for future work and economic well-being.
- We welcome parents' involvement in their children's education and care through discussions (formal and informal) and their contribution to their profile record of achievement by providing information about their children's home life, which we can build upon at COA.
- We build upon each child's personal development through our entire provision, ethos and in their everyday learning. Examples include sharings, celebrating festivals and birthdays, expeditions into the local community, and special events such as Christmas Lights, and our annual themed open day with the involvement of parents and the local community in COA.

Enabling Environments:

- At COA we believe that stimulating and safe indoor and outdoor environments which encourage children's independence are central to their learning and development.
- We observe children closely in order to tune into their interests, needs and abilities and then use this knowledge to underpin our planning.

- A rich and varied environment is carefully planned to ensure all children learn and develop well, are engaged and making progress at their own pace.
- Children develop the confidence to explore in the safe, yet challenging environment that COA offers.

Development and Learning:

- The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning and development.
- At COA we are committed to supporting each individual child, including children with special educational needs, disabilities and English as an Additional Language.
- We encourage creative and critical thinking in a sustained fashion for all children and particularly for the more able, gifted and talented. This is done through specific adult involvement and intervention via a wide range of resources so that links are made between the areas of learning and children can transfer and generalise their knowledge and skills.

The Seven Areas of Learning:

The Prime areas:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

The Specific areas:

4. Mathematics
5. Literacy
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

An Overview of Curriculum Planning:

The seven areas of learning support, foster, promote and develop children's learning and development. At COA we plan for the seven areas taking into

account the children's interests, needs, abilities and diversity as well as current events and broad areas of interest common to young children.

1. Communication and Language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
2. Physical Development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement on both large and fine scales. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development involves helping 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.
4. Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interests.
5. Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, mathematical language, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
6. Understanding the world involves guiding 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.
7. Expressive Arts and Design involves enabling children to explore and 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, dance, role-play and design technology.

In planning and guiding children's experiences, staff always reflect upon the different ways that children learn and reflect these in practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and exploring**-children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'.

- **Active learning**- children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and thinking critically**-children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

At COA we also consider these factors as important:

- The children are given opportunities to explore, learn and make sense of the world through structured play and their own child-initiated play. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. Children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- We provide activities to promote play. Learning and development opportunities are planned for both indoors and outside which encourages children to be self-motivated, active, enthusiastic learners. The children make their own selection of the activities on offer as this encourages independent learning.
- We have high expectations for all children and we expect the majority of our children to reach standards above those expected for their age in relation to the age-related criteria of the EYFS framework, and so we provide challenges and inspirations for them whilst being careful that it does not pressurise them.

Assessment:

- Assessment takes place all the time through the everyday processes of teaching and learning, as staff observe and check on the children's skills, knowledge and understanding throughout the sessions. They produce a range of formal and informal observations, photographs, work samples, planned assessments, record keeping and tracking on an ongoing basis. This in turn supports staff in planning the next steps for individual children throughout the year as well as reporting progress to parents.
- Parents are given a clear indication of their children's progress at their twice yearly parents' consultation meetings with key workers in early November and May, as well as in each child's final transition to primary school report. With children who have special educational needs and disabilities there is more frequent discussion alongside the termly review of Achievement and Learning Priorities Plans.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The Head has overall responsibility for the leadership, management and development of the whole curriculum, its teaching, learning and assessment.
- The Leader of Learning (Deputy Head) is responsible for developing the long, medium and short term planning with the staff team alongside the assessment systems so they match the needs, interests and requirements of the children plus the expectations of the EYFS.
- Curriculum Co-ordinators are responsible for the particular focus and coverage of their curriculum area (s) in ensuring all the children access the broad and balanced provision via their specific planning and assessment.
- Key workers are specialists who plan for the particular individual interests, needs, schema and dispositions of their key group children. This may be by group activities and experiences or 1-1 provision using appropriate differentiation and detailed record keeping and assessment.

The above roles and responsibilities are closely interlinked, for example, Keyworkers are curriculum co-ordinators. The staff team work closely and collaboratively together on all aspects of planning, teaching and assessment.

Professional Development:

- Staff undertake regular training both locally and where relevant nationally and disseminate it appropriately amongst colleagues.
- Individuals identify areas for development with senior colleagues via our Performance Management system and these are built into our Training Plan and Improvement Plan.
- We have a large resource of reference books, regular periodicals and documentation for further information and individual study.