

Treetop Family Nurture Centre

Curriculum Rationale

**Introduction**

Our Curriculum Rationale is based on the key principles within Curriculum for Excellence as well as the fundamental pedagogy as defined in more recent guidelines e.g. ‘Building the Ambition’, ‘How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare’, Pre-Birth to Three Guidance.

By embedding a child centred approach to teaching and learning, we aim to deliver experiences for children and families which will promote:

**‘Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work’ *Building the Curriculum 4***

By working in partnership with staff, children, parents/carers and all other stakeholders, our Curriculum Rationale will continually evolve and change to take account of the needs, skills, expertise and expectations of all involved.

**Our Vision**

**“Families are our focus: children are our future”**

In order to realise our vision, we work together to develop an inclusive curriculum, providing children and families with quality experiences and equal opportunities to enable them to reach their full potential. We acknowledge the uniqueness of our local community and through partnership working, we aim to enhance the educational journey for all learners.

**Key Features of Our Curriculum**

In developing our Curriculum Rationale, we have identified the essential values and principals which are embedded in our daily practice.

Every child at Treetop Family Nurture Centre is entitled to a curriculum which provides:

* is coherent, with smooth and well-paced progression through the experiences and outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and especially at points of transition,
* contains learning experiences that develops the knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities which contribute to the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence with a particular focus on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and health and well-being, through play based approaches
* develops the skills they will use throughout their life and in their work, and aims to foster the development of key skills in communication, critical thinking, problem solving and enquiry, social and personal awareness and interaction,
* individual support, which builds upon and extends prior learning. This allows children to achieve their full potential and enables them to become healthy, confident and resilient individuals.

Our staff are committed to improving pedagogy in order to keep abreast of current thinking and research thereby ensuring a more consistent approach and shared philosophy across our provision. Staff promote a child centred approach to learning and continue to reflect upon, and refine their skills in, supporting all children in the learning process. Staff are equally committed to providing all children with the highest standards of nurture, support and care.

**Responding to Our Local Context**

When planning our learning opportunities we take full account of the demographics of our catchment area. By engaging with the wider community we provide opportunities which will allow our children to develop self-awareness, confidence, independence and resilience. Real life learning opportunities allow children to make meaningful connections between home, nursery and community. We recognise the need for our learners to focus on developing spoken language skills, developing understanding and widening their vocabulary. We work with our children to give them a fuller understanding of the role they play as citizens within their community and the part they play in shaping the environment for future generations.

**The Totality of Our Curriculum**

We fully endorse Curriculum for Excellence and are committed to continuously improving and developing our curriculum in response to our learners and our local community.

1. **The Ethos and Life of our Nursery**

*“The starting point for learning is a positive ethos and climate of respect and trust based upon shared values with genuine engagement across the school community.”*

*(Education Scotland Website)*

As an inclusive nursery we pride ourselves in providing a welcoming and nurturing environment in which our children can grow, develop and learn. This positive ethos is crucial to the success of our collaborative work with families, parents, the community and other professionals.

Our learners have the opportunity to be leaders of their own learning through our child centred philosophy, and are encouraged to contribute to daily life in our centre through being encouraged to take responsibility for their environment and themselves at an age and stage appropriate level.

Our values permeate all that we do and enable us to embed our vision into our daily practice with children and their families.

Ranges of opportunities take place throughout the year to develop the identity of our centre. These include Health Promotion Initiatives, Eco Focus Weeks, Concerts, Open Days and Fundraising Events.

1. **Curriculum Areas**

*“The curriculum areas are the organisers for setting out the experiences and outcomes. Each area contributes to the four capacities.” (Education Scotland Website)*

Our youngest children follow the framework of Pre-Birth to three in organising learning and celebrating achievements. In our 3 – 5 year old playrooms all curricular areas are planned using the experiences and outcomes of the Curriculum for Excellence and will experience a Broad General Education, progressing through the early level and beyond as far as this is consistent with their learning needs and prior achievements.

Long term plans help children explore learning in seasonal and culturally relevant contexts, while short term and daily planning is flexible and responsive to learners’ needs. Children and families are encouraged to be involved in planning learning through regular consultation and feedback.

1. **Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL)**

*“How the curriculum should include space for learning beyond subject boundaries which will provide learners with the opportunity to develop insights and apply skills in a way and/or to a degree not offered through the study of a discrete curriculum area.”*

*(Education Scotland Website)*

IDL continues to be reviewed within the ELC context to ensure it promotes child centred approaches to learning, and planning processes do not become overly bureaucratic. Children are becoming increasingly involved in planning and evaluating their own learning through the use of Learning Walls and their own Personal Learning Journeys. Staff will continue to develop their use of these approaches to help provide evidence of learners’ achievements and involvement.

