



a revolutionary response to school

## EYFS Teaching & Learning Policy

### The Vision and Aims of Atelier 21 Future School

Imagine a school where children have lots of time to choose what they want to learn and are encouraged and supported to master skills at their own pace. All set in a culture of respect where adults see themselves as researchers of children who are committed to delivering an entirely relevant and personalised educational experience to every child.

The aims of Atelier 21 will be to create a democratic space for children to learn that enables high levels of self-directed learning, assumes personal responsibility, and fosters innovation, curiosity and creativity which will help young people compete, contribute and thrive in an ever-changing modern world.

Without compromising academic opportunities, at Atelier 21, children will be taught how to think, not what to think. Their broad talents will be celebrated and encouraged, and they will learn how to be resourceful, resilient and reflective. Atelier 21 serves to advocate for the rights of children and the protection of the culture of childhood, as an important time for rich connection with nature, other people and the wider world as the lifelong journey of self-discovery is embarked upon. Our pedagogical approach can be summarised as the following:

- **active:** emphasises learning by doing.
- **interactive:** uses discussion and debate.
- **relevant:** focuses on real-life issues facing young people and society.
- **critical:** encourages young people to think for themselves.
- **collaborative:** employs group work and co-operative learning.
- **participative:** gives young people a say in their own learning.

### In our EYFS Reception Class we are committed to providing:

- inspirational teaching.
- a stimulating environment.
- a challenging and interesting curriculum, so that children learn a variety of skills and are inspired to develop a love of learning; and
- a happy, safe and caring school where: - every child can reach their full potential - staff are valued - visitors feel welcome.

We are committed to developing an inclusive school at the heart of the Atelier 21 community where:

- every child's happiness and needs are of great importance.

- where there are high expectations of good behaviour; and
- where all members of the school community value good manners and co-operation. We are committed to:
- communicating and working effectively with parents so that there is a genuine partnership supporting children's learning.

## **Rationale**

At Atelier 21 School learning in the Early Years (Reception Class) is celebrated and promoted as a profoundly important stage of a child's life when vital emotional, social, physical and intellectual development takes place. We believe that from birth, children are strong, competent, motivated and confident learners who explore and test their ideas, solve problems and try to make sense of their world. We recognise that learning needs to be first-hand, experiential and active; it should promote children's independence and autonomy, encouraging them to take responsibility for their own learning – initiating and making decisions.

Learning needs to take place in the social context, and we believe 'talk' is central to the learning process. We also understand that learning cannot take place unless children's emotional needs are met, and they feel safe to take risks. We believe that parents/ carers are the first and most enduring educators who have the most impact on their child's life and education. Therefore, we work in partnership with parents to seek their perspective of their child to inform planning a meaningful and purposeful curriculum based on the interests and strengths of their children. We value the process of learning utmost and understand that young children have the right to communicate and explore their learning in many different ways. Above all we believe that learning is 'learnable' and strive to support children to develop specific learning capacities which will enable them to be effective lifelong learners.

Learning happens best when it exercises and challenges the learner's capacities as they emerge at a given developmental level; when it encourages them to develop talents. Young children need time and space to become resilient lifelong learners.

## **Aims**

Though effective learning and teaching opportunities we will ensure that all children are enabled to:

- Feel valued as an individual.
- Show enthusiasm and confidence with high self-esteem and self-worth.
- Be independent, curious, creative and resilient learners, researching the world around them, following their own fascinations.
- Be courageous and take risks, challenging themselves and each other.
- Know they have a voice, feel heard and that they can make a difference.
- Be able to identify and communicate their own needs and feelings.
- Be empowered to meet their own needs.
- Respect themselves, each other, their communities and environment.
- Feel safe and secure and have a sense of belonging and strong attachments.
- Establish effective and supportive relationships and be able to work collaboratively.
- Know themselves as a learner, leading and co constructing learning experiences in a meaningful way to develop mastery.

- Have high aspirations, build on their previous best and excel in whatever they choose to do.

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum in the Reception Class covers the seven areas of learning, the prime areas

- communication and language development
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

and four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design
- literacy
- mathematics

Staff will consider the individual needs of each child using information from the progress check at age 2, parents and information from nurseries or other providers. Each child will benefit from a challenging and enjoyable learning experience. If a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern staff will discuss it with the child's parents/carers and agree how the child can best be supported. Staff will consider the child's progress and assessment information over the course of a few weeks and decide if the child may have a special educational need or disability (SEND) which may require specialist support. The school special educational needs coordinator and key worker will meet with the parents to discuss the next steps. Parents will be helped to access specialist services from other agencies as appropriate.

