

Workplace Professional Development Policy

To be reviewed Bi-Annually.

Policy Agreed February 2021. To be reviewed February 2023.



The purpose of this policy is to outline:

- *How we develop and support staff in their professional development.*
- *How our work is monitored, developed and improved.*

Our vision for professional development

We have a clear vision at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre that includes a core commitment to the ongoing professional development of all staff. We want to develop a team who are assertive; self-critical and supportively critical of others. We believe in the importance for all staff to work co-operatively, respect strengths and celebrate each other's successes and failures. We accept however, that "looking deeply at what is happening and what needs to be done can be uncomfortable, but is essential" (Tina Bruce, 1996).

We believe that all adults need to be rigorous thinkers, focused and analytical, and yet aware of the rhythms of the organisation and their personal lives. We aim for the work of all staff to be rooted in the local community but for staff to reach out, make their views known and challenge local and central government over important issues.

This policy is about how we support all staff as a team and as individuals, in improving their professional development and for the Teaching Team/Early Childhood Educators extending their knowledge of pedagogy and wider early years practice. This policy is about how staff can understand the richness of the early childhood curriculum beyond targets, standards and performance and be supported in their reading and keeping up to date with theory and practice for their day to day role.

How we develop and support all staff

All staff will be encouraged and supported in their ongoing development. The following combination of strategies will be used:

- ◆ In-service training sessions/directed times/days within the school/centre.
- ◆ Attendance at conferences and courses outside of the school/centre.
- ◆ Clear school/centre guidelines and policies.
- ◆ Listening to the views that parents/carers express about the role of the school/centre.
- ◆ The monitoring, leadership and development role of the Headteacher/Head of Centre.
- ◆ Performance Management/Appraisal for all staff.
- ◆ Liaison with other staff to enrich professional development.
- ◆ Team meetings and learning from the rich diversity of understanding and experience amongst our team through discussion.
- ◆ Visits to other settings.
- ◆ All staff having access to a wide range of professional Early Years journals/books in the staff room.
- ◆ Access to North Liverpool Teaching School continuous professional development opportunities.

- ◆ Liaising with professionals from external agencies such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra musicians.

Funding professional development

Professional development at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre is the responsibility of the Headteacher/Head of Centre. This is co-ordinated by the Assistant Headteachers and Early Intervention Co-ordinator. Requests for external courses and conferences can be made in writing on the centre course/conference request form at any time of year to individual line managers.

Our agreed criteria are:

- ◆ All staff can request to attend a course.
- ◆ First priority will be given to opportunities that link with the School/Centre Development Plan.
- ◆ Second priority will be given to opportunities that address professional needs as identified through Performance Management/Appraisal, Observation of Practice or the view of the Leadership Team.
- ◆ Third priority will be given to opportunities that match role/responsibilities within Everton Nursery School and Family Centre.
- ◆ Fourth priority will be given to other courses that match staff interests.
- ◆ An average guide cost for a course/conference is £200 per day – higher costs are at the discretion of the Headteacher/Head of Centre.
- ◆ Sources of external funding for such opportunities may also be explored by the Assistant Headteachers/Early Intervention Co-ordinator or oneself.
- ◆ After a funded course/conference the member of staff involved MUST complete a feedback sheet within a week. This is available from the staff professional development board in the staff room and returnable to the Headteacher/Head of Centre.

Our professional standards

There are four areas of practice which all staff are encouraged to reflect upon, discuss and debate. They are standards that we agree to work towards at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre. The four areas are:

- i. Pedagogy (predominately for the Teaching Team and Early Childhood Educators)
- ii. Supporting families
- iii. Wider professional effectiveness
- iv. Professional characteristics

What is involved in each area of practice is outlined below:

(i) Pedagogy

We believe in the message from research (e.g. Ferri et al., 1981) that the success of a combined centre is dependant upon staff. Therefore, the knowledge and understanding of staff at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre is of fundamental importance.

Our aim is that all staff demonstrate that they have a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of working in an early years setting. For Teaching staff and Early Childhood Educators this includes an emerging understanding of learning, teaching, curriculum and care for children from birth to age five. Our aim is also that all staff take account of wider developments in supporting families and multi-disciplinary working which are relevant to their work.

All staff (especially the Teaching Team and Early Childhood Educators) will be supported in order that they can consistently and effectively demonstrate that they work within the 'Curriculum, Learning and Teaching Policy' of the centre.

All staff will be encouraged to work reflectively and to consider their own knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ Does my work reflect accepted good practice ? How do I keep up to date?
- ◆ Do I have a good knowledge of my specialism(s)? If I am working outside of my specialism how did I adapt/retrain?

