



# **Greenfields Nursery School and Children's Centre**

Headteacher: Ellie Larkin

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Policy**

Date Approved: September 2022

Approved by Policy and Curriculum Committee

## Introduction

*'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'*

*Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory framework, 2021, 1.1*

At Greenfields, children learn through play using the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and other non-statutory guidance as tools to ensure a broad and balanced child centred curriculum. The curriculum for children from birth to five is dictated by them through a 'listening to children' approach. It is carefully planned around children's own interests, thoughts and ideas.

At Greenfields children are viewed as strong, competent and capable learners who come to the centre with a wide range of experiences, abilities, cultural diversity and needs. Children learn effectively in a number of different ways, including observing, listening, investigating, exploring, experimenting and problem solving. Greenfields provides a rich learning environment which seeks to respond to children's individuality in order to ensure progression and continuity of development.

This policy sets out the rationale, aims and ethos that underpin the curriculum for learning and development at Greenfields Nursery School and Children's Centre and Havelock Children's Centre.

### Aims:

- Give children equal opportunities to learn and develop through planned play experiences
- Plan appropriate differentiated activities to raise achievement
- Ensure that children are interested, excited and motivated about their learning
- Provide experiences and support which will help children to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others; respect for others; social skills; and a positive disposition to learn
- Provide children with opportunities and encouragement to use their language and communication skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes.
- Provide children with opportunities to practise and extend their skills in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in a broad range of contexts
- Support children in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world
- Offer children opportunities to explore and use a range of resources, equipment and tools
- Support all children in using all of their senses to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know
- Promote a healthy lifestyle and develop an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food, including the importance of oral health
- Provide children with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings, for example, through a variety of art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role-play activities
- Establish firm partnerships and communication links with parents/carers
- Promote an ethos of inclusion in all aspects of the curriculum

## The Greenfields Curriculum...

### 'The child himself is the curriculum' – Rudolph Steiner

#### Child Development

*'Each child is unique, and while we can be guided by an understanding of some general patterns of development from pre-birth into early childhood, progression is uneven and unfolds differently for each individual child. The complex differences for each child mean the pathways toward maturity should be seen more as dancing around a ballroom than climbing a ladder.'* (Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance for the EYFS, p.18).

The process of learning, development and progression for young children is complex, it is influenced by many factors and is not linear, it is more like 'dancing around a ballroom than climbing a ladder'. At Greenfields the curriculum is co-constructed between children and adults. Each practitioner brings together their in-depth understanding of child development and their knowledge and experiences of each individual child to create a rich and meaningful curriculum for all children tailored to both their strengths and their needs. All practitioners are engaged in on going professional development and dialogue that sharpens and enhances their skills as they work with our young children.

**The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based around four overarching principles:**



*(Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance for the EYFS, p.8).*

These principles are embedded within the culture, ethos and curriculum at Greenfields Nursery School and Children's Centre.

## The Characteristics of Effective Learning

*'Education for children's futures requires supporting children's ability to learn and think for themselves. We cannot predict what challenges children will face in their unknown futures in a complex and rapidly changing world. The best preparation we can give them in their early years is to promote positive dispositions by providing living experiences of making choices, innovating, taking responsibility, facing challenge, thinking flexibly and critically, and learning how to learn so that they will be able to respond to their unfolding futures. Supporting children in the Characteristics of Effective Learning, a statutory element of the EYFS, is a central responsibility in early years provision. The three aspects are Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Thinking Creatively and Critically.'* *(Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance for the EYFS, p.22)*

At Greenfields the characteristics of effective learning underpin children's development in the areas of learning. The characteristics focus on 'how' children learn while the areas of learning focus on 'what' the children learn. We provide children with a safe, secure and supportive environment where they are encouraged to be independent learners, who can explore and use their learning environment independently to discover new things and develop new ideas. They are provided with a range of experiences that stimulate their thinking and prompt them to ask questions about the world around them.

