

Quality of education

Our teaching, learning and assessment is a process that is continuously reviewed. We make changes and reflect on our practice to ensure we have consistently high expectations of what children can achieve and how we can move them onto challenging experiences that promotes their learning throughout the early year's provision.

Our process begins by assessment. We use home visits and open afternoon visits as an opportunity to assess children at the beginning of their preschool journey. Key persons are able to meet their key child, not only to begin a trusting relationship but to also make initial assessments, through observations and interactions. We continue this process by asking the parents to record any information about their child's development in an 'All about Me' booklet, which has parent friendly statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage. We gather information from previous childcare providers and request to see any learning journey files that may have been passed on. The information given by the parents and previous childcare providers allows the key person to do an initial assessment with these starting points and the interactions during the home visit. We begin the child's preschool journey with a good knowledge of the child and their home life, to help them settle into preschool smoothly.

This information is used in our 'progress matters', which is reviewed and updated at the beginning of each term, to highlight progress made and whether there are any gaps. The data is gathered from every child and is grouped into cohorts. Within the cohorts we analyse groups such as those who receive Early Years Pupil Premium, children with additional needs, children with English as a second language, gender, and those who are more able and those who are disadvantaged. We aim to close the gaps, to ensure children are able make reasonable progress throughout their preschool experience. We also carry out 2 year checks on all 2 year olds and use information provided by the parents and health carers to review children's progress and highlight any additional need for support.

When children, groups or whole cohorts are not making progress in their development we review our teaching and learning strategies. We are reflective through auditing, observations, meetings and progress matters data. When we feel a child is falling behind we make plans to ensure their learning over a long time is supported so they are able to make progress and achieve well.

As part of our 'in the moment' planning process, it is vital that we have up to date assessment information on the children's current level of development. Our key persons pride themselves on having a good knowledge on each individual child's development and use this to plan for their needs. All our practitioners have an excellent knowledge on the Early Years Foundation Stage and the development stages, and can apply their knowledge to the varied age groups throughout the prime and specific areas.

As a child's focus week comes up each term, we ask parents for some up to date information on how they feel their child's development is progressing, if there is anything significant happening in their lives currently, and if there is anything they would like to know about their child's time at preschool. This information is used to inform all the practitioners during the child's focus week, to enhance the experiences and learning opportunities. The child's key person will also record any information

needed, including a short description of the child's development and what they are currently developing/ learning.

As a team, the practitioners use this information to impact on the children's play, to be an active part in their learning by enhancing their learning opportunities through their free play. Practitioners spend time observing the individual child's play styles, friendship groups and current interests. We focus on the characteristics of learning throughout their focus week, encouraging the children to play and explore, actively learn, to self-challenge, risk take and be creative and critical thinkers. Throughout the child's focus week, practitioners adapt the resources and routines to ensure they are meeting the needs of the children. They use challenging language such as 'I wonder...' and use teachable moments to enhance the children's play such as demonstrating, supporting, advising, modelling, encouraging and much more.

During this process children's next steps of development are met in the moment of observing it. We do not believe next steps should be recorded and met at a later date, when they are not as meaningful or as current. Our practitioners utilise their skills to identify how to challenge children on progressing their development. This is recorded and the key person is then able to identify the child's development and how to encourage this further. At the end of the child's focus week, the key person reviews all of the observations and learning intentions that have been identified and records a summary of the child's week. Within this summary the key person highlights the teachable moments, where the input of the practitioner has enhanced the child's learning experiences. Key persons will also include in this summary any advice or information about how the parents can continue to support this learning at home. We aim to teach parents about their child's development in relation to their age and understand how they can be engaged in their child's learning.

