

# My Learning Journal

## Information for Parents and Carers

Your child's Learning Journal celebrates his or her experiences. Over time it will tell a story about your child - his or her learning, friends, and the experiences he or she enjoys sharing with others.

Staff watch and notice each child at play because it helps us to understand and support their individual wellbeing and development. We really get to know the children as unique people with special skills, interests and ideas. The more we understand about your special child, the better we can support them in the way that is right for them.

Your child's key person or teacher and family work together to build this Learning Journal as a record of your child's Early Years. We value parents and carers taking the Learning Journal home and sharing in their child's learning. Although the Learning Journals will be sent home at the end of the year, you may wish to borrow them to share with other settings or important people - just ask a member of staff! Throughout the year there will be opportunities when you will be invited to look through, and contribute to, your child's Learning Journal, but we encourage you to contribute and look through on a more informal, regular basis. We also encourage you to talk with your child about their Learning Journal and feel free to add in family photographs or other things of significance for your child.

At this age, so much happens so quickly, and we would love to hear about events, activities or achievements which can be put into your child's Learning Journal! Feel free to write us a note, have a chat to a member of staff or bring in a photo, drawing or souvenir to share with us. When you tell us about your child a clearer picture unfolds and together we can plan more effectively to help your child's learning and development. When children are ready, they can also choose to put things that are important to them in their Learning Journal - though it is mainly kept here it belongs to you and your child.

### The Learning Journal will include the following:

**Photographs** - These capture moments and sequences of your child's experiences, their interests and explorations. You can add some of your own from home. Sometimes, we will write down exactly what your child says about the photographs, so we know your child's point of view. This is also an accurate record of language development. Pictures of important people and things from home will help your child to feel secure when making the link between home and their educational setting. Please feel free to add any photos to the Learning Journal. You could also write down the names of family members or friends pictured in the photos and we will then be able to talk with your child about things that are important to them.

**Observations** - These are quick notes of significant moments we notice in your child's learning.

**Your child's creations** - These could be photos of models, photos of their role-play, marks they have made, or art-making – with an observation to explain what your child did or said.

**Learning stories or detailed observations** - These detailed observations give snapshots of learning that your child has initiated themselves. Staff then think about what and how your child is learning, their development and how best to support them further.

Amongst all the notes and observations, you may see reference to areas of the Early Years Curriculum known as Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which supports children from birth to the end of their Reception year at school.

This curriculum is planned around four main themes:

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.	Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.	The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.	Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

There are then 7 areas of learning and development:

3 Prime Areas		
Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)	Communication and Language (C&L)	Physical Development (PD)

4 Specific Areas			
Literacy (L)	Mathematics (M)	Understanding the World (Utw)	Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

The 7 areas of learning and development are further divided into strands and age bands. Your child's progress is recorded in order to support and encourage them throughout their journey in the EYFS. For example, you may see 'PD 30-50 months'. This tells us that the child is currently demonstrating an activity or skill that relates to Physical Development within the age band of 30-50 months.

Alongside these areas of development there are also the Characteristics of Effective Learning which describe **how** your child learns best.

The 3 Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

1. **Playing and Exploring** - Engagement - Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to 'have a go'.
2. **Active Learning** - Motivation - Being involved and concentrating, keep trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do.
3. **Creating and Thinking Critically** - Thinking - Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things.

Staff will refer to these areas of learning and characteristics when planning and preparing activities and also when assessing and observing your child. Adults will consider the Characteristics of Effective Learning within the observation, assessment and planning cycle of the EYFS.

We hope you enjoy contributing to and looking through your child's Learning Journal! If you have any questions please ask a member of staff. Thank you!