Oxenhope Pre-School Curriculum Model

 **‘A curriculum with nurture at its core.’**

At Oxenhope Pre-School, we have a solid curriculum in place, developed by leaders and in conjunction with staff in order to decide what we intend children to learn and develop during their time with us. The Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards that all early year’s providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. As part of our ambitious and broad curriculum, we have looked at how to implement it successfully across pre-school to ensure children make progress in the seven areas of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage seeks to provide:

* **Quality & consistency** in all early year’s settings, so that all children make progress, and no child gets left behind.
* **A secure foundation** through planning for learning and development of each individual child and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
* **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
* **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

**What does curriculum mean?**

In basic terms, it is the programme of study in place at pre-school which allows children to learn and development. It is the process of building on children’s learning and closely linked to our pedagogy; how we see our children learning and developing and our beliefs around teaching. We believe that children learn best when they feel secure and are nurtured and this is a huge part of being able to implement our curriculum successfully.

Our curriculum is based on Development Matters which is a non-statutory educational programme however what we implement goes far beyond this. We tailor our curriculum to meet the individual needs, interests and abilities of all children meaning that no child gets left behind. It is based on knowledge and skills which are fundamental to learning and allowing all children to be the best versions of themselves. The curriculum is a progression model, taking larger goals into smaller components to allow children to make continued progress.

As part of our curriculum, we consider what children could do when they arrived (through starting points and baseline assessments), what they are working on now and what we want them to learn or be able to do by the time they leave.

**Why is our curriculum ambitious?**

We believe our programme of study goes above and beyond for children. Our practitioners, within their nurtured approach know their key children and challenge them. They practitioner knowledge is paramount to informing children’s learning processes and tailoring provision to meet their needs. We give our practitioners the autonomy and training to allow them to create a personalised learning experience for their key children, overseen by our strong leadership team.

We do not believe that one box fits all children, and we seek to achieve the best possible opportunities and outcomes for all children. Our practitioners and leaders develop a great understanding of our children and their families, the community within which our setting is based, the culture and demographic, all of which impacts on what an ambitious and successful curriculum looks like. We shrive to achieve a positive experience for all children, creating a love of learning and promoting the characteristics of effective learning which teach way beyond just the Foundation Stage (Birth to 5) but acts as the foundation for a lifelong learning journey.

**What are our main cores and values for our curriculum?**

Our curriculum has core values for which we want children to develop by the time they leave pre-school.

**I know that I am loved and cared for –** I have strong, secure attachments to adults in my life and I am nurtured. I know that I am safe and have numerous positive role models, including the adults at pre-school. **Above all else, without this nurture we believe that children cannot access the rest of this curriculum, and this is what we pride ourselves on providing and creating within our pre-school.**

**I am powerful within my play – I** can be independent, take risks and work things out for myself. I spend extended periods of time engrossed in play.

**I am a confident communicator –** who can listen carefully in situations, group and one to one. I can talk to adults and peers and hold a conversation. I ask relevant questions and have an array of extended vocabulary to describe my thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

**I am a resilient risk taker –** who can follow the Golden Rules at Oxenhope Pre-School. I show determination and perseverance in order to achieve goals. I will keep on trying, even when things get tough!

**I am a healthy hero who knows how to take care of myself –** by managing my own personal needs and understanding how I can keep myself safe and healthy, including looking after my body, my mind, and my teeth.

**I am a fantastic friend –** who is kind, caring and shows empathy and respect to others.

**I am a talented tool user –** who has fantastic fine motor skills, can hold a pencil correctly and use wide range of tools such as scissors, tongs, and cutlery, safely and with confidence.

**I am an amazing athlete –** who enjoys being active, moving in a variety of ways and showing strength, balance and co-ordination when using my gross motor skills.

**I am a brilliant bookworm –** who loves reading! I can talk about stories with enthusiasm, and I will make predictions and retell stories using illustrations. I am beginning to be able to differentiate between sounds and hear sounds within words which will help with my phonics journey. I look at books independently and enjoy listening to adults read stories.

**I am a wonderful writer –** who can assign meaning to my marks and talk about what I have written. I can write my own name, forming letters correctly using my talented tool user skills!

**I am a master of maths. –** I show a deep understanding of number, recognise number patterns, can subitise and compare quantities. I show a good understanding of the counting principles.

**I am an exceptional explorer who is aware of the world around me, near and far –** I love exploring outdoors and being at one with nature. I am aware of the world around me and how much it differs compared to the place where I live.

**I am a compassionate citizen** – who can help look after my community and care for the environment. I am aware and respectful that not everyone is like me, and I learn about other cultures and countries to develop a great understanding of what life is like for other people.

**I am an astounding artist –** who can make an array of creations and talk about how I have done so.

**I am a proud performer –** who enjoys performing songs, poems, instrumentals and dances with expression and confidence.

Pedagogy that informs our curriculum

Pedagogy refers to the ‘how’ of teaching. It is how we believe learning takes place and how we encourage children to learn effectively. These beliefs inform our curriculum.

