Curriculum

Here at Nanny McFiFi’s, we aim and strive to provide a high quality educational and care service for the children that attend our setting. We also strive to adhere to the quality standards outlined by the early years foundation stage and plan our programme of activities based on the characteristics of effective learning.

Our early years practitioners, practice, commitment, perseverance and hard work, and we are determined to achieve this to ensure the service we provide, to the children in our care is of the highest standard. Our main aim is to support and encourage each child that attends our setting to progress and develop into confident and component children, achieving this at their own unique pace. We appreciate and embrace the fact that each child has their own individual needs and identity, we implement and evaluate a programme around each child. We embrace the families of the children and identify that parents are the primary educators and aim to build our relationship with not only the child but the family as an entire identity. We aim to build a partnership with and invite parents to join their children on this momentous development stage. We recognise that each area of the child’s development cannot be viewed in isolation but instead we recognise that a holistic view of their development is paramount. Our primary aim is to create an inviting, safe, fun, healthy and warm environment that prompts a positive relationship between staff and children and also between the children themselves. This environment will help to prompt and enable the children to learn the necessary social skills that are paramount through early years and beyond. We recognise that the transition into preschool can be a daunting occasion for both the children and their families so we aim to ensure this transition is as smooth as possible.  We will strive to plan a curriculum that reflects the abilities and also ensure we challenge the children in an appropriate manner to build confident, competent and happy children.

we plan our curriculum based around 4 themes- Explore, Play, create and think critically and below we will outline how we plan to encompass these themes into our daily routine. We deliver a play based curriculum and ensure all of the activities and experiences we provide are through play. Nanny McFiFi’s  boasts a generous outdoor area and we aim to spend as much of the session as possible outdoors. We value the extensive benefits the outdoor provides for the children in our care.

**Well Being:**
The childrens Well-being is about children being confident, happy and healthy. Well-being focuses on developing as a person. It has two main elements: psychological well-being (including feeling and thinking) and physical well-being. Children’s relationships and interactions with their families and communities contribute significantly to their sense of well-being. Children need to feel valued, respected, empowered, cared for and included. They also need to respect themselves, others, and their environment. They become positive about themselves and their learning when adults value them for who they are and when they promote warm and supportive relationships with them. Expressing themselves creatively and experiencing a spiritual dimension in life enhances children’s sense of well-being. Life is full of challenges and struggles. Therefore, being flexible and having a positive outlook on learning and on life is crucial. All these experiences help children to become resilient and resourceful and to learn to cope with change and situations in which things go wrong. Physical well-being is important for learning and development as this enables children to explore, to investigate, and to challenge themselves in the environment. A growing awareness of their bodies and abilities is also part of this. The adult supports children’s psychological and physical well-being by helping them to make healthy choices about nutrition, hygiene and exercise. He/she plans for and provides opportunities for children to express themselves, to encourage them to play and work with others, and to deal with challenges. The adult also helps children towards independence by providing them with choice in their activities, and by providing opportunities for them to make decisions and to take the lead, (child led learning and play)