## **The Role of the Practitioners**

- To have a firm understanding of child development and an awareness of age-appropriate needs, behaviour and learning.
- Key Person role embedded to support strong attachment and containment.
- To be attuned to individualised feelings, needs, fascination and lines of enquiry.
- To be attentive to any patterns of play that may be emerging or reflecting an emotional need.
- To encourage children to communicate in a variety of ways and value home language, cultural heritage and British Values.
- To develop planning that is personalised, challenging but achievable.
- To ensure quality interactions which scaffold and prompt thinking, building on children's interests, strengths and questions.
- To encourage and support children's interactions with other children and adults.
- To ensure that learning is documented in a meaningful way.
- To model feelings, learning characteristics and reflective learning.
- To model language of learning and exploration of emotional well-being.
- To be attentive to the four principles of assessment for Learning: learning intentions, feedback, questioning and self-evaluation/challenge.

- To support children to become mastery learners - to ask questions, take and evaluate risks, develop resilience and have ownership for their learning.
- To ensure the environment is safe, calm, purposeful, challenging and supportive.
- To provide inspiring learning experiences and provocations in which children can become the leaders.
- To maintain 'practice' leadership ensuring authentic connection with daily practice.

## **The Enabling Emotional and Physical Environment**

The daily routine is structured to include time for personal exploration, small and large group sessions and social experiences. The routine ensures time for children to repeat, revisit and reflect on their previous experiences, which includes a long, uninterrupted 'exploration time' during which children can really master and engage in deep level learning. The routine is always consistent, thus ensuring children feel secure and are able to operate independently. Within the elements of the daily routine varied and enriching experiences are planned to maintain and stimulate children's attention and learning. Children are emotionally contained in a small consistent group – their home base is supported with pictures displayed of their families or other significant people. Boundaries are clear and consistent across the setting. Children are empowered to manage their feelings, keep themselves safe and resolve conflicts using the Conflict/Resolution steps alongside emotionally literate adults.

Children have continual, free flow access to a stimulating learning environment, both inside and outside, at all times. Planning for the environment is informed by children's interests, their learning styles and preferred ways of communication. Resources are easily accessible, plentiful, well maintained and organised and appropriate – with an emphasis on open ended exploration and collaborative learning.

## **Developing Learning Power**

We believe that children can become confident lifelong learners if equipped with the appropriate skills, attitudes and capacities for learning from an early age. Children need to become Resilient, Resourceful, Reflective and Reciprocal Learners (Claxton). In order to develop these appropriate attitudes, we:

- Enable children to initiate and carry out their own activities and make independent choices and decisions.
- Encourage children to find, use and replace equipment and resources independently (in an organised, labelled and accessible learning environment).
- Encourage the children to make plans, modify plans, review and reflect on their own learning.
- Set challenges for children and support them through the process of problem solving.
- Model and use the language of learning with both children and adults alike.
- Use and encourage use of open ended and challenging questioning techniques.
- Model 'being stuck' and learning from mistakes.
- Using consistent strategies for what to do if you get stuck!
- Encourage collaboration.
- Enable children to see each other as tools for learning as well as the teaching staff.
- Develop children's noticing skills.

- Encourage absorption, and an awareness of distractions.
- Plan for varied imaginative play situations.
- Encourage children to make connections from their experiences and to explore possibilities. This goes beyond the 'effective characteristics of learning' identified in the EYFS.

## **Growth Mindset**

At ATELIER 21 we embrace the lifelong learning pedagogy. We provide the children with opportunities to learn about and discuss the key characteristics of a growth mindset and effective learning. These include:

- learning from mistakes
- failure
- resilience
- perseverance
- challenge
- effort
- self-efficacy

As these concepts are re-visited throughout the school, it deepens the children's understanding and enables them to become confident, independent learners.

