

Sawston Nursery Curriculum Development and Ethos

Our **vision** at Sawston Nursery is to provide a caring, stimulating, and professional learning environment for all children. We recognise that children thrive in a warm, nurturing, and friendly atmosphere, where staff ensure that each child feels individually valued and are able to reach their full potential.

Intent:

We offer a holistic approach to learning, so each child is able to explore a variety of experiences through play and follow their own interests across the seven areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Areas within our continuous provision are accessible to all children where they are able to experience age-appropriate resources which are challenging, hence creating confidence, providing 'thrill and will' for each child.

We are fortunate to have large outdoor spaces across the nursery which allows the children to interact and develop a sense of freedom to make discoveries by themselves. Children are able to develop their own ideas or create games and activities to take part in with their friends, whilst they experience risk taking. For example, 'Shall I climb this tree, or should I jump off this log?' Children begin to understand what they can do by themselves and develop a 'can do attitude' which will act as a solid foundation for future learning.

At Sawston Nursery, we feel that our outdoor space should be an extension of our classroom where children can explore and express themselves freely without classroom constraints. This in turn, promotes a sense of well-being and an active lifestyle.

Spending time in our garden area allows the children to challenge themselves and take risks, building self-esteem and helping them gain independence and confidence.

Children are also encouraged to develop an appreciation for nature. From an early age we motivate everyone to weed, water and plant in our growing areas. Furthermore, we are fortunate to have a forest area close by which we visit regularly to explore our local wildlife and their habitats.

We believe that consistency supports children in developing a resilient attitude to learning and to feel good about themselves.

Good interactions with children together with communication and conversations help a child to problem solve and self-regulate.

We strive to be aware of each child in the Nursery, establishing their interests, and developmental level. We are then able to promote children's next steps in their learning through play and discussions with other adults and build on the child's current stage of development.

We aim to form good relationships with parents and work together to provide the best possible outcomes for each child. Staff are friendly, approachable, positive, and respectful to all children and their families, treating everyone as an individual recognising their uniqueness.

Play is the business of childhood. We believe through play, children are able to become an enquirer, an experimenter, a discoverer, and an explorer, as play sets the stage for learning and children at Sawston Nursery have the opportunities to learn through quality play.

Implementation:

Children learn through a balance of child initiated and adult directed activities where they are given plenty of time to engage in exploration and challenge themselves.

Our environment enables children to follow their interests and become independent learners based around experiences. We believe that if a child is interested in an activity, they can be taught anything. Adults will provide thoughtful resources that children are interested in and like to play with. We want our children to be resilient, independent and be able to communicate with others. We want them to make thoughtful decisions about what they want to do, and the risk involved. This will impact decisions in the world about what they do.

Staff across the nursery plan activities for the children that excites them and allows their interests to be acknowledged. Modelling to the children takes place in the daily routines and capturing those teachable moments such as allowing a child to show an interest in scissors and have a go themselves before the adult offers support and shows the child how these are used.

We ensure the content of the curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of all children so that children build on prior learning.

We plan activities around the child's interest and extend the activities to challenge children further where appropriate, to consistently give the children the opportunity to consolidate and learn new skills. This will support them in their next steps and transitions to the next classroom.

There is robust and effective communication with parents and practitioners actively seek advice from parents about their child's learning and development at home. Parents and practitioners work together to create a two-way partnership that ensures we give every child the best possible start in life.

Impact:

We provide a caring, stimulating, and professional learning environment for all. Children will be allowed to gain and develop their social skills and be ready for the next stage of their learning journey.

At the end of a child's time at Nursery the transitions to new settings and schools are positive and children are praised for their readiness. Children are confident, resilient and have good self-esteem in preparation for new experiences.

Children are able to focus and engage in their play due to experiences on offer throughout their time in the Nursery. Allowing children time and space to follow their own interests promotes their independence to learn.

Through outdoor play opportunities in the Nursery, children can learn the skills of social interaction and friendship, care for living things and their environment, be curious and fascinated, experience awe, wonder and joy and become 'lost in the experience'. They can satisfy their deep urge to explore, experiment and understand and become aware of their community and locality, thus developing a sense of connection to the physical, natural, and human world.

Staff evaluate practice and the learning environment through regular audits and being reflective practitioners.

Sawston Nursery's ethos reflects the varying approaches used for many years in Childcare and Education, including, the caring and concern for one another and the world around us. Those children learn best through actively participating in their own play situations, supported by the adults, offering stimulating safe

activities with enthusiasm and dedication. This includes using everyday experiences and life skills in a multi-cultural environment ensuring all children have the best possible start to their early education.

Individual children should be respected and have access to a provision that fosters their unique aptitudes and abilities and enables them to thrive and develop.

Margaret Mc Millan

We adopt a child centred approach where we take great care to provide a structured environment which supports children in becoming active, independent learners. Children learn best when they feel safe to explore and experiment, make mistakes, and try again.

Vygotsky

Children are able to problem solve through social interaction with others during childhood. Culture and environment play a large role in a child's development where social interactions support a child in their learning. Sociocultural theory asserts that learning is an essentially social process in which the support of parents, caregivers, peers and the wider society and culture plays a crucial role in the development of the child. Within the nursery children are able to scaffold their learning through the interactions with adults and children around them.

Reggio

In our outdoor areas we have mud kitchens with utensils where children are able to play imaginatively, enjoy sensory play, whilst developing their maths skills and hands on exploration.

The large sand pit in the garden area can generate countless variations of role playing and imaginative play.

Physical movement of climbing, jumping rolling and crawling can be facilitated through the choice of equipment available.

A tinker table is where children can explore sensory play, tactile engagement of their senses, a place to make conversations with other children and adults. Children will find baskets and containers which they fill with loose materials and objects, making their own wonder filled creations using a variety of resources available.

High Scope

Children in the nursery are encouraged to be create, confident and independent, where the skills they learn prepare them for later schooling and future success.

We have an active learning approach which achieves positive results and happy children. We know that children learn best when they have the opportunity to be active, interested, engaged, and supported.

Children are encouraged to plan their own activities during play and to talk to others about what they have learnt and be proud of their achievements.

Children will be prepared for the transition to school from Nursery feeling confident and ready for their next adventure due to the hands-on experiences they encounter during their time at the nursery.