1. **Opportunities for Personal Achievements**

*“Children and young people need opportunities for achievements both in the classroom and beyond, giving them a sense of satisfaction and building motivation, resilience and confidence.” (Education Scotland Website)*

We are currently recognising children’s achievements through Star Moments, Personal Learning Journeys and displays of children’s work including writing, art work, models and photographs. Families are encouraged to share children’s successes from out with our centre in the playroom and in PLJs.

Pupils, parents and staff meet regularly throughout the year to reflect and evaluate learning and set learner targets for future next steps.

Each year we focus as a centre to establish a link with charity and contribute to this through fund raising events. This develops the concept of giving. Our Eco School work helps promote social responsibility and sustainability for future generations with our children and our community.

Independence is promoted with children actively encouraged to make choices, select resources and follow their interest. The child centred environment is easily detected. We provide opportunities to enable children to experience success and achievement in a wide range of additional activities, these may include sports tasters, outdoor learning visits and outings within their community.

**Curriculum Design**

The key principles for curriculum design are: personalisation & choice, depth, progression, challenge & enjoyment, breadth, relevance and coherence. Our child centred philosophy embeds the key principles into daily practice.

Staff aim to ensure that children are:

* 1. appropriately challenged and supported in building their knowledge, understanding and skills in order to ensure progression in learning,
  2. experiencing depth, breadth and coherence of learning, with opportunities to use higher order skills that ensure challenge and application across a range of contexts that are relevant to the children experience, learning and interests in and beyond the ELC setting,
  3. Empowered to plan and reflect on their own learning journey.

**Partnerships with Parents and the Wider Community**

We aim to promote children’s learning by involving parents, community groups, local businesses and the voluntary sector to support and enhance the delivery of our curriculum.

We recognise that children learn first from parents and family members and come to our centre already with experiences of the world. We aim to build on these previous experiences with children and in partnership with parents and families. Throughout the year we regularly provide opportunities for parents to share in learning experiences in our centre. This provides children with a sense of pride and satisfaction, while also enabling parents to gain an insight in to children’s ever growing achievements and also enables staff to work with parents on how these achievements and learning can be built on at home.

We are fully committed to supporting families to develop their parenting responsibilities and capacity to the full. We do this through a range of universal accessible and directly targeted groups. These groups continue to be reviewed to ensure we are responding to the needs of our families, in helping them better to support their child’s development and learning. We also open up our pre-three groups to members of the local community, so that we can be a support hub to the wider community.

**Moderation of Learning**

We are working in collaboration with colleagues within our nursery and from across our cluster, to help us share good practice and expertise. This is an important part of our professional review and development and assists in moderating practice through the self-evaluation process.

**Transitions**

We acknowledge the importance of continuity in learning especially at points of transition e.g. between home and nursery and nursery and school. We have developed good links with our local primary schools to ensure effective links are embedded and we continue to develop our learning transitions.

We have developed an Early Bird program for children coming into nursery starting in our 3 – 5 year old playrooms.

All children who attend as early entrants, either through entitlement or referral, are visited at home prior to entry where a detailed analysis of their needs is carried out. This helps to ensure that these children have the best possible start and quickly settle into their playroom.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Staff evaluate children’s learning through observation and planning next steps on a daily basis. Staff are engaged in our self-evaluation process whereby we identify strengths and development needs across the nursery. Parents and stakeholders are also involved in this process and together this information informs our nursery improvement plan. We are currently becoming increasingly familiar with ‘How Good Is Our Early Learning & Child Care’ (HGIOELCC).

**Our Next Steps**

This Curriculum Rationale will be reviewed regularly in order to ensure that it accurately reflects current thinking, research and National and Council guidelines. Partnership working will ensure that we reflect upon the ongoing needs of individual children, families and carers within our local community in order to ensure that we deliver a relevant and quality experience for everyone concerned. We are committed to developing our understanding of pedagogy to ensure our provision builds on and extends children’s learning and achievements.

Our vision is to be at the heart of the local community and to be responsive to its needs by working in an inclusive way.

We must therefore actively source good practice to help influence our strategic developments from across our centre, cluster, authority and at national level. Learning from, with and of our peers will be crucial in supporting our curriculum development and pedagogy.