



## **Greenhall Nursery**

### **Expressive Arts & Design**

1. Introduction
2. Exploring and using media and materials
3. Being imaginative
4. Assessment, recording & reporting
5. Monitoring Effectiveness
6. Equal Opportunities

## **1. Introduction**

Expressive arts and design is divided into two aspects:

1. Exploring and using media and materials
2. Being imaginative

As the children attending the nursery present with a very wide range of physical abilities they will access learning experiences and activities in different ways - planning and assessment will therefore need to take account of individual learning needs. A child's physical skills will have an impact on the way in which they are able to access media and materials and it is important that activities are carefully planned to ensure that children can access this area of the curriculum with regards to their physical development.

The nursery environment (both indoor and outdoor) should offer a variety of opportunities for children to investigate and use a wide variety of objects, tools, and media, as well as providing environments that encourage creative thinking and develop imagination skills.

Expressive arts and design has links across all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Through exploration of objects and media children begin to make connections with the world around them and how they can influence it. They then begin to use these objects to represent other familiar objects and develop their imaginations, using their language skills and physical skills to create their own scenarios.

At Greenhall, we recognise that our children need specialist, carefully planned interventions and activities in order to maximise progress with this area.

## **2. Exploring media and materials**

This aspect of the expressive arts and design curriculum can be divided into four distinct areas: exploration and experimentation, musical development, mark making, making links. Practitioners must provide opportunities and resources appropriate to the children for them to be able to demonstrate skills within these areas.

### *Exploration and experimentation*

In early stages of expressive arts and design, children explore materials and media as part of their exploration of the world around them. They then begin to experiment with these materials through sensory exploration using the whole body. It is important for practitioners to provide appropriate activities that take account of children's individual needs. Some children may not be able to hold objects and so may need co-active facilitation to explore using touch (see Physical Development policy). Others may have visual or hearing impairments that need specific strategies to enable them to engage in exploration.

Children that are further along their learning journey may begin to explore colours, lines and textures and experiment with techniques to change these e.g. mixing colours and creating different textures

### *Musical development*

At Greenhall children are exposed to a wide variety of music on a daily basis. These include musical cues, singing as a form of rhythmical intention (see Conductive Education policy), song bags and singing sessions. Makaton signing is also used to support singing

Children are encouraged to move their bodies to music through activities such as knill, jabadao, sticky kids and exposure to a variety of action rhymes, with appropriate facilitation to take part. They have opportunity to make their own sounds by tapping, scraping, banging and shaking items during resonance board sessions, as well as the opportunity to use a wide variety of instruments including percussion instruments and electronic instrument such as keyboards.

Children are encouraged by practitioners to experiment with their voices and sounds to create new sounds, tapping out rhythms and building up their own repertoire of songs.

### *Mark making*

Children should be given opportunities to make marks in a variety of sensory materials using all of their bodies (link to Physical Development). Children need to be provided with physical development opportunities that develop their abilities to control their bodies and use their hands effectively for mark making (see Physical Development policy)

*Early mark making*- this can involve any part of the child's body and any sort of material- imagination is the only limit!

*Later stages of mark making* - Sometimes marks are made for the pure physical enjoyment of the activity – the feel of the felt-tip pen as it glides over the surface of the whiteboard or the chalk as it grates over the bumpy tarmac, the sight of the brightly-coloured dribbles of paint as they run down the paper on the easel, or the sensation of the glue, oozing between children's fingers as they spread it over the paper. On these occasions children have no interest in an end product at all; the physical activity is an end in itself and an opportunity for them to experiment and explore with their senses, developing confidence and dexterity through the process.

As children develop they begin to distinguish and ascribe meaning to the marks that they make. Although an adult may not be able to recognise what the children have drawn / written, the important detail is that the children themselves are able to do so.

Some children may find some activities difficult due to their physical difficulties and should be provided with opportunities and facilitation to improve hand function (see Physical Development policy).

### *Making links*

When young children have made sense of the world around them they begin to make links in their learning and begin to combine objects and experiment with construction materials.

They begin to construct horizontally and vertically and should be given a wide variety of opportunities to do this both within indoor and outdoor provision. This may include large building blocks, small bricks, duplo, stickle bricks, magnetic bricks as well as junk modelling materials.

Children should be encouraged to be as independent as possible, with resources clearly labelled with symbols / photographs so that children are able to find and use the resources they need independently.

### 3. Being imaginative

This aspect of Expressive Arts and Design is concerned with children's ability to think creatively and imaginatively, using what they know and have experienced. It has been divided into the following;

1. expression
2. pretending
3. play
4. creativity

#### *Expression*

Young children first begin to express themselves through physical action and sound. They should be given ample opportunities to do this in a variety of ways, using their knowledge of media and materials to support this. As they develop they begin to develop preferences for their individual forms of expression. This may be in the form of movement to express feelings or in response to music. It may also be through activities such as drawing, colouring and painting.

#### *Pretending*

Young children begin to pretend by using objects to represent something different but which have characteristics in common e.g. using a calculator to represent a phone. They then begin to make-believe by pretending. Practitioners should provide them with the relevant resources to be able to do this such as cardboard boxes, dressing up clothes, a variety of props. This then leads to role play and small world play.

#### *Play*

Children use their own first hand experiences to engage in imaginative role play, noticing what adults do and imitating them. It is vital that children are encouraged in this through adults commenting on what they are doing and extending this, and adults taking part in the children's play. Areas such as a home corner, workshop, office, kitchen, library, should be provided, as well as giving children the tools and resources to create their own imaginative areas.

Small world play e.g. farm, train track, mini figures should also be provided, as well as 'scenes' e.g. beach, moon so that children can begin to build stories around toys which will then have an impact on their literacy and communication and language development. Practitioners should model story telling through small world play and then encourage children to introduce a narrative to their play, working together to extend this (sustained shared thinking).

#### *Creativity*

Children should be given opportunities to express themselves creatively. This includes using line drawings to make representations and capturing their experiences with a range of media such as music, dance and paint. Some children may find this difficult due to their physical difficulties but should be given as many opportunities as possible through carefully differentiated activities and facilitation (see Physical development policy).

They may also create simple representations of events, people and objects.

In order to be imaginative, children need to have had wide and varied experiences of media and materials so that they can then use them in new and original ways.

#### **4. Assessment, recording & reporting**

Children's progress is recorded on session evaluations and used to inform future planning. Annotated photographs and observations are kept in the children's individual learning journeys. Reference is made to the aspect of Expressive Arts & Design as well as the child's age and stage.

Children's skills related to Expressive Arts & Design are assessed using the EYFS and B-Squared EYFS assessment tool on entry to provide a baseline and then each term. This is reported to the Headteacher and data is analysed with regards to progress made at the end of each academic year although information is gathered on trends at the end of each term.

At the end of their reception year, children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals in line with National Regulations.

#### **5. Monitoring Effectiveness**

The coordinator for Expressive Arts & Design at Greenhall is Agnes Palinkas. She will monitor the effectiveness of the policy together with the link Governor, Rod Goldthorpe. They will then report back to the Headteacher and Curriculum Committee.

#### **6. Equal Opportunities**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities policy.

Policy approved by Governors on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Reviewed & approved 21/6/17.

Signed.....Date.....  
(Headteacher)

Signed.....Date.....  
(Chair of Governors)