## The Areas of Learning / Educational Programmes

Learning and development is separated into prime and specific areas:

- **Prime Areas:** Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development; Communication and Language.

The prime areas of learning lay the foundations of learning and development for young children. Developmental steps missed in these early stages are much harder to address later on, so it is vital that children's interactions and experiences in the first few years' support development in these fundamental areas. At Greenfields these areas are the primary focus for children under three but also remain central to the curriculum for children over three, supporting a balanced and holistic curriculum for all children throughout their time at Greenfields.

- **Specific Areas:** Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; Expressive Arts and Design.

The specific areas build upon the prime areas. They broaden children's understanding of cultural and intellectual life in modern society and give them the skills and knowledge to support them in

their future learning. At Greenfields the specific areas are largely developed through a project approach to learning.

The areas of learning are set out in more detail in the EYFS Statutory Framework and are further developed within the Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance.

| Characteristics of Effective Learning                                                                              | Areas of Learning and Development                 | Birth to 5 Matters Aspects                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Playing and Exploring</b>                                                                                       | <b>Prime Areas</b>                                |                                                                 |
| <b>ENGAGEMENT</b><br>Finding out and exploring<br>Playing with what they know<br>Being willing to 'have a go'      | <b>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</b> | Making Relationships<br>Sense of Self<br>Understanding Feelings |
| <b>Active Learning</b>                                                                                             | <b>Physical Development</b>                       | Moving and handling<br>Health and Self-care                     |
| <b>MOTIVATION</b><br>Being involved and concentrating<br>Keep trying<br>Enjoying achieving what they set out to do | <b>Communication and Language</b>                 | Listening and Attention<br>Understanding<br>Speaking            |
| <b>Creative and Critical Thinking</b>                                                                              | <b>Specific Areas</b>                             |                                                                 |
| <b>THINKING</b><br>Having their own ideas<br>Making links<br>Working with ideas                                    | <b>Literacy</b>                                   | Reading<br>Writing                                              |
|                                                                                                                    | <b>Mathematics</b>                                | Mathematics                                                     |
|                                                                                                                    | <b>Understanding the World</b>                    | People and Communities<br>The World<br>Technology               |
|                                                                                                                    | <b>Expressive Arts and Design</b>                 | Creating with Materials<br>Being Imaginative and Expressive     |

(Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance for the EYFS, p.42).

## The Early Learning Goals

Practitioners are aware of the Early Learning Goals that children are expected to achieve by the end of their reception year in school, however we continue to provide a broad and holistic curriculum that is not dictated by these goals.

## The Observation, Planning and Assessment Process

*'Children's development and learning is best supported by starting from the child, and then matching interactions and experiences to meet the child's needs. The observation, assessment and planning (OAP) cycle describes what is frequently called assessment for learning, or formative assessment. On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice. It involves observation of children as a part of all activity, which is most often held in the mind of the practitioner but may sometimes be documented, and using this rich information to understand how a child is developing, learning and growing, and then planning the next steps for the adults in supporting and extending the learning'. (Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance for the EYFS, p.38)*