For Teaching Team/Early Childhood Educators

- ◆ Do I have knowledge about 'children in need' as defined by the Children Act 1989/2004? How do I develop and extend this knowledge?
- ◆ Have I extended my knowledge to take account of wider curriculum changes?
- ◆ What have I done to develop my ability to use ICT in my work with children?

In learning, teaching and assessment, the Teaching Team/Early Childhood Educators will be encouraged to work reflectively and to consider:

- ◆ Do I work in open, respectful partnership with parents/carers to build upon their knowledge of what children can already do and what experiences they have had?
- ◆ Do I support children's learning by observing, supporting and extending their play and by participating genuinely and sensitively?
- ◆ Do I consistently and effectively plan for learning and teaching activities to meet individual learning needs? Are there written short, medium and long term plans that are developed and evaluated with colleagues?
- ◆ Do I consistently and effectively use a range of appropriate learning and teaching strategies?
- ◆ Do I give targeted support for pupils with particular learning needs, and promote good levels of behaviour and self-discipline? Are the children happy, interested, self-motivated and involved?
- ◆ Do children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) have written individual education plans (IEPs) that are shared with parents and colleagues?
- ◆ Do I use written, observational assessment as part of my everyday work to monitor progress and adapt my work?
- ◆ Do I use assessment information to give children clear and positive feedback? Do children have the opportunity to talk to staff and be listened to?
- ◆ Do I work in genuine partnership with colleagues and respect different backgrounds, experiences, training and needs?
- ◆ Do I work closely with professionals from other agencies?

- ◆ Staff demonstrate that, as a result of the support for learning and the teaching, the children achieve well relative to prior attainment. This will be shown through observational assessment and record-keeping.

(ii) Supporting families

Through combining education with care and providing an integrated service, all staff work closely with families at Everton Nursery School and Family Centre. The school/centre believes in a community development approach and staff are given opportunities to contribute to adult education, family support and outreach work as appropriate. This is under the direction of the Headteacher/Head of Centre.

In working reflectively to support and share in family support work, All staff are encouraged to consider:

- ◆ Do I support parent/carers capacity to be self-directing?
- ◆ Do I help parent/carers to gain more control over their lives?
- ◆ Do I promote learning as a lifelong experience?
- ◆ Do I demonstrate equal opportunities practices?
- ◆ Do I enable parent/carers to push boundaries that limit their opportunities?
- ◆ Do I support constructive discontent about community issues?
- ◆ Do I encourage parent/carers to feel that they have the power to change things?

(iii) Wider Professional Effectiveness

Working in a professional role with young children and their families is demanding and challenging. Within such a vibrant and dynamic setting as Everton Nursery School and Family Centre this is particularly important for us to recognise.

In their wider professional effectiveness, All staff will demonstrate that they:

- ◆ Hold a positive attitude towards our own lifelong learning. Where possible, we take responsibility for our professional development and use the outcomes to improve our support for learning, our teaching and the learning opportunities that children and families experience.
- ◆ Make an active contribution to the policies and aspirations of the school/centre.
- ◆ Share the centres pedagogy and philosophy with visitors to the school/centre, some of whom may want advice about working with young children and their families.

All staff will be encouraged to work reflectively and to consider:

- ◆ What have I personally done to pursue my own professional development (in the broadest sense)? What activities inside or outside the school/centre (not just courses) have I made use of to improve my work with children and families? e.g. mentoring, own-time study, provision of information to colleagues, involvement in developing school/centre policies. What has been the effect?

- ◆ How do I contribute through my support for learning, my teaching and other work to the School/Centre Development Plan, to the implementation of school/centre policies and wider aspirations and values of the school/centre?

(iv) Professional Characteristics

All staff demonstrate that they are effective professionals who support all children and families through:

Positive personal qualities e.g.

- ◆ Working genuinely and with warmth and empathy;
- ◆ Able to tolerate many demands at one time and still maintain control;
- ◆ Concern for the happiness of others and a capacity to share in their enjoyment of life;
- ◆ Have a sense of humour;
- ◆ Ready to listen to individuals as well as a readiness to mix with larger gatherings;

Inspiring trust and confidence e.g.

- ◆ Showing an evident commitment to children and their families and respect for others who have different views, backgrounds and experiences to ourselves;
- ◆ Influencing others through our integrity and professional confidence;

Building team commitment e.g.