Each child is given a focus week once a term, 2 year olds are given a focus week twice a term as their learning and development is advancing at a quicker rate at this age & often they do not attend so frequently during the week. When a child is not in their focus week, all practitioners will still be supporting their learning and development. Monitoring their play, analysing their development and enhancing the provision to meet individual needs. The difference is that we do not record unless a child is developing a WOW moment. WOW moments are when a child is doing something new that can be recognised as an achievement. This could be using the potty for the first time, coming into preschool confidently, rising to a challenge and continuing to proceed to keep on trying. Each time a child has their focus week, we evaluate the progress the child has made and focus on closing the gaps in any area highlighted. This should also be demonstrated on each terms progress matters data, as a whole cycle of focus weeks would have been complete and children's development recorded.

During the summer term each year we begin to introduce phonics in our everyday learning, and add more maths challenges into children's play. These learning experiences help prepare the children as they become ready for school. We divide our children into Leavers (Bluebirds) & non-leavers (Chicks) for circle times so that the older children are offered opportunities to extend their concentration, literacy & early numeracy skills. When children are ready we have a lending library of phonics reading books to further develop these skills at home. We continue to use the focus weeks to observe and record children's developmental progress.

During team meetings we discuss children individually so the whole team have a good understanding of individual needs to ensure we promote equal opportunities to all children,

including those who may be at a disadvantage. We are diverse in the way we support each child individually, however we are consistent in our high expectations of every child. We use parent's evenings and various forms of communication to work in partnership with parents and carers, including child-minders and other early year's settings to share information and support children's development and learning holistically. We involve parents in the learning process and help them to understand what to expect of their child's development. We regularly provide the 'What to expect when' document and display this in a family friendly manner within our preschool. We provide additional support to parents whose children may not be progressing as expected or have additional needs. We utilise the services available for parents and children and we update our own knowledge and training to ensure we offer a high quality provision for all children.

Our practitioners are excellent at identifying children with additional needs and have a wide range of knowledge and experience to support children. Our SEND co-ordinator liaises with the practitioners who support the children with SEND. They have regular meetings and discuss the children and their needs in order to stay up to date and provide the highest level of care.

Our aim is to develop confident and capable children who engage in regular interactions with practitioners and their peers. We fully believe that the development of Prime areas are fundamental as the building blocks for competent, holistic learners. We believe that by children's physical and emotional (basic and physiological) needs being met, children are then able to learn essential skills and knowledge through the specific areas, to help children reach their full potential. We know that our children are ready for their next stages of learning when it is time to move on from Woodlands because they have developed the skills and capacity to develop and learn effectively.

Woodlands preschool is run by a management committee of volunteer parents, their roles contribute directly to the running of Woodlands. Management utilise the skills of the Committee in decision making and have made changes to appraisals and staff targets as a direct result of committee members input. Woodlands managers often write and amend policies in line with recommendations and changes to legislation and circumstances and the management committee will oversee these changes and offer support where needed. We hold management meetings every half term where accounts, staffing and other topics are discussed to administer quality assurance throughout the preschool.

We liaise with our local authority, central beds, and work closely with Laura Ross, our Development Officer. We attend regular network meetings where we are given an update of information and offered advice and training. We use this time to network with the development officers and other professionals in attendance. We ensure we put into practice anything gained from these meetings. We use email and informal meetings with our Development Officer to audit our setting and make changes where needed. Recently we attended a network meeting where we were offered a range of audits to undertake. We have done these as a team, with our staff members taking an active role in reflecting on our preschool and practice through the audits.

In our most recent Ofsted inspection in February 2016, we were advised to further improve the quality of our provision to *'explore further innovative methods and ideas to engage parents even more in their children's early mathematical development'*. We have continuously used this advice to improve the development of maths within our setting and to engage parents even more within this area of learning. Whilst we use the Progress Matters data to review the development of maths,

feeding this back through the team and make changes and improvements where we can, we have also make positive steps to engage parents further in this.

Parent's evenings are available twice a year, where parents are given the opportunity to talk with their child's key person. We also offer opportunities for parents to come in for a meeting or an informal chat throughout the year when needed, to ensure parents are satisfied with the provision provided and to ensure we meet the needs of the children throughout. We will often meet with parents and professionals, and have taken part in TAC teams and safeguarding meetings.

