Our Curriculum Policy

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2026.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2026.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Curriculum

Our Curriculum offers a wide variety of **rich experiences** that are crucial to child development. We believe children learn best when they are interested, curious and deeply engaged, which at this age and stage of development is best achieved through play.

Our approach is committed to **child-led learning**. We see children as confident and capable learners who are able to lead their own learning and develop their own ideas and theories, whilst practitioners watch, support, extend the learning alongside the child. We believe that the correct mix of adult directed and uninterrupted child initiated play ensures the best outcomes for children.

It is our intent that all children develop **physically, verbally, cognitively and emotionally** in an environment which values all cultures, communities and people.

Warm and positive **relationships** between staff and children, consistent routines and strong relationships with parents are key.

Planning and teaching……How the curriculum is taught

At The Orchard Nursery we meet the welfare requirements laid down in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and actively safeguard and promote the welfare of all of our children.
We prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and between peers.

We understand the importance of parental engagement and believe that our parents have a crucial role to play in their children's education. We work hard to create strong partnerships between home and nursery. Parents enjoy using eyLog to engage in their child's learning and are encouraged to share learning at home.

As part of the learning and teaching process, children are assessed in relation to their progress towards the checkpoints in the Development Matters and our Nursery goals. These judgements are made on the in depth practitioner knowledge of the children acquired through ongoing observation and assessment. These ongoing assessments are used to inform planning and next steps in teaching and learning for all children throughout the year.

The curriculum is taught through the following ways…….

In the moment planning

We have adopted an **'In The Moment'** approach to our planning, teaching and learning. Our approach supports us engaging in high quality interactions with the children where we follow their interests and to spot 'teachable' moments in their play. Planning in the moment means we do not plan ahead, rather we remain in the moment with the children as they explore and learn. We observe carefully and enhance the learning whenever we spot a 'teachable moment'. Our observations and interactions are recorded on eyLog afterwards.

We want to spend as much time with the children as possible, so our written planning is minimal. We record short observations to celebrate children's achievements with our parents and this is done through eyLog.

The cycle of observation, assessment, planning, observation is carried out on a moment-by-moment basis.

We have focus children each week (approximately 2-3 children per week per key person).

Our Environment

Our **environment** is carefully planned and designed to ensure the core provision meets the needs of all the children to ignite and promote curiosity. Our learning environment consists of various different areas. Each area is equally important and provides children with a range of resources and equipment to enable children to learn, working towards our Nursery Goals.

Curiosity approach

We take aspects from **'The Curiosity Approach'** and use natural, reclaimed and authentic resources, which promote exploration, discovery, creativity, imagination, curiosity, awe and wonder. These resources are anything from branches, pine cones, leaves, mud, flowers, shells, real items such as kettles, pots and pan, crates, tyres, cable drums and microwaves.

Adult-led activities

In addition to open-ended, child-initiated learning, regular routines of the day offer important opportunities for learning and literacy development. Adult-led activities include a daily story, singing sessions, and letters and sounds activities. One session per week, all children participate in a scheduled music and movement session run by Boogie Mites. We also deliver a physical sports session run by Dave Sawyer to promote balance, co-ordination and gross motor skills.

A seasonal and story based approach to learning

At The Orchard Nursery we use the seasons, and our CORE stories to teach the children. Our CORE stories reflect learning and the times of year. For example we use "Owl Babies" as our first half term core story to

help settle the children and have discussions around saying goodbye and feelings. The below chart is an example of our stories over the year. This is flexible and we have carefully chosen stories for each age group.

Autumn 1 – Owl Babies The Three little pigs	Spring 1 – Tooth brushing books The Tiny Seed	Summer 1 – Smartie the Penguin (pre-school) The Hungry Caterpillar
Autumn 2 – The Leaf Man Goldilocks and the Three bears	Spring 2 – We're going on a bear hunt Oliver's vegetables Oliver's Fruit salad	Summer 2 – The Underpants Rule (pre-school) The Rainbow Fish

Assessment

At The Orchard Nursery, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe children to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape next steps and planning in the moment. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Practitioners will be using their professional judgements alongside our **Nursery Goals** to assess the child's development during our daily interactions and activities. The staff will share their assessments with parents and highlight progress and any concerns.

Our Nursery Goals have been developed alongside the new Development matters and will be used by practitioners as a guide to assess if a child is on track to meeting developmental age appropriate milestones and will support practitioners to quickly identify children who are not reaching milestones and may need more support.

A written review (starting points), outlining strengths, concerns, parents view and what to do next is shared with parents when they first start at the setting. A Two Year Old Check is also completed when a child is between 2 and 3 years of age. This will highlight progress and areas of concern. This is shared with the parents.

During each term practitioners will do a short assessment outlining if a child is on track to meeting age appropriate milestones. This is then discussed with the supervisors and management at an assessment meeting, so that support can be given to practitioners and adjustments can be made, if needed to resources or the environment. We also meet with parents face to face at the end of the academic year to discuss progress or concerns and provide opportunity for questions and discussions.

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general.

We will encourage good oral health in the following ways:

- Talking to children about the effects of eating too many sweet things
- Promoting regular tooth brushing – twice a day for 2 minutes using a fluoride toothpaste

- Encouraging children to visit the dentist regularly (twice a year is recommended)
- Encouraging parents to promote good oral health at home
- Read books about going to the dentist and promote activities relating to oral health
- Our curriculum has been adapted to enhance good oral health through a story based approach to teaching and learning this subject.

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Signed on behalf of the nursery.....Emma Middleton.....Date:… August 2026