



Teaching and Learning Practice Policy Statement

At Paper Moon we have a very clear understanding of what we consider to be the foundations of effective practice to ensure our children experience high quality teaching and learning opportunities during their time at nursery. We work with staff showing them how important it is to adopt our values and vision in believing that children should have exploratory, hands-on experiences through play so that they can develop into well-rounded individuals and confident learners with a positive sense of self. We know parents/carers are the child's first educators and focus on working in partnership with them in order for the child to benefit from a joined up approach to learning at home and at nursery.

We understand that the type of early years pedagogy that works best for young children is a mix of adult-directed and child-initiated learning.

Pedagogy relates to the "how", or practice of educating. It refers to, "the set of instructional techniques and strategies which enable learning to take place and provide opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions within a particular social and material context. It refers to the interactive process between teacher and learner and to the learning environment"

It concerns the "how" of adult and child interaction, whilst recognising that how children learn and develop at this stage is not just subject to what is intended to be taught, but it is also of particular importance how it is facilitated.

We insist staff have high expectations and aspirations for our children and bring to the role a positive commitment to inspire and engage children in recognising their ability to learn and achieve.

Staff facilitate play to provide natural, imaginative and motivating experiences for children to develop holistically, learn about themselves, one another and the world around them. All activities and daily routines at Paper Moon are valuable opportunities for teaching and learning. While we cannot always know and plan for when teaching opportunities will present themselves, it is the skill of the staff that enable them to readily recognise the "teachable moments" when they arise and respond to them appropriately.

Staff are very clear that effective teaching and learning is also embedded within the 'process' of an activity not the end result. The 'process' allows a child to experiment, develop ideas, be creative, test ideas, take a risk, fail, achieve, solve problems and think etc. Staff respond appropriately during play to scaffold, enable and facilitate the child's learning.

By scaffolding we support and challenge the child to extend their current thinking skills and overall development to a higher level. Staff take time to get to know the child's strengths, interests, fascinations, aptitudes and attitudes. The adult responds to what the child knows, understands and can do, always praising the child's existing ability. Staff consistently use observational skills to recognise opportunities for children to realise their full potential. Supporting the child's development by placing emphasis on further learning opportunities. These could take place by providing experiences slightly above the level of cognitive functioning of the child to provide challenge and stimulation whilst being within the range of the child's comprehension.

It is important however, to try to determine when adult intervention could hinder or stifle children's learning, rather than extending it. Staff know that children involved in play are gaining a deep, motivated, intense and long-term learning experience. Knowing how or when to 'teach' is about knowing the child very well and being aware that sometimes important learning can be taking place without you being present and without you influencing what children are doing. We encourage staff to **Observe, Wait and Listen** before interjecting into children's play.

Research tells us that there are indeed three core elements in an adult's style that can shape learning:

1. **Sensitivity** - where the adult demonstrates sensitivity to the feelings and emotional well-being of the child, and includes elements of sincerity, empathy, responsiveness and affection.
2. **Stimulation** - the way the adult intervenes in a learning process and the content of such interventions
3. **Autonomy** - the degree of freedom the adult gives the child to experiment, make judgements, choose activities and express ideas.

Staff must become a partner with the child, enjoying with them the power of their curiosity and ability to:

- play and explore - children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- actively learn - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements
- create and think critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things (*Characteristics of effective learning*)

Constantly giving a child time and the opportunity to develop curiosity, interests, explore, question, investigate, concentrate, take risks, experiment, problem solve, make predictions, test ideas and make choices.

Staff will understand and support each other to use the teaching skills listed below to support and extend children's learning. The list is not a definitive list however, it provides us with a focused skill set of appropriate interactions that can be used during planned and child-initiated play that will inevitably support children's progress and development -

- Creating a sense of awe and wonder through passionate and inspirational practice, making play fun and exciting
- Taking time to plan and prepare and think about how activities will be offered both indoors and outdoors to inspire and satisfy children's thirst for learning and challenge
- Communicating sensitively and effectively, giving the child time to think and respond
- Listening and really 'hearing' children, tuning into their world
- Modelling language and play, playing alongside to help release the potential of an activity or resource without directing
- Showing
- Explaining, taking learning to new place for children. A place that they would not have visited without her support
- Demonstrating
- Exploring ideas - "What if", "How can we fix this", "I wonder"
- Encouraging
- Questioning - "What if" , "I wonder"
- Recalling

- Providing a narrative for what they are doing, but equally offering silence and space to encourage thinking and reflection. You should always be able to hear the children during play.
- Facilitating learning to occur through sustained shared thinking (helping the child to solve a problem, develop and extend understanding)
- Setting challenges and encouraging risk taking

Staff will also understand how to recognise and respond to a 'teachable moment' in order to respond appropriately supporting learning and development.