Our recent audit carried out by a member of staff on Maths found that we could '*encourage more basic counting and shape recognition*' when sharing information on learning and development with parents and home learning. We regularly reflect on how we can engage parents into mathematical development and although it can sometimes be challenges, we have devised various ways of achieving this. One of our most positive methods of engagement with parents is through children's Focus Summary. At the end of a child's 'Focus Week', the key person will spend time evaluating the observations and information gathered on the child. They will then summarise these and offer ideas and advice of development through the prime and specific areas. Please see examples:

Notes

Focus Week: This week Daisy has had her focus week where we have observed Daisy through her free play and have supported her learning and development through role modelling, resourcing and teachable moments. Daisy has settled into Woodlands well, she has been playing with friends that she knows outside of school as well as seeking out others to share experiences with. Daisy has particularly enjoyed playing out in the garden where she has been using the scooters, the trapeze, throwing and catching a ball and role playing in the house along with her peers. Daisy is able to express her wishes and is confident in asking adults for help.

Next Steps

Moving forward we will continue to support Daisy with her development at Woodlands, we will introduce mathematics into her chosen activities to scaffold her learning within this area.

Next Steps

MATHS -Continuing looking at number problems beginning to match numeral and quantity together , recognizing numbers of personal significance
PHYSICAL - Showing understanding to good practice in regard to eating ,sleeping , hygiene and exercise .
using scissors confidently one handed .
PSED- support in sharing , taking tuns with toys and equipment

made.

I had highlighted Literacy as an area to focus on this week, and while some learning objectives have been achieved in this area I will continue to encourage other aspects of it in her play. Lylah is enjoying being at pre-school, and is really developing a lovely group of friends.

Next steps

Lylah has shown development in Maths through role playing shops. To develop her understanding more, I suggest you give Lylah the opportunity to experience this in real life situations such as paying with coins and notes when purchasing something at the shop, allowing Lylah to count out the coins, talking about the numbers she sees on the coins and the price labels to make connections

We ask for parents input into their children's learning and development via email, which is inputted into their child's focus week, this creates a holistic view from both parents and key person. We also obtain the views of parents through questionnaires which we create electronically via Survey Monkey. We have used questionnaires to make decisions and inform our

practice. For example, our PANCO (Physical and Nutritional Co-ordinator) has introduced a healthy snack menu, encouraged healthier packed lunches and made changes to the birthday circle celebrations. Before we made any decisions about birthday circle sweets we asked parents for their thoughts on the suggested change. We found that whilst some questioned our changes, most were happy with the decision. One parent commented *“A nicer gesture would be to bake and decorate a cake with the children. Would be more educational. Can then sing happy birthday and share the cake”* (Healthy Eating Survey May 2017), we have implemented this idea.

We discussed this with our staff also, asking for their opinions in a staff meeting. By sharing and listening to each other we found that although there were differing opinions, the heart of the reason was to promote healthy lifestyles for children and were able to come to an agreement. We use staff meetings to make decisions as a team, taking on board everyone’s opinions and experiences. We feed this back to the management committee who on occasions may attend a staff meeting also. We have also hosted and attended local network support meetings which have been organised by ourselves and the local preschools, nurseries and lower schools. Together we informally work through an agenda set by those in attendance, this has created a very beneficial support network between the local provisions.

As a result of these meetings we collaborated together for a training day with Anna Ephgrave. We have visited each other’s settings, shared information and had practitioners come spend sessions with us to see how we implement our planning in the moment method. Our Development Officer has been invited to attend these meetings also. As a local community of varied provisions we have created a good support group with many benefits to all.

Leanne Needham (Early Years Team Leader and Reception Teacher Raynsford Lower School) – Nov 2019

Testimonial: “We have been collaborating with Woodlands now for the past year. We have shared ideas about organisation of the pre-school, done some work shadowing, observed and advised on each other’s settings and shared best practice with regards to planning. We feel we have an excellent working relationship which is transparent and reciprocal. We have benefited from the local pre-school network forum meetings (of which Woodlands is a member), where we have also been able to discuss poignant topics affecting not only us, but all other local pre-schools”.