## Planning

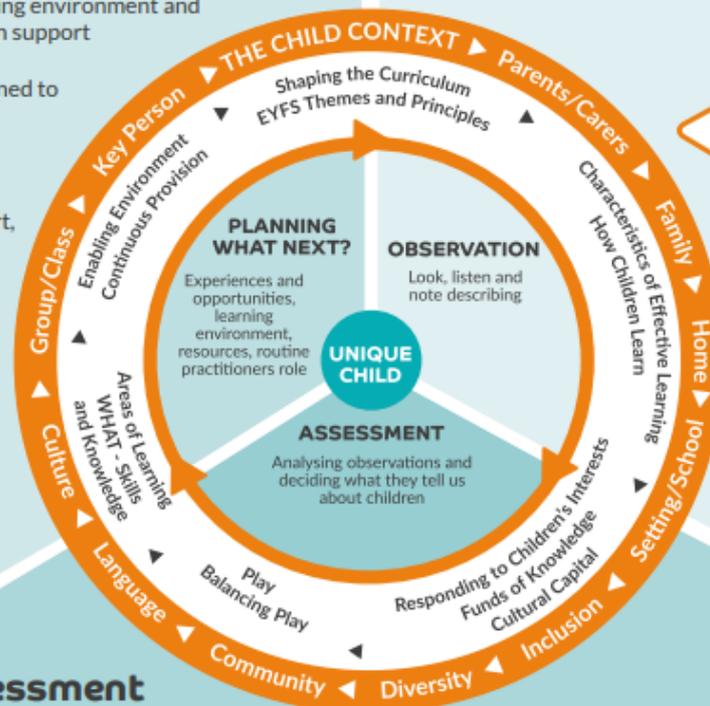
Decide how best to support, extend and teach children. Based on your observations and assessments, consider the following questions:

- Have you engaged with me/us to co-construct our next steps together?
- Have you considered my/our interests in the planning? (child-led)
- Have you planned a specific experience or activity to teach a skill or knowledge? (adult-led)?
- How does the enabling environment and continuous provision support my/our next steps?
- What have you planned to support meaningful interactions and back-and-forth conversations?
- How will you support, extend and deepen play, interactions and learning in partnership with me/us? (Planning-in-action)

## Observation

Observe children as they act and interact in their play, everyday activities and planned activities, and learn from parents about what the child does at home.

- How do you see me?
- Are you observing carefully when I am on my own and when I am with others?
- Am I involved in continuous provision?
- Have you observed while engaging with me/us? (Observation-in-action)



## Assessment

Reflect on what you have noticed to help you understand the child/children.

Consider the following questions:

- How do you understand me?
- Do you understand how I feel? What I am interested in? What question may be in my mind?
- How am I approaching my learning? (Characteristics of Effective Learning)
- What have I learned and understood? (Areas of Learning and Development)
- What do you think is happening as you listen and engage with me/us? (Assessment-in-action)

(Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance for the EYFS, p.38).

### Procedures for Observation, Assessment and Planning

- A home visit is carried out as part of the children's settling in process, this is the first opportunity for practitioners to meet with the child and the parent, to find out what their interests are and any other information that is relevant to the child's learning and development.
- Observations, assessment and planning is documented in each classroom using planning and project boards, listening stories and learning books which enable reflective learning for both children and adults. (see appendix 1 and 2 for photographs of planning board and example of a listening story)
- A "listening to children culture" provides the basis for project work and listening stories.

- Adults act as protagonists to children's interests by providing a range of experiences across the seven areas of learning that enhance children's experiences and extend their interests into new areas.
- The learning environment is carefully planned and set out to cover all seven areas of learning and development and to enable children to develop the characteristics of effective learning.
- One or two planned adult led high profile activities are delivered each day to reflect one of seven areas of the curriculum all underpinned by aspects of the prime areas area of learning. Planning boards show the rationale and thinking behind these planned activities and demonstrate progression within the curriculum.
- Each child has a personal portfolio and or personal book containing a selection of their work which they are encouraged to take ownership of, celebrating their achievements.
- Children work in a variety of targeted small groups to support specific areas of learning e.g. bucket time, philosophy, speech and language groups.
- Practitioners meet at the end of each day to reflect and evaluate and plan next steps.
- A keyworker is assigned to be the initial point of contact for the child and his/her family and is responsible for record keeping and monitoring progress.
- The keyworker will closely monitor the progress and development of all of their children using the assessment toolkit (see appendix 3).
- Observations, assessments and next steps for learning are recorded on an ongoing basis by the keyworker.
- Summative assessments are recorded on the Development Map on a half termly basis and are monitored by the senior leadership team to ensure progression in learning for all children. (see appendix 4 for example of Development Map).
- We provide children with a variety of resources, both natural and man-made.
- We provide a stimulating environment for learning both indoors and outdoors where children can access all areas of the curriculum (see appendix 5 for non-negotiables).
- The centre uses a range of non-verbal learning cues to support children's attainment e.g. makaton, visual timetable, choice board, PECS.
- Children and their families are encouraged to make use of our book library on a daily basis
- Parental partnerships are fostered through home visits, induction days, curriculum days, joining story group time, visits to places of interest and worship, international evening, newsletters, parent consultations, family learning, volunteering and study opportunities, advisory board, centre clubs and meetings.
- Multi-agency partnerships are fully utilised to support individual children's pathways.
- We have a continuing programme of CPD for all staff and support individual staff with specific further development e.g. EYP, Foundation Degrees, Forest School.
- Children's work is celebrated through displays, display books and listening stories.
- Group time actively promotes good listening, turn taking and care for resources through adult led exploration of a range of stories, rhymes and games.
- Children are given opportunities and are encouraged to explore the natural environment through Forest School activities.

