

Little Park



Handbook



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Park Primary Vision, Values and Aims

Our core values at Park are:

Confidence

A self-confident approach allows the children to tackle all learning opportunities positively, supporting them to take risks and respond to the challenges they face along the way.

Creativity

We nurture children's individuality and self-expression through our emphasis on creativity and the arts and through providing an irresistible learning experience. By being independent and creative learners and thinkers, we expect all children to make excellent progress and achieve their very best.

Care

We encourage every child to care about and have respect for their learning, each other and our environment. By being socially and emotionally intelligent, understanding and caring about themselves and each other, our children will make the right choices and experience positive relationships now and in the future.

Aspiration

Teachers and key adults at Park set high expectations for all children and we encourage children to set high expectations of themselves through taking ownership and responsibility of their learning and always striving to challenge themselves and deepen their understanding.

We also place a high priority on British Values which we value as our own. As well as these core values we expect our learners to:

Be curious

Co-operate

Find things out

Concentrate

Enjoy learning

Have a go

Persevere and not give up

Use their imagination

Keep improving

In Little Park the above expectations are seen as the children's Characteristics of Effective Learning. As children develop these, they are able to use the skills to learn effectively throughout life. The key adults will be looking for each child using these skills and planning how to support children in developing them. These skills are continued to be developed further into Park Primary where the children are explicitly taught these, calling them their 'learning powers'.

Early Years Vision, Values and Aims

Nursery at Park is a place where curiosity, exploration, communication and creativity of mind are seen daily. Our intent is to deliver the Early Years Framework through engaging and enabling environments, as well as through building exceptional positive relationships. Children learn in Nursery through a balance of child-led free-flow activities, adult-led small groups and whole class carpet sessions. 'Free flow' is a term we use when the children can autonomously choose where to learn through play based activities. We believe that much of a young child's learning comes from their active investigation of the world around them, this is why we aim to implement a love of learning and growth throughout each of the learning environments. Children in Little Park learn through play and this provides meaningful, rich learning experiences, such as building social and communication skills through role play, developing literacy skills through storytelling with small world objects, and using their investigative and problem solving skills in block play.



As well as encouraging the children to engage in their own learning through play, we combine an appropriate combination of open-ended play and exploration with direct teaching and adult supported activities. We find that this balanced approach to teaching and learning engages and supports children in reaching their next steps and moving them closer to meeting the EYFS Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception. This means we plan and implement carpet and group time sessions that are planned to impact the children's development towards their next steps for learning. These sessions may include: listening and attention games, phonics, story times, mathematics and personal and social sessions.

We believe a balance of open-ended play and adult directed activities allows for children to see themselves as explorers - active learners with independent attitudes, as well as teaching them new skills and knowledge to extend their thinking and learning.

Learning in Little Park



In Nursery at Park, as well as an emphasis on enabling environments including use of the outdoors, we believe in learning through play. We use the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS) to support children's learning and development. There are 7 areas of development within this framework. To the left is a more detailed picture of each of the 7 areas for learning in the Early Years. The Early Years Framework starts from birth and ends at the end of Reception when a child enters Year 1 and joins the Key Stage 1 curriculum. We focus on the Early Years Framework from age 3 in Nursery to age 5 in Reception at Park Primary.

We focus on specific parts of the curriculum each month and children are given the monthly 'next steps' to take home so they can continue this learning outside of school. These monthly next steps are worked on throughout the whole of Nursery and vary from month to month. An example of the progression of learning throughout the year can be seen in the table below.

	September	December	April
Personal Social Emotional [Making Relationships]	Seeks out others to share experiences.	Shows affection and concern for people who are special to them. May form a special friendship with another child.	Keeps play going by responding to what others are saying or doing. Demonstrates friendly behaviour, initiating conversations and forming good relationships with peers and familiar adults.
Literacy [Writing]	Distinguishes between the different marks they make.	Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places.	Continues to build up their fine motor skills to make more distinguished marks

In September, we concentrate on implementing routines and building positive relationships that support children in settling into their new environment. We facilitate environments and plan activities that encourage children in becoming more independent in dressing, toileting, using their language to talk about their thoughts and feelings, and forming friendships. By October and November, the children are settled and our expectations move to them focusing their concentration during carpet sessions, joining in with adult-led maths and literacy learning, as well as helping them navigate the complexities of developing their personal, social and emotional skills.