**We are teaching children for a future that we do not know; we teach children how to learn, not what to learn.**

**Nurture – I know that I am loved and cared for**

At Oxenhope Pre-School, more than anything else we believe that nurture is key. Nurturing, emotional relationships are the most crucial primary foundation for both intellectual and social growth for children. At the heart of our curriculum and the most fundamental thing is relationships with children that foster warmth, security, physical safety, trust, empathy, and compassion.

Numerous pioneers such as Erik Erikson and Anna Freud tell us that in order for children to pass successfully through stages of early childhood, they require sensitive, nurturing care to build capacities for trust, empathy, and compassion.

Quite simply, without nurturing care, we believe that children cannot access our curriculum to it’s fullest potential. This is why, **nurture is at the heart of our curriculum and our pre-school.**

**Lifelong learning, motivation and learning for the future – I am a resilient risk taker**

Children at Oxenhope Pre-School learn that mistakes are nothing to be ashamed of. This is part of our celebratory approach and valuing everyone ‘having a go,’ promoting the characteristics of effective learning. Children develop self-esteem and confidence, and nurturing practitioners facilitate this. We show children that we value their mistakes, the risks that they take that do not always pay off, mistakes are OK, and the end-product is not what matters, it is the process of getting to the end-product, the effort, which is important.

We encourage children to think for themselves to enable creativity, imagination and thinking skills. As part of our ambitious curriculum, challenge is fundamental. We are reaching for the stars! We as practitioners believe, and therefore teach children to believe that anything is possible and that we can do anything we set our mind to! Children access extended periods of uninterrupted play in which they can pursue activities according to their interests and try out different ways, explore and engage, promoting these characteristics of effective learning.

**Holistic approaches and learning through play – I am powerful within my play**

 Using a holistic approach seeks to fully activate all aspects of the child’s personality (intellect, emotions, imagination, and body). The physical, personal, social, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of the child interconnect. We view children as individuals and celebrate their differences and we look at the whole child. Children need to be able to explore in their own time, at their own pace and planning supports children as individuals. Play provides exciting opportunities for children to acquire the characteristics to be effective learners in the future and provides the best foundations. We know children can be independent, take risks and work things out for themselves. Therefore, we want them to develop their collaborative and higher order thinking skills so that they can reach their full potential.

**Connecting to nature - I am an exceptional explorer who is aware of the world around me, near and far**

Research shows that people who are more connected with nature are usually happier in life. Nature generates a multitude of positive emotions, such as calmness, joy, creativity, and facilitates concentration. Children connect with nature to ensure they care for nature and ensure that as they grow, they will take better care of the planet as adults. We allow children the freedom to explore outdoors; within our outdoor area, the nature area, the local park and the local community and there are always things that children discover outside that simply cannot be discovered inside which spark awe, wonder and curiosity; all paramount qualities within our curriculum to instil in children for life.

**Inclusive practice**

Inclusive teaching within Oxenhope Pre-School’s curriculum recognises that all children are entitled to a learning experience that respects diversity, enables participation, and removes barriers to learning. We consider children’s needs and preferences when planning the environment.

All children have a voice and views which are respected. We provide opportunities for children to engage in learning that they have initiated and balance structured opportunities with spontaneity.

**Understanding brain development and self-regulation and co-regulation – I am a fantastic friend**

Self-regulation is the ability to monitor and manage your energy states, emotions, thoughts, and behaviours in ways that are acceptable, and produce positive results such as well-being, loving relationships, and learning. It is how we deal with stressors and as such, lays the foundation for all other activity. Developing this ability requires self-awareness, emotional intelligence, efficient filtering of sensory stimulation, coping effectively with stress, relating well to others, and sustaining focus. Children will need to be able to do this throughout their lives. Children cannot do this alone; children need adults to co-regulate. Practitioners are present in the moment with children when they are having difficulty. We teach children how to be calm, to communicate, to negotiate, compromise and deal with conflict. We need all children to feel safe to be able to tap into their thinking part of the brain. Children often experience dysregulation, and it is our job to co-regulate.

**Cultural competence - I am a compassionate citizen**

Cultural competence, defined as the ability to understand, appreciate, and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own, is what we want all children to have to create compassionate individuals who have a developed sense of cultural capital – the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens.

**The 3 I’s as part of the planning process…**

As part of our curriculum, we look at the 3 I’s – Intent, Implementation, and Impact.

**Intent**

What do we want children to learn?

We consider what we want children to learn and then plan the activity.

This may be based on their future intent for learning and development as derived from assessments, observations, or parent/carer input.

It may be based on broadening their cultural capital and giving children the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens.

It may promote values of the setting.

This may be around celebrations and diversity, broadening children’s understanding of that world around them.

It may be based on their interests, engrossing them in activities and allowing them to take a lead in their play.

**Implementation**

How will we facilitate this?

This will include a rigorous planning process of continuous provision tailored to children’s interests and needs with account for parent/carer contribution through ‘parent input into planning’ sheets.