What is a 'teachable moment'?

A teachable moment is a learning opportunity for a child that occurs for them whilst they are engrossed in something. It is an opportunity for the child to benefit from an adult to acquire new information, discuss values, morals, a new behaviour or a new skill, or a new way of expressing and coping with an emotion.

Teachable moments are real, spontaneous, immediate, and relate to the interest level and curiosity of the child. By recognizing them as an opportunity, staff can have a tremendous impact on the present and future development of their children. It is important to have the timing just right so the impact of what is being taught and learned is immediate and relates to real life.

The benefits of teachable moments are endless. Teachable moments cover so much that the learning knows no boundaries. So, whatever the situation or area of interest, learning is an opportunity. Children are always learning and so are adults. Staff will understand the need to slow down and be observant enough to recognise what learning opportunities are present.

Teachable moments also help children's emotional development. Many times, children feel an emotion, but are not always sure what to do with it, how to express it, etc. Teachable moments are opportunities for children to practice how to express their anger, sadness, joy, satisfaction and delight in accomplishing something important to him or her. If a child knows how to express his or her emotions appropriately at a young age, he or she has a model for the rest of his or her life.

Follow the child's lead

Children learn best when the teaching relates to their real-life experiences, when the teaching is immediate, and children have the opportunity to ask questions and make sense of the teachable moment. It is important when working in a room to be 'present' in the room and not get caught up in the 'busy-ness' of the moment, etc. and miss the teachable moment. Working in this way means staff have to be present and ready, physically and emotionally, and listen to the cues given by the child. If staff are distracted, then the teachable moment is missed.

Continuous Provision offering an enabling environment

At Paper Moon we recognize that children are born with a natural desire to explore and learn and staff support them in this. Staff create an enabling environment (both physical and emotional) and through the relationships and interactions that the children experience. 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, interactions and the outcomes are recorded afterwards.

Both indoor and outdoor provision accessed by children at Paper Moon offers an environment that provides opportunity for high level learning opportunities and represents the children's developmental age and stage and more importantly their interests and 'things' of curiosity, whilst also being challenging and having a focus on the children's next steps.

Staff will use the environment to best effect to focus on the 'process' of learning, creating and supporting the opportunity for development and 'teachable moments'.

There are no expectations on the children to produce end products nor that this is the only sign of achievement and progress. Children will know that to try and 'have a go', or 'try to solve a problem' are also signs of achievement and should be praised and celebrated.

Continuous provision will support all areas of EYFS and integrate areas so that children can independently develop skills and knowledge during play. Children will be supported and encouraged to move items of particular interest to them around the room if this helps to extend their play and learning. Staff will model the use of a reference book or ICT to research, extend and develop the understanding of an area of interest or pick up a pencil and clipboard to record their observations, thoughts or ideas. Maths, Literacy, Knowledge and Understanding of the World, Creative Arts and Design, Communication and Language, Physical, Personal, Social and Emotional development will be visible across all areas as well as being a focus in specific activities.

Further research and information on effective teaching and learning

Learning together through play in the early years: St John Vianney Primary School Childcare, July 2015;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-together-through-play-in-the-early-years.

Teaching young children to develop their communication skills: Nicola Phillips, childminder, July 2015;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-young-children-to-develop-their-communication-skills.

Using the physical environment as a tool for teaching: Netherfield Primary School, July 2015;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-the-physical-environment-as-a-tool-for-teaching.

Improving boys' literacy skills: Greenfields Children's Centre, July 2015;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-boys-literacy-skills.

Parents as partners in teaching: Trimdon Grange Infant and Nursery School, Ofsted, July 2015;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/parents-as-partners-in-teaching.

'A balancing act - teaching and play, no one way' - introduction
www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWf6oHE9YqY.

'A balancing act - a family-focused approach to teaching two-year-olds'
Trimdon Grange Infant and Nursery School, County Durham
www.youtube.com/watch?v=cCtg52EILQo.

Involving children in decision making, July 2014; www.gov.uk/government/publications/involving-children-in-decision-making.

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