Our daily timetable changes throughout the year and as the children's listening and attention skills become more refined, carpet session learning becomes longer. Below is an example of a usual daily timetable from the Autumn Term- Times will look different for PM children.

8:45-9:00	Children arrive, self register and name recognition, Boogie Beebies dancing
9:00	Literacy/ communication and language carpet session
9:30	Free-flow learning through play in each of the areas of learning from the foundation stage - adults will support children in small group times and adult directed activities throughout this time -rolling handwashing and snack time with allocated adult
10:30	Tidy up time- Maths carpet session
10:40	Prepare to go to the outdoor areas
10:45	Outside learning through play
11:45	Home time

Little Park Learning Environments

At Little Park we have a range of environments available to us and we plan to use each of the areas weekly. We have our main nursery classroom in the church building, our nursery garden which is the church garden, the reception garden over at the main school, our Forest School area at Westham Park and we also make use of the park itself. When it is time for the children to move to Reception, we also have dedicated time to use the reception areas, to aid with this transition.



These environments have been carefully facilitated with provision to meet children's interests and learning needs. The provision changes from week to week and almost always includes sand, water and playdough areas, 3 different role play areas such as home corner, space center or pirate ship, a building and construction area, creative table and maths and literacy areas. Maths and literacy are also seen and encouraged throughout each learning area. For example, the play dough table may have a recipe for reading, the home corner will have notepads to make shopping lists and the construction area may have rulers and numbers for measuring towers. The environments are facilitated so that the children learn in ways that are hands- on and purposeful to them.

Key Adults



In Little Park we have Early Years educators as well as a class teacher. The Nursery also has a designated Early Years Phase Lead and Assistant Head Teacher who oversee teaching and learning throughout Nursery and Reception. Within the Nursery, each child is allocated a key person who will have responsibility for planning next steps for learning for each child in their key group. These key people work hard with children and their families to build positive relationships and secure attachments. It is alongside parental engagement that teachers and Early Years educators are able to meet the child's individual needs as well as plan for a child's next steps for learning.

The teacher and Early Years practitioners respond sensitively to children's feelings and behaviours and meet their emotional needs by giving reassurance, such as when they are new to a setting, and supporting the child's well-being. We find that by building these positive relationships, children are able to respond and engage in more specific learning such as maths and literacy with the support of these adults.

Forest school and learning outside of the classroom

Forest School is a concept that can be linked back to the early work of some influential educational theorists and has been well embedded in Scandinavian education. It involves children learning in the outdoors for prolonged periods of time. Forest School gives children hands-on learning opportunities in an environment that stimulates all of their senses. It encourages their curiosity, problem solving, independence and gives them the chance to take risks in a well managed way.



FOREST SCHOOL

'The best classroom and the richest cupboard are roofed only by the sky.' Margaret McMillan

Little Park children have access to our Forest School areas, over at Westham Park, and sessions are planned and implemented throughout the year. These are with our designated Forest School teacher who plans for these sessions. Forest School activities include den building, hammock reading, nature hunts, tree and plant recognition, as well as using tools and fires.



There is ample opportunity for children to experience learning in the outdoor environments in Little Park. This includes outside opportunities at Forest School, planned sessions at West Ham Park, use of the main school playground and roof terrace, as well as having our very own Nursery garden. Children have access to a planned outdoor space daily.



We feel it is vital for all adults in our setting to show an enthusiasm for outdoor learning during every season. We encourage parents to be consistent in their own approach to the outside, including with regards to the weather. We risk assess appropriately for each season and we give the children the opportunity to access the outside daily, whatever the weather. Children get wet, muddy and messy when they play outside and we provide waterproof overalls and wellies on Forest School days. We teach children how to manage messiness and they become better at this as they get older. This is part of their learning and development. We value the outdoors as an essential part of children's curriculum, learning and development. It is essential for children to learn about the world around them in a hands-on approach where they can make purposeful connections and create meaningful learning experiences.