## **Parents In Partnership**

Parents and carers are fundamental in their child's development and learning; therefore, we actively seek to learn from them and share with them in all aspects of their child's learning. We foster this relationship through:

- An ethos of openness and honesty that encourages parents /carers to share their knowledge, understanding, hopes and concerns with us.
- Opportunities to listen to and value personal histories.
- An open learning community – sharing and celebrating ALL our learning.
- Opportunities for parents/child/practitioner to co-construct learning priorities and document children's learning and interests
- Reports to parents.
- Parents' evenings
- Parents invited into school to view learning taking place.
- Up to date communication through Evidence Me, website, texts, newsletters, noticeboards, displays, etc. and consultation.
- Ensuring access and removing barriers to engagement
- Home-visiting
- Pre-school visits and close links with the children's childcare providers.

## Assessment

We are committed to narrowing the gap in progress and attainment, ensuring that no child underachieves, especially those from identified underperforming or underrepresented groups. We believe that every child has the right to a well-planned and meaningful curriculum that will provide them with the tools needed to succeed throughout their lives, regardless of culture, social class, gender, physical and cognitive capabilities and beliefs.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of children's progress enables us to continually adjust our provision in response to any areas of underachievement that may be identified. Assessment is a fundamental part of the planning process. To help us decide what to provide we observe children in their play in a range of situations.

“On-going formative assessment is at the heart of effective early years practice.” (Revised Development Matters in the EYFS 2012, p.3)

We respond to the development and learning of each child by planning a range of experiences which include the Prime and Specific areas of learning and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Diversity and inclusion are our priority and therefore we differentiate our planning and provision to ensure every child can access the learning experiences at their stage of development. No child is excluded from activities.

Assessment of learning and development for each child in Reception Class will include the completion of the EYFS Profile no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> of June and shared with parents, and future class teachers.

## Assessment Tools

We use a range of assessment tools to assess children's development and progress:

- Revised EYFS Development Matters statements for the Prime and Specific areas of learning including the Early Learning Goals
- Characteristics of Effective Learning, Attitudes and Dispositions to Learn, Social Competence and Self Concept and Emotional Well Being
- Leuven's Levels of Involvement and Well Being

The revised EYFS Development Matters statements support us in being able to assess children's progress and identify next steps in their learning for the seven areas of learning and development. It also helps us to evaluate the provision, celebrate achievements and plan for improvements. All our teaching is based on our knowledge of the children's current learning, interests and developmental stage. Observations of Play + Learning (OP+L) is used to assess each child in accordance with their age in years and months. This is a fairer system that acknowledges the disparity between a winter born reception child and one born in the summer, thus allowing staff to tell and celebrate each child's story and focus on the support they need from educators. This knowledge is gathered and continually updated through a variety of ongoing assessments, which take the form of:

- learning observations uploaded to Evidence Me.
- video and photo documentation.
- assessment sheets for Prime and Specific areas of learning and COEL.

## Reflective Planning Cycle

This leads reception teachers through the continuous cycle of reflecting on:

context, assumptions, questions, distilling of learning and challenge, taking children’s ideas and voice into account when planning next steps and experiences to stretch and challenge them appropriately.

Weekly sprint meetings are also conducted to reflect on the week to ensure the needs of the children are being met and to inform forward planning.

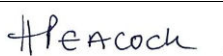
## Teaching Tools

READ WRITE INC - The teaching of systematic synthetic phonics begins with RWI where children start to be taught the relationship between written letters (graphemes) and the sounds of spoken English (phonemes). See APPENDIX A for further details.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every year in consultation with staff and the School Advisory Panel

Next review Autumn 2021

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Document Review			
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## Appendix A

**Read Write Inc.** Phonics is a synthetic phonics scheme that teaches children to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. They learn to form each letter, spell correctly, and compose their ideas step-by-step. Children learn the English alphabetic code: first they learn one way to read the 40+ sounds and blend these sounds into words, then learn to read the same sounds with alternative graphemes. They experience success from the very beginning. Lively phonic books are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky' words and, as children re-read the stories, their fluency increases. Along with a thought-provoking introduction, prompts for thinking out loud and discussion, children are helped to read with a storyteller's voice. The children write every day, rehearsing out loud what they want to say, before spelling the words using the graphemes and 'tricky' words they know. They practise handwriting every day: sitting at a table comfortably, they learn correct letter formation and how to join letters speedily and legibly. Children's composition (ideas, vocabulary and grammar) is developed by drawing on their own experiences and talking about the stories they read.