## Partnership with Parents

*'Parents and carers make a crucial difference to children's outcomes. It is vital that early years practitioners recognise parents' commitment to their children's early development and education and give priority to working with parents. Research tells us that regardless of the quality of settings, the most important predictor of children's future outcomes is the quality of the home learning environment, so involving parents in their children's learning is the most significant factor in enabling children to do well despite disadvantage. The benefits are greatest when practitioners and families work in respectful partnership to develop ways to support children both at home and in the setting'. (Birth to Five Matters Non-Statutory Guidance for the EYFS, p.28)*

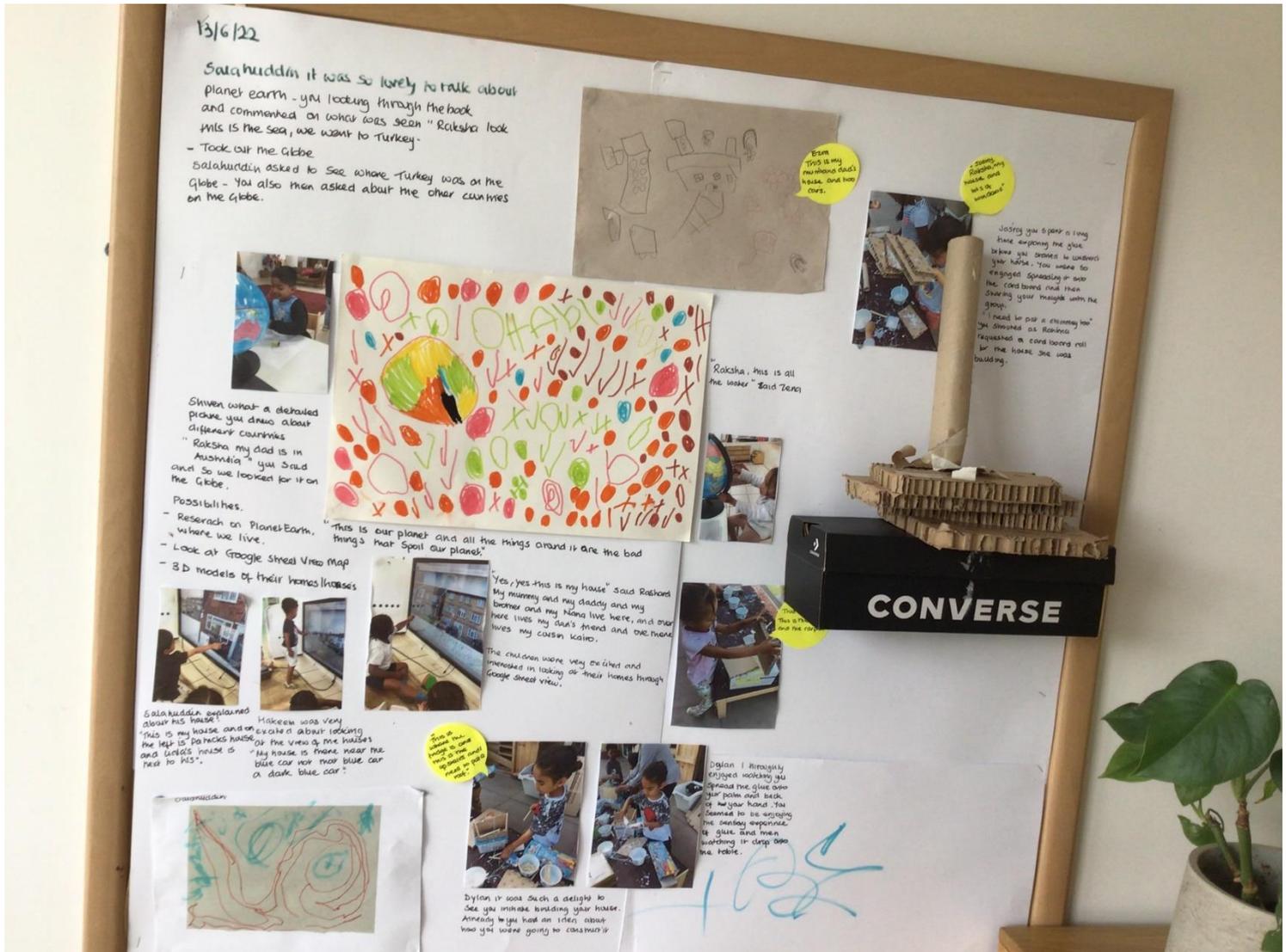
At Greenfields parents are recognised as their child's primary educator and as such are integral to their child's learning journey. We value parent participation and partnership and strive to develop strong and transparent relationships with our parents. We operate an 'open door' policy where parents can talk to a member of the senior leadership team or a keyworker on a daily basis as well as facilitating other more formal routes for parent participation.