We identify children’s needs at an early stage and use early intervention teams including Speech Therapists, Early Years SEND advisory Teachers, and Advisory Teacher Early Years Support Team including specialist Nursery Nurses.

Emma Butterworth (Speech Therapist) - September 2019

“I have worked with Woodlands Preschool for the past couple of years, helping to support some of the children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). The staff have always been so welcoming and accommodating, and are always keen to do their best to support the children and their individual needs. I enjoy working with the staff at Woodlands as they have such a creative and child-centred approach to everything they do. They take on board any advice given and often go above and beyond so that the right support can be put in place. They make time to access and organise staff training so that they are able to maintain and develop their knowledge and skills in the

area of speech and language. Woodlands provides a very nurturing and enabling environment for children with SLCN, and I feel very lucky that I get to work with them."

Anne Eadie (Early Years SEND advisory Teachers) – Nov 2019

"For the past ten years I have had the privilege of working with you and your team at the Woodlands. I have always found your staff to be very welcoming, and believe that your children receive a first class experience at The Woodlands. I have been involved more specifically with children who have been identified with an additional need. Your ethos of training staff and attending Central Bedfordshire Training days has meant that your team as a whole are confident in their knowledge of child development and so able to identify difficulties or gaps in learning in the first instance. Children with SEN are always warmly welcomed into your setting and well supported at an appropriate level which means they make good progress. I have always been happy with the positive response from all staff members following suggestions for making alterations or providing advice for supporting children with specific difficulties. The information you share with me shows a great knowledge of individual children and their families and ensure a holistic, tailored approach to supporting can be made."

We maintain close relationships with our feeder school- All Saints Academy, as well as the local schools that our children's transition into. We prepare children for the transition to school and take into account the children's views and feelings, ensuring that it is a steady process that isn't unsettling for the children. To aid this we invite the teachers from the schools to come visit their new pupils, to help develop new relationships and trust. Alongside our Bluebird programme, we visit the feeder school regularly, give children the opportunity to have lunch in the school hall and watch concerts in the school hall. All of this helps prepare the children for their new surroundings. We meet with the teachers closer to the end of the summer term to discuss the children individually, addressing any concerns or individual support the children may need.

Emma Lines (Reception Class Teacher, Clifton All Saints academy – Nov 2019

"The Woodlands preschool has fully prepared the children in our provision for school life. The staff within the setting were proactive and forthcoming in developing positive transition systems with myself and the rest of the EYFS team. The children visited the setting on various occasions for a variety of reasons. The first visit the children make is to watch the Christmas performance. This is a short visit to simply introduce the idea of 'school' to them. Bluebird's session begin in the spring term for the oldest children and as the year progresses further the remainder of the children attend the sessions. Bluebirds greatly enhance the children's ability to settle into school life. The children are given slightly more structure to their morning and this helps them respond to adult led activities better in school. The staff from both settings work together to arrange a timetable of visits in the summer term. The children greatly benefit from these sessions as they are able to familiarise themselves with the setting and the staff. The EYPP funding has been used well to support those children with their phonics. As a result of the work done in Woodlands and Robins the reading results increased from 72% to 80% of children achieving age related to expectations. In summary the strong links between the two settings ensure that the children are school ready."

The forefront of all views comes from the children. We fully believe that for practitioners and key persons to fully know the children in their care their views and ideas must be listened to and fully understood. As managers we felt the importance of adult interaction rather than excessive paperwork was a large contributing factor to our change in planning methods. The EYFS states that *"Paperwork should be limited to that which is absolutely necessary to promote children's successful learning and development"* (Early Years Foundation Stage). Our interactions with the children help us to know the children well, to understand their needs, appreciate their interests and challenge their learning and development. Our planning methods reflect our time spent with the children in comparison to the time writing lengthy observations. We aim to keep measurable and specific records of children's develop, which highlights the way they learn, the interactions they have and the progress they are making.