

Little Bears Curriculum



Our Curriculum Statement - Little Bears is about supporting children's learning through play and helping them to be 'school-ready'. We aim to help every child to become independent, confident, socially interactive and have a rich vocabulary by the time they go to school. Every support is given to them to help them develop at their own pace and reach their optimum potential in every area. We want all our Little Bears to have fun, to feel happy and safe in the learning rich environment that we offer.

Our Curriculum - We adhere to the 'Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)' educational framework which is specified by the UK Government. We also refer to the non-statutory curriculum guidance 'Development Matters' this is to support our professional judgement as we assess each child's progress and level of development. When required we refer to the EY SEN Guidance and SEN development Journal.

The EYFS Framework consists of seven areas of learning, 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas.

The 3 'Prime' Areas of the Curriculum are:

Communication & Language - Without good communication and language skills, all other areas of learning could suffer, so these are critically important skills for children to master in their early years. Little Bears provides a language rich environment always encouraging communication within the setting. Language and communication skills grow naturally to children through engaging, fun activities like role-play, story-telling and question-and-answer games. High quality books are used by staff to read with the children in an *interactive* way. Using these kind of approaches helps children to learn new vocabulary and broaden their language and communication skills as they grow.

Physical Development At this formative age, young children are growing and developing rapidly, so their physical development is significant. The staff at Little Bears will do everything they can to ensure good health, wellbeing, strength, coordination and fitness among the children at every stage. As they grow Little Bears will provide fun, physical activities which will help every child to reach their personal bests for traits like fitness, balance, coordination, hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness. We are lucky to have a lot of outside space, including a very large garden to practise all these activities in. We host an end of year sports event for the children to take part in and invite their families/carers along to. We include physical activities in our fundraising events: spring walks, wellie walks and pedal push.

Personal, Social & Emotional Development (PSED). The *personal* part of it aims to ensure that children can look after aspects of their lives themselves, independently managing personal needs like cleanliness, toilet training, healthy eating and so on. The *social* and *emotional* aspects of it aim to help children fit in with adults and peers around them, learn to manage emotions and behave in acceptable, appropriate ways. As they learn to do all of this, they will become more confident, feel rightly valued, more easily resolve any conflicts and form closer friendships with peers.

The 4 'Specific Areas' of the Curriculum are:

Literacy - Literacy is fundamental and will give each young child the very best start when they leave our setting to start school. At Little Bears, we encourage the children to *take enjoyment* from reading, we have a very cosy and comfortable book area where they have access to a wide, rich variety of reading materials. Exposure to our rich variety of books and story sacks will feed their imaginations and help them to be more creative themselves. We also encourage reading at home and offer a 'home library' where the children can take books home to read with their families/carers. We encourage children to recognise their name by self-registration and to work towards forming the letters in their names. We display print all around the setting to continuously enhance their literacy skills.

Mathematics - is a fundamental skill that children need to learn but, as with everything at Little Bears, we make it fun. Through play and interactive sessions, children will learn the concepts behind mathematics, soon learning to distinguish things like number patterns and sequences, concepts, like larger or smaller, wider or taller and more or less. Counting will first be mastered from zero to five, then zero to ten. Concepts like volume, shape, measuring and space will also be included.

Little Bears have a 'maths station' where children can access resources themselves to assist them with all of the above activities.

Understanding the World this is a very broad but important area of study for the children. After all, there is so much around them and they need to understand it and to give everything they see context. At Little Bears we help the children to recognise, understand, describe and even sometimes draw what's immediately around them. They will learn about the technology they see and use around them. They will also learn about other communities, cultures, beliefs and religions.

Expressive Arts & Design Is one of the areas that children find most fun as it gives them the freedom to express themselves, be imaginative and creative, and best of all, to get messy! At Little Bears we offer a wide variety of media, equipment, and tools to encourage our children to get involved and to *create*. It's not just art, though; the children can involve themselves in role-play activities; they can sing, dance, tell stories and perform. Their imaginations can run riot and be free as they can express themselves and their creativity in a variety of ways. As well as a lovely home corner at Little Bears to support role model play, we also have a mark making station where there is always a selection of mark making tools available for the children to use at all times. In the garden we have a great mud kitchen where the children can follow recipes and make imaginative meals!

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning. When planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different rates at which children develop and learn. We include the children's interest and involve the children in our termly planning.

Children learn in different ways; The three characteristics of effective learning are:

playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things