Through the onsite Children's Centre there are a variety of opportunities for parents to develop their own learning and to learn how to better support their child's learning and development at home. The Children's Centre timetable includes, parenting classes, stay and play, Makaton and speech and language groups. Within the nursery school parents are invited to attend, curriculum days, local visits, keeping up with the children classes and transition workshops.

Parents are kept informed of their child's learning and development on an informal basis through daily conversations and on a more formal basis through termly parent consultation meetings, where they will receive a short report of their child's most recent achievements and targets for future learning. Parents will also have an opportunity to look through their child's learning journal and listening stories (see appendix.....for EYFS progress report). At the age of two the statutory progress check will be carried out and parents will be invited to meet with the child's keyworker to discuss this (see appendix 6 for two year progress check template).

The Centre provides parents with a fortnightly newsletter, updating them on what the children have been learning at nursery and how this can be developed at home. As well as giving parents valuable updates on services offered by other community partners that may support their child (see appendix 7 For example of newsletter).

# Appendix one – Planning Boards



Further examples can be found in: [Staff Shared / Digital Planning Folders](#)

## Appendix two – Listening Stories



It is a sunny day at Greenfields Children Centre. The children are outside in the garden using the large blocks to work together to build a structure. S notices the sun beaming through the blocks as he is building. He watches the sun shining over the blocks and the shadows it creates. S decides to try and block the sun out by using smaller foam bricks. S shares this idea with his friends and encourages them to help him.

### **What learning is happening here?**

S is actively engaged in his learning. He demonstrates an interest and understanding of his surroundings. S is highly involved in trying to solve a problem as he carefully arranges and positions the blocks to try to block out the sun. His ideas show he has a hypothesis that he is trying to test. S shows confidence in his theory as he communicates them to his peers.

