



The Mall School

The Mall Nursery Curriculum

Our aims

We believe all children should be inspired with a lifelong love of learning. Our mission is to create an environment that ignites the love of learning in children, through passion, joy, confidence and happiness. We will achieve this by providing a supportive community and place to grow, where everyone has a voice. A place where true potential can be developed, whether it is academic, sporting, musical, dramatic or artistic. We will guide all children to develop their natural curiosity and independence leading to happy confident individuals, with a lifelong love of learning.

We acknowledge that parents are children's first and most enduring educator and we will work closely with them and other adults to enable children to reach their full potential before continuing their learning journey into school and beyond.

Our values

- We seek to spark creativity, curiosity and imagination.
- We embrace our differences.
- We believe confident, happy children are inspired to learn.
- We bring out the best in each other

Our approach

We use the four overarching principles from the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021):

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents.
- Recognising the importance of learning and development, and that children develop and learn at different rates.

We want children to be curious and confident; with a passion for learning; to form positive relationships; and thrive in their environment and beyond. We want to ensure that the foundations for learning are available for all and that the children in our nursery flourish.

Areas of learning

There are seven areas of learning and development: all are interlinked and are of equal importance.

Prime areas:

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

Children will also be supported in the four specific areas:

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

The educational programmes we provide involve activities and experiences for children within each of the areas of learning. Below we have outlined how as adults we will support the children in each of the seven areas of learning; our teaching styles; our use of the environment and partnership with others.

Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them, the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding – such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting – children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

Our teaching

We recognise that children arrive at our nursery with a wide range of different experiences. It is our role to discover what these experiences are by working closely with parents. We will observe and interact with the children to discover their interests and to ignite the love of learning.

Our practice is informed by a range of pedagogical approaches:

- Montessori: where teachers serve as guides for developmentally appropriate activities that are engaging and imaginative. Where children choose activities themselves and hands-on learning is an important part of the process.
- Steiner: which emphasises the importance of imagination in intellectual, practical, and artistic development.
- STEM: recognising that the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering and maths is part of our everyday lives.
- Reggio: focuses on the environment as the third teacher by exploring interests not just through books, but songs, dance, drama and sculpture.

Our interaction with the child

Parents will be invited to complete an all about me form which will be updated after the child's first six weeks at the nursery with a more about me form.

We use the following five questions from the child's point of view to get to know the children in our nursery:

- Do you know me?
- Can I trust you?
- Do you let me fly?
- Do you hear me?
- Is this place fair for me?

We have a holistic approach to learning so that all children are able to flourish. We ensure that the children have the best support:

- By their side.
- In front of them leading them.
- Behind them supporting them.

We endeavour, through a variety of methods, to consult with the children in our care.

Our environment

We create an environment which supports the child's interests and engages them and encourages them to explore. An environment that will inspire them to be curious and want to continue to learn.

We will encourage children to care for their own environment and care for others within the nursery and beyond within the community.

To support the communication and language programme our nursery will be rich in opportunities to share and take turns, setting the foundations for back and forth interactions.

Story telling will not be carried out in isolation or just at fixed times during the day. Staff will be trained and supported to tell stories with passion and the engagement of the child using props to extend the child's learning.

The role play areas will be rich in authentic resources:

- **Aesthetic qualities:** what does it look like? Feel like? Smell like? Is it unique?
- **Unique and unusual:** items that are eclectic and offer visual beauty and stimulus.
- **Trust:** with guidance and support, the child will work with real breakable objects.
- **Holistic approach to child development:** engaging the mind, body, heart and soul.

- Encourage exploration: taking thinking to a higher level.
- Nature collections: seashells, leaves, cones, pods, feathers and stones
- Thinking: developing higher order thinking to provoke curiosity, awe and wonder.
- Imagination: introducing materials that require the child to use their imagination and own experiences.
- Curiosity: creating a magical and wondrous place to learn.

Our practice

We believe that our curriculum is everything we say and everything we do and that our children are learning all the time they are with us. Every moment is an opportunity that should not be missed to provide a worthwhile experience to the children in our care.

Each child is assigned a key person who understands and can articulate their needs to teachers, parents, and other professionals. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs; to help the child become familiar with the nursery; offer a settled relationship for the child; and build a relationship with their parents. We will inform parents of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending the nursery. The key person will seek to engage and support parents in guiding their child's development at home. They will also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.

We aim to:

- Provide all children with a smooth transition into our nursery; through all the rooms and then on to their next school.
- Provide all children with a safe environment which they can freely explore.
- Encourage children to develop their independence and at times choose and follow their own learning journey.
- Provide children with a learning experience tailored to their needs.
- Provide children with resources that will challenge and inspire them.
- Pay as much attention to care as we do to play and learning.
- Offer children a play based learning environment.
- Encourage self-regulation rather than simply managing children's behaviour.
- Offer the same support and opportunities for all children.
- Support children with English as an Additional Language.
- Regard all children as unique individuals.
- Always have the children at the centre of everything we do.
- Get to know each and every children and what interests them.
- Give them the knowledge, skills and opportunities to ignite the love of learning.

Outcomes for the children

Children will be provided with the knowledge, skills and opportunities:

- To help them flourish in the wider world.
- To have a sense of self.
- To have a sense of others.
- To have been challenged to reach their full potential.
- To want to try new experiences.
- To suggest their own ideas.
- To look for the next challenge.
- To have the ability and willingness to self-regulate.

- To make another attempt even after not succeeding the first time and finding or suggesting a new route to success.
- To have interests of their own and be able to share these with others.
- To make predictions of their own.

Our assessment

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the early learning goals. When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, staff will draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement.

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents and staff to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves staff knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, staff should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents share.

Parents will be kept up-to-date with their child's progress and development. Staff should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents, and any relevant professionals.

When a child is aged between two and three, staff will review their progress, and provide parents with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas. This progress check will identify the child's strengths, and any areas where the child's progress is less than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns, or an identified special educational need or disability, staff will develop a targeted plan to support the child's future learning and development involving parents and other professionals, e.g. the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

Where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate a special educational need or disability) the written summary will describe the activities and strategies the nursery intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns.

If a child moves settings between the ages of two and three it is expected that the progress check would usually be undertaken by the setting where the child has spent most time. Staff will discuss with parents how the summary of development can be used to support learning at home.

Staff will encourage parents to share information from the progress check with other relevant professionals, including their health visitor and the staff of any new provision the child may transfer to. Staff will agree with parents when will be the most useful point to provide a summary. Where possible, the progress check and the Healthy Child Programme health and development review at age two (when health visitors gather information on a child's health and development) will inform each other and support integrated working. This will allow health and education professionals to identify strengths as well as any developmental delay and any particular support from which they think the child and family might benefit. Providers must have the consent of parents to share information directly with other relevant professionals.

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