As part of our Little Park curriculum, we plan to expose children to a range of environments where opportunities for exploration and to be curious are encouraged. We also have special visitors at school each year, this has included visits from older year groups and visits from the chicks and ducklings that we observe hatching during the Spring Term. This exposure to visitors and animals allows a hands-on experience to learning and encourages the children to ask purposeful questions. We also have two school dogs, called Filos and Tato, who the Nursery children often get to see on their walk to Forest school and then later on in their time at Park, children may be involved in wellbeing walks with the dogs.



Online Learning Journeys

In Little Park, practitioners make regular observations of the children's learning and development. We call these the 'children's learning journeys'. These observations are stored in each child's individual learning journey on an app called Tapestry. This can be downloaded onto a phone or laptop and can be accessed by parents and carers to see what their child has been learning at school. This includes photos and videos alongside written feedback on children's learning. We encourage parents to add comments including things that their child has become interested in and any new skills that they have learnt at home. This allows us to continually evaluate our resources and start topics and discussions that are relevant to each individual child.



Preparing for Little Park- General Information

Transition to Little Park

We hope you can appreciate that transition into our setting this year is going to look a little different to a usual year. Below is a list of what we will be putting into place to ensure this year's cohort of children are given the opportunity to transition as effectively as previous year groups, whilst taking into account the safety precautions.

To aid transition in Little Park Nursery this year we will be:

- Making and issuing videos to our new cohort which will allow them to see Park's learning environments and meet the key adults.
- Asking families to set themselves up on our Tapestry account so that children can begin to access some of our learning activities online from their homes in the Summer Term before starting Little Park.
- Arranging virtual 'home visits' with families and children to give parents/ carers a chance to ask questions and for the children to talk about or show their home and favourite toys virtually.
- Considering how our settle sessions will look and arranging times and dates.

School Uniform

At Park we value individuality and creativity and, as such, we have an optional uniform. Messy, explorative, sensory play are essential parts of children's development. We ask parents to ensure their child is wearing suitable clothing so that they can explore paint, food, climb and are not restricted by expensive clothing. We ask that children's names are written onto their items of clothing and that children dress appropriately for the weather on all days. Jewelry is not allowed (apart for religious reasons) and children can wear 1 pair of stud earrings. We do not allow hooped earrings. We ask that children wear appropriate footwear that is comfortable with closed heels and toes.

Lunch time and snack time

We are a school with 'Healthy School' status. This means that we encourage children to eat fruit, vegetables and drink water. We provide snack times for Nursery children. Snack time includes either a piece of fruit and milk and we also operate a no nuts policy. For full time children who stay for lunch time, we ask that they bring their own packed lunch taking into account our healthy school status. We ask parents and carers to not send in chocolate bars. Key adults support the children at lunch times, encouraging them to try the foods in their packed lunch and discussing their likes and dislikes.

Toileting

Toileting accidents occasionally happen. When this does happen, two adults will support a child in changing. We encourage children to become independent in changing themselves and using the toilet by themselves. We are grateful that parents support us with this throughout the summer before starting Little Park so that the children are ready to use the toilet. If a child needs support with using the toilet, this can be discussed during the virtual home visit with the child's key adults.

Book bags and items to bring to school

A bag should be provided and can remain in the classroom on each child's specific peg. This can be used to store a change of clothes in case of toileting accidents or becoming too wet from playing outside. We encourage the children to become independent in changing themselves and we ask parents and carers to encourage this at home also. During the settling in period, children may want to bring a specific item or toy to aid in their transition from one setting to another. We ask that these go home each day and that we support children in taking responsibility for their belongings.



When children arrive at Little Park for the first day at school they are usually full of emotions which vary from each child. We want our children in Little Park to arrive with feelings of excitement, happiness and confidence, even if they are also feeling a little nervous and this is ok and very normal. We start the transition approach in the Summer Term and our door is 'always open' so if families have any questions or concerns, they are encouraged to speak to one of the Nursery Team. The Early Years Foundation Stage is about children and their families working in partnership with us to ensure they succeed and develop a secure foundation for later learning.

To see more about our policies, safeguarding and complaints procedures, please see our school website:

<https://park.newham.sch.uk/>

We look forward to meeting you all soon.