## Blocking out the sun!

Documented by Kitty [Dabir-Alai](#)

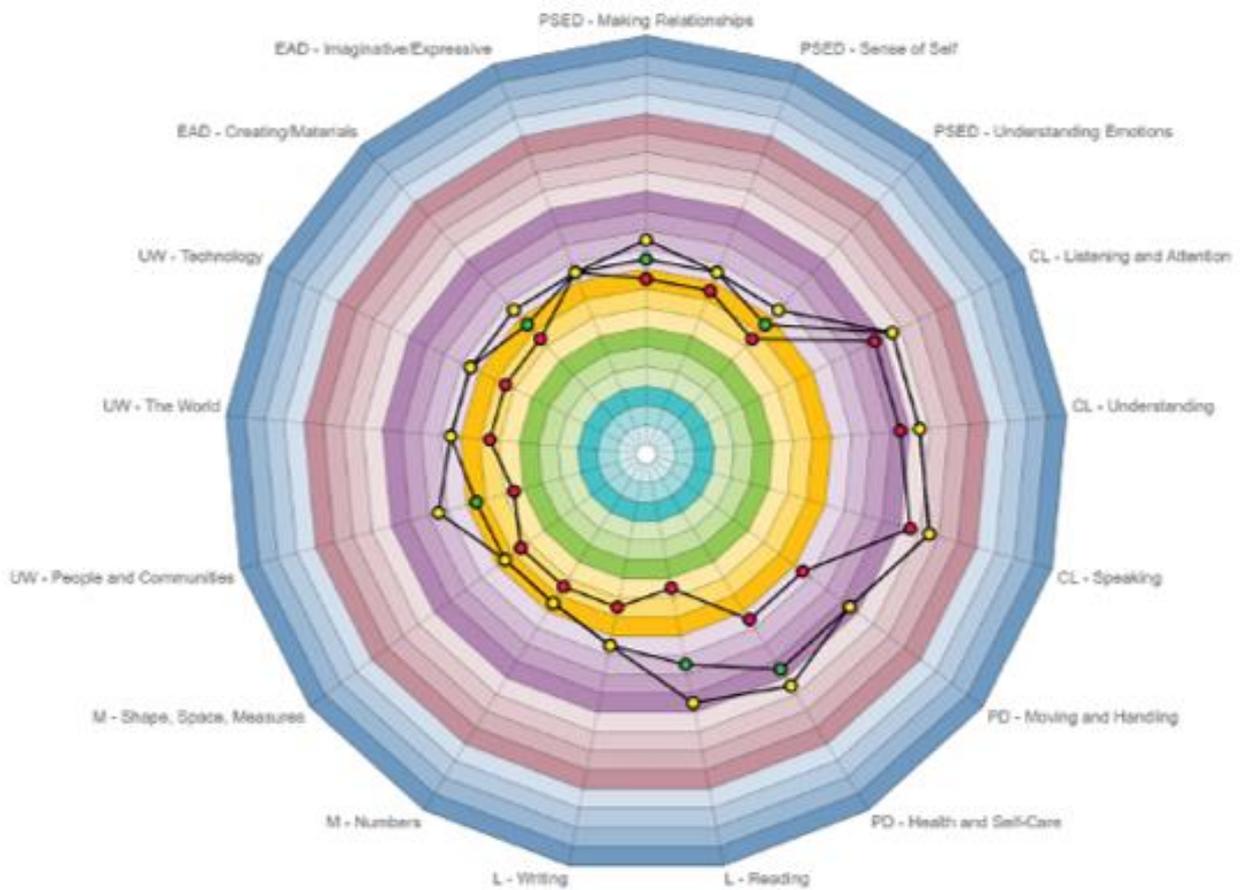


**Next?** Would S be interested in exploring light further? He could use torches, an OHP and the sensory room to explore shadow, light, dark, reflection.

