

Literacy

Category: Early Years

Risk Management and Legal Implications

Failure to manage risk may impact on the delivery of Service objectives and the outcomes achieved by Service users. Education and Children’s Services aim to mitigate the implications by ongoing management and review of risk in all elements of work activity.

The production of this document is one way in which we aim to reduce our exposure to risk. By providing staff with information on good practice, making reference to other guidance that is available across the Council and providing clarity on how we should do things, we can ensure that the management of risk is intrinsic to what we do.

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Literacy

Rationale

“The development of children's skills in early literacy is central to their abilities to communicate in relationships and learning, to understand ideas and to order, explore and refine their thoughts.”

(Curriculum for Excellence)

“From the earliest stage, the aim is to equip every child with the early speech, language and communication skills to support their learning and achievement and ensure that every child has the same chance to succeed.”

(A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning & Childcare in Scotland)

“The importance of communication and language development for all aspects of children’s lives cannot be overstated. Communication underlies our ability to manage behaviour and emotions, by expressing what we need or using language to regulate how we feel. Language is also much more than words. It is understanding and using patterns and cues for interaction, sequencing thoughts and ideas, and making stories that help us understand what is happening, and what is next.

Literacy, numeracy and mathematical thinking are woven within the fabric of all conversations, interactions and experiences. They are everywhere in the environment. They are part of a child’s everyday life and are fundamental to all other learning.

Our ability to use language unlocks all areas of learning. Children’s language development thrives through exposure to environments of rich and diverse spoken language experiences. We grow a sense of purpose for the child by our own use of language and engaging them with a wide variety of stories, rhymes, songs, symbols and texts in different media all around them. Building this purpose helps to nurture engagement and encourages children to see themselves as readers and writers.

We need to co-create safe spaces with children to talk, sing, rhyme and play with sounds, vocabulary and print. Role modelling language and building vocabulary to make sense of the world is vital for all young children. The amount and quality of language that children are exposed to is crucial to their progress.”

(Realising the Ambition – Being Me)

Aims

In early literacy children should learn to;

- have fun with language and make stories
- listen to other children during social activities and play
- listen with enjoyment and respond to stories, songs, music, rhymes and other poetry
- listen and respond to the sounds of rhythm of words in stories, songs, music and rhymes
- pay attention to information and instructions from an adult



- talk to other children or with an adult about themselves and their experiences
- express needs, thoughts and feelings with increasing confidence in speech and nonverbal language
- take part in short and more extended conversations
- use talk during role play and to re-tell a story or rhyme
- use language for a variety of purposes, for example to describe, explain, predict, ask questions and develop ideas
- use books to find interesting information
- recognise the link between the written and spoken word
- understand some of the language and layout of books
- develop an awareness of letter names and sounds in the context of play experiences
- use their own drawings and written marks to express ideas and feelings
- experiment with symbols, letters and, in some cases, words in writing
- recognise some familiar words and letters, for example the initial letter in their name.
- engage with and create a wide range of texts in different media, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by ICT
- develop their understanding of what is special, vibrant and valuable about their own and other cultures and their languages

(Curriculum for Excellence)

Realising the Ambition – Being Me focuses on the needs of the young child and identifies the essentials of a literacy rich environment as:

An environment which:

- Provides areas for children to engage in conversations' where they can 'talk listen and share ideas.'
- Is rich in opportunities for children to engage in conversations about the here and now, the past and future and discussions about the world around them'.
- Has appropriate resources which make a clear mark on paper, a selection of paper and cards which are relevant for children to use.
- Has a library rich in books, favourite stories, fiction and non-fiction, books children have made themselves, recording of experiences and stories they want to share and tell.
- Uses environmental print recognisable to children to help a growing understanding that print has meaning.'

With adults who:

- Give time for children to explain their interests but also elaborate on what the child has said by asking probing questions to further extend the child's use of language.
- Offer different ways and words to children to extend their vocabulary.
- Create opportunities for children to 'write' in different play situations and for different purposes.
- Encourage children to talk together with their friends and create situations where children take turns and listen in small groups.

(Realising the Ambition – Being Me)



How aims are to be achieved

Staff encourage the development and acquisition of language and literacy skills by:

- listening attentively to children and providing a supportive atmosphere
- implementing scaffolding structures for example gestures to enable children with poor language and communication skills to interact more easily
- assuring children that their linguistic attempts, contributions and actions are valued
- using a variety of questioning techniques encouraging discussion, expression and understanding
- using the children's own experiences and interest to promote communication, interchange, conversation and expression
- motivating the children to talk through their activities, actions and experiences
- ensuring that children are stimulated and motivated to talk and use language through the educational environment and the opportunities provided in the nursery
- assisting children through the provision of appropriate words to understand what they are saying/ doing/learning/hearing
- providing opportunities for children to listen to adults and other children for example Circle Time
- providing opportunities for children to listen to and participate in a variety of texts for example stories, nursery rhymes, poems
- providing a variety of scribbling materials for example pencils, pens, crayons, paintbrushes, felt-tip pens
- providing various media to make words for example magnetic letters.
- providing opportunities for children to use a wide range of ICT
- providing opportunities for children to experience religious and cultural festivals and celebrations

Evaluation

- Observations to show children's progress in language development
- Discussion with parents
- Discussion with other professional colleagues where appropriate
- Recorded evidence e.g., ELIPS screening tool
- In a secure environment, children will listen with enjoyment and express their own feelings.