This will include the provision of child-initiated activities, allowing children to take a lead in their play and giving them choice to explore and be engaged within pre-school.

We also facilitate our intentions for learning with the provision of adult led activities, tailored to specific ages with differentiated outcomes.

Practitioners facilitate learning through effective interactions with children knowing how to extend learning in the moment through differentiation, effective questioning and sustained shared thinking.

Children are given autonomy over the planning process in order to encourage them to become independent learners by choosing what they would like to access and contributing to the formal planning process each week.

**Impact**

How do we measure this?

Practitioners assess impact in the moment throughout interactions, questioning and conversations. They may make observations of these on Tapestry, our online learning journey system however practitioner assessment does not need to entail prolonged breaks away from children completing paperwork. We would much prefer practitioners to spend time really getting to know children to gain a holistic picture of them rather than uploading observations in order to ‘tick boxes.’

Practitioner knowledge of their key children means that they are very aware of intent for children and know how to promote desired outcomes and recognised those achieved by children independently.

Practitioners use formative assessment such as ongoing observation to measure the impact on children’s learning and progress through their play.

Each term practitioners will complete a summative assessment where they will track children’s progress according to their vast knowledge of typical child development to give you an idea whether children are ‘on track.’ When your child is between the ages of two and three, their key person will complete a two-year progress check, a statutory assessment requirement. This is a brief summary of your child’s developments in the prime areas and an identification of whether progress is less than expected. We encourage parents/carers to share this report with your Health Visitor in order to support integrated working.

We use Development Matters Observation Checkpoints and our own in-house Curriculum & Language Assessment Framework. Parents/carers are invited to consultation to discuss children’s progress and provide valued contributions. If children are not ‘on track,’ practitioner early intervention is key. This may simply include planning future implementation ideas to accelerate development in certain areas where delay may be evident, planning for continuous provision play or planning adult guided activities to intervention such as ‘Individual Support Plans’ or the signposting to external professionals where necessary.

Practitioners will always consider if a child’s progress delays in any prime area gives cause for concern which may indicate a special educational need or disability which requires specialist support. In this case, practitioners along with Oxenhope Pre-School SENCO will link with, and help families access relevant services from other agencies as appropriate.

Further Curriculum Information….

**The curriculum as a progression model**

We want children to make progress and recognise any progress, no matter how small as progress. A celebratory approach is key!

**Communication & Language**

Communication and language are an integral part of our curriculum, and we know that language development in the first years of life is important to later educational success. Children’s language skills are connected to their overall development and can predict their later educational success. We know that children from more disadvantaged backgrounds may have fewer chances to develop their vocabulary (research provided, this is not a personal opinion) therefore it is fundamental that we close gaps early on to avoid inequalities in children’s language development. Removing this inequality is a priority as part of our curriculum and we do this by having well trained staff who undertake annual communication and language specific training meaning that children can make good progress with early language development support. Good interactions depend on social relationships and tuned in adults, going back to our value of nurture above all else. Training includes:

* Creating an effective communication and language environment
* Speech Language and Communication
* Supporting Early Language Development

Our environment means that children participate in playful, language rich environments with opportunities to learn new vocabulary. They experience hands-on experiences to help them assign meaning to new words and explore sounds and patterns of words through songs and rhymes. A well-planned language rich environment is important to facilitate good interactions.

Our curriculum values mean that encouraging children to become **confident communicators** and **brilliant bookworms** assists in helping them develop language and understand new concepts through conversational skills or sharing stories.

With practitioners acting as skilled communication partners, children are supported in language development, and we narrow the word gap allowing all children to make good progress.

**Children for whom English is an additional language**

Our curriculum takes steps to provide for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning and support their language development at home. Our provision also ensures that children have sufficient opportunity to learn and reach a good standard in English language during their time at Oxenhope Pre-School in ways which will be personalised to the child.

**Oral Health**

Oxenhope Pre-School takes its commitments to promoting oral health for children very seriously and promote this through carefully planned learning opportunities, parent education and the use of external professionals. Teaching children to be a **healthy hero** as part of our core curriculum means that they understand how to keep themselves healthy and safe.

**Parents as Partners**

Partnership working is a fundamental principle of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and we recognise that parents make a crucial difference to children’s outcomes. Parents are children’s first and most enduring educators and each unique family must be welcomed and listened to. This starts with practitioners getting to know families at the ‘first visit’ and parents/carers providing an ‘All About Me’ in order to facilitate our curriculum values of parentship working. Clear leadership regarding partnership with parents will provide the right foundation. As part of our curriculum, we actively encourage parents to contribute with learning and development through being involved at consultations in a two-way dialogue, adding to Tapestry and accounting for children’s ‘starting points’ assessments at the beginning of their journey with us.

During the ‘first visit’ parents and carers are invited to be within pre-school as we settle their child. This means they can then trust practitioners in the way in which they respond to their child and see how we personalise the child’s learning and experience. Together, we work to share knowledge, understand children’s interests, and discover how best to support their learning.