**The Assessment Toolkit is available for staff in the staff room and includes the following documents:**

- 1- Birth to Five Matters Book 2021
- 2- Development Matters 2021
- 3- Realising the Ambition (National Practice Guidance for Early Years in Scotland)
- 4- Early Years Developmental Journal
- 5- From Birth to Five Years by Mary Sheridan
- 6- Every Child a Talker Language Development Tool
- 7- Development Matters 2017

## Appendix four – Development Map



## Appendix five – Non negotiables

Non-negotiables are used to maintain the quality of the continuous provision and can be found on the staff shared drive or by using this link – [Non negotiables](#)

## Appendix six – Two Year Progress Check

Currently being reviewed and will be included at a later date.

## Appendix seven - Newsletter

**GREENFIELDS NEWS**   
FORTNIGHTLY CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER

Greenfields Nursery School and Children's Centre  
Recreation Rd, Southall, Middlesex, UB2 5PF  
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Email: admin@greenfieldschildren.com, parents@greenfieldschildren.com  
Headteacher: E. Lar kin

Issue 15: 09/05/2022

### OVER THREE'S

#### Land Ahoy!

It all started when gold was discovered in the sand pit. The children were very excited "I have found gold" shouted R. The children rushed to see what he had found. Soon they were digging deeper and deeper into the sand too. "Look I have also found gold" said S. Over the week the children have been carrying out research about pirates. Talk was generated about how they might look, how they dressed and what kind of vessels they sailed in. The children also made telescopes and pirate hats alongside drawing maps. The children have also enjoyed making observational drawings of pirate ships and were using language such as boat, sails, mast and flags.

At home parents can further support their children's interest in pirates through making telescopes using resources such as kitchen rolls, they can also encourage children to draw their own maps of where they have hidden the treasure and the children and parents could also go on a treasure hunt either in the garden or the park. We would love to see photos of what you have been doing at home with the children. Please send them via email [parents@greenfieldschildren.com](mailto:parents@greenfieldschildren.com)



**GREENFIELDS NEWS**   
FORTNIGHTLY CURRICULUM NEWSLETTER

Greenfields Nursery School and Children's Centre  
Recreation Rd, Southall, Middlesex, UB2 5PF  
tel. 020 8813 8079  
Email: admin@greenfieldschildren.com, parents@greenfieldschildren.com  
Headteacher: E. Lar kin

Issue 15: 09/05/2022

### Diary Dates

#### Summer Term 19/04/2022 – 26/07/2022

Half Term 30th May – 6th June (Centre open for day care only)  
Spring Bank Holiday – Thursday 2nd June (Centre closed for all)  
Curriculum Day – Friday 20th May  
Bank Holiday for Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Friday 3rd June (Centre closed for all)  
Transition Workshop for Parents – Wednesday 25th May  
International Evening – Tuesday 19th July  
Occasional days – Friday 22nd July Tuesday 26th July (Centre open for day care only)

### OUTDOOR CLASSROOM DAY

Thursday 19th May 2022

Outdoor Classroom Day is a global movement to inspire and celebrate outdoor learning and play. On the day, thousands of schools around the world take lessons outside and prioritise playtime.

When teachers take learning outdoors, they report some powerful impacts: Children's behaviour improves, whole classes are excited to learn, and individuals who feel inhibited by the curriculum often thrive in an outdoor environment.

Greenfields will be participating Outdoor Classroom Day and will be planning a range of activities focussed on the natural environment and looking after the world around us. For more information, please visit the news page of our website. [www.greenfieldschildren.com/news](http://www.greenfieldschildren.com/news).



Walk to school week – **Week beginning the 16th May**. Encourage your child to live a healthy lifestyle and walk to school everyday. If you have to drive you could Park and Stride instead!!!  
Daily exercise is essential for young children's learning and development and less driving means less air pollution for their growing lungs.

### Baby Massage—5 week course

New course beginning Wednesday 15th June 2022

Cost—£2.50 to cover the cost of the oil and course handouts.

Book your place in the admin office or call 020 8813 8079