- ◆ Contributing constructively to the work of the room/wing and school/centre team;
- ◆ Able to act on own initiative and make decisions when appropriate;
- ◆ Using our understanding of others to help tackle issues which might hinder progress;
- ◆ Able to endure setbacks;
- ◆ Committed to Everton Nursery School and Family Centre and willing to commit over a period of time;
- ◆ Recognising and encouraging everybody's effort as well as achievement;

Engaging and motivating children and families e.g.

- ◆ Having a happy, friendly and welcoming atmosphere;
- ◆ Agreeing clear expectations with children and their families;
- ◆ Reaching out to children for whom learning is not a natural avenue for progress;
- ◆ Making learning relevant, interesting and fun;
- ◆ Giving targeted encouragement and support;

Use effective pedagogic strategies e.g.

- ◆ Make subtle interventions – interact with children gently and respectfully;
- ◆ Demonstrate knowledge of the child's previous experience and interests and current concerns;
- ◆ Affirm children through own body language and interactions;
- ◆ Encourage choices, decisions and responsibility;
- ◆ Encourage and support children to take risks appropriately;
- ◆ Encourage children to go beyond adult knowledge base;
- ◆ Be aware of the impact of own knowledge and attitudes;
- ◆ Demonstrate that learning is a partnership;
- ◆ Be aware of the impact of own knowledge and attitudes;
- ◆ Demonstrate that learning is a partnership.

Analytical thinking e.g.

- ◆ Identifying with colleagues cause and effect in children's learning and using our knowledge to get children to do their best;
- ◆ Recognising with colleagues patterns in situations, making comparisons and gauging the best learning strategies;

Positive action to improve the quality of children's learning (Teaching Team/Early Childhood Educators)e.g.

- ◆ Striving for improvement in the way they gather information or resources;
- ◆ Anticipating difficulties and resolving problems before they become far too advanced;
- ◆ Being principled and reflective and not reactive and pragmatic.

All staff will be encouraged to work reflectively and to consider:

- ◆ What is it that makes me good in my role?
- ◆ Am I clear about my role and responsibilities and yet flexible and responsive?
- ◆ How do I inspire trust, confidence and confidentiality?
- ◆ How do I contribute to building the team?
- ◆ How do I engage and motivate children and their families?
- ◆ How do I think analytically and creatively about my contribution to the team?
- ◆ How do I work with colleagues to improve the quality of children's learning?
- ◆ How do I provide help and support to other team members?
- ◆ How do I value the ideas and input of others?

Monitoring, development and improvement

At Everton Nursery School and Family Centre, we recognise the value of regular 'Performance Management/Appraisal' for all staff. This mechanism is crucial for individual staff support and development. This enables discussion and agreement of personal objectives for development. This is set within the context of the School/Centre Development Plan and the school's/centre's most recent OFSTED report/action plan.

Following an academic year cycle, the first session (which sets yearly targets) is in the autumn and the last session is an annual review that takes place in late summer. An ongoing point of reference is an individual staff members job description. The annual review will use the yearly objectives as a focus to discuss achievement and identify development needs.

Our agreed guidelines for Performance Management/Appraisal

The Headteacher/Head of Centre and Leadership Team will undertake performance management with staff members. They will:

- listen and be approachable;
- be available for an informal discussion when urgently needed;
- be supportive;
- aim to empower staff and develop staff confidence;
- hold a positive attitude towards the whole process;
- act with empathy and in a consistently positive manner;
- deal with concerns;
- offer suggestions;

- recognise and strive to understand the experiences and training of different professionals;
- provide staff with a written copy of their performance management/appraisal meeting within ten days of the session.

The Assistant Headteachers and Early Intervention Co-ordinator will have lead responsibility for Performance Management. This will be through liaison with the Headteacher/Head of Centre. Each staff member will negotiate one session twice a year. Where appropriate, further sessions can be negotiated.

Further support and development is given to individuals and to teams through observation of staff working with children. This Observation of Practice is the responsibility of the Headteacher/Head of Centre and Assistant Headteachers and each member of staff is formally observed at least once a year (mainly staff directly working with the children on a daily basis).

Our agreed guidelines for Observation of Practice

- The focus of an observation will be agreed in advance;
- The purpose of an observation will be made explicit in advance;
- The wider context will always be considered in reflecting upon an observation;
- Confidentiality between individual or team of staff and the Headteacher/Assistant Headteachers will be respected;
- Staff will aim to work in as normal a manner as possible whilst being observed;
- Staff agree to discuss the conclusions of the observation with the Headteacher/Assistant Headteachers and to agree strategies to implement change where necessary.

Policy Review

This policy was reviewed by a group of seven Governors on behalf of the Curriculum, Children and Family Committee on Wednesday 10th February 2021 and was ratified online due to coronavirus by the Governing Body in February 2021.