As outlined above, here at Nanny McFiFi’s we recognise that the child’s wellbeing is paramount to their overall development and when implementing our daily routine, we keep the 4 themes at the forefront. When the children arrive at the service we will welcome the children in a positive and inviting manner recognising and identifying if they are upset and will comfort the children and their parents. At circle time, the children will have the opportunities to form friendship, build their confidence and express themselves in a number of forms. At plan and do the children will be given the chance to choose their own activities from an array of choices including all the fundamentals of play sand, water, play dough, play to name a few, this will allow the children to express themselves creatively and experience the arts. Our organised activity, which is based around emergent curriculum (the children’s interest at the time), will enable the children to take part in a large group activity ranging from messy, fantasy, imaginative play, using an array of materials and equipment. Our outdoor time will enable the children to develop and nurture their sense of wonder and awe. The outdoor area will allow the children to show good judgement when taking risks, will enable them to discover, explore and refine gross motor skills. The cosy corner is a warm inviting area of the preschool which provides the children with a comfortable sanctuary to rest and relax in if they are feeling tired. Our healthy eating policy and our implementation of the change 4 life programme will help the children make healthy choices and demonstrate positive attitudes to nutrition, hygiene, exercise and routine. The children will be encouraged to use self-help skills in caring for their own bodies through hand washing and tooth brushing techniques. The children will show increasing independence through activities such as putting on their own coats, taking responsibilities for their own belongings coats, bags etc. We will give the children the opportunities to think positively, take learning risks and become resilient and resourceful when things go wrong. We will aim to provide the materials and opportunities for the children to motivate themselves and welcome and seek challenge. Through planned activities such as our feelings discussions,  the emotion books and drama exercises expressing our emotions we aim to provide the children with the tools to become emotionally literate and build an awareness of the different types of emotions and how best to deal with them.  By using facial expressions, appropriate words and being attentive to the babies needs, we can help build trust and a sense of love and nurture that promotes happy and healthy babies.

**Identity and Belonging**
Identity and Belonging is about children developing a positive sense of who they are, and feeling that they are valued and respected as part of a family and community. From birth, children develop a sense of who they are. Relationships with family members, other adults and children, friends and members of their community play a key role in building their identities. Children’s sense of who they are is shaped by their characteristics, their behaviour, and their understanding of themselves, their family and others. Belonging is about having a secure relationship with or a connection with a particular group of people. When children feel a sense of belonging and sense of pride in their families, their peers, and their communities, they can be emotionally strong, self-assured, and able to deal with challenges and difficulties. This creates an important foundation for their learning and development. Giving children messages of respect, love, approval, and encouragement enables them to develop a positive sense of who they are and a feeling that they have an important contribution to make wherever they are. Positive messages about their families, backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and languages help children to develop pride in who they are. These messages also give them confidence to voice their views and opinions, to make choices, and to help shape their own learning, which comes as the babies transition from Hatchlings to Owls. By embracing difference, by exploring their own attitudes in relation to equality and diversity, and by realising that their attitudes and values influence children, adults can develop the insights, self- awareness and skills that are needed to help children develop a strong sense of identity and belonging. This helps to ensure that all children are respected and valued and that they can recognise and deal with discrimination and prejudice.

Here at Nanny McFiFi’s we identity that each child is unique and has their own sense of identity, there are a number of ways we will help and support the children to feel valued and see themselves and their interests reflected in the environment. The children’s art work and projects will be placed on the wall for the children to have a sense of pride in the work; we will also place each child on the birthday train with their picture and their birthday giving them a sense of belonging and being part of the group. Our community wall and our family information area will let the children know that members of their family and community are positively acknowledged and welcomed. We will invite members of the community such as the police, fire service, ambulance crew and school staff to talk to the children about road safety, stranger danger, transitions, safety and health, this will help the children to understand the different roles of people in their community. Each child that attends the setting will have their own designated bag and coat hook with their name and a picture, this will give the children the opportunity to recognise their own name and give them a sense of belonging.  Babies that are in nappies, recieve a named box and tray too.
We will take an intercultural approach to our environment, identifying the different cultures that attend for this year and invite the children and their parents to bring in items, books, cooking utensils etc that best reflect their cultures. This activity will reinstate the child’s sense of belonging and reiterate how much the setting values their culture. In circle time and throughout the session we will sing a wide variety of songs and action rhymes to encourage movement and learn about difference sounds and ways to express themselves.  Our plan and do activities will enable the children to develop a broad range of abilities and interests and also demonstrate dispositions like curiosity, persistence, playfulness, motivation and responsibilities. Our Nanny McFiFi Owl, ‘PINKY’, will be sent home each week along with their diary and each child will have the opportunity to share personal experiences about their own families and backgrounds. We have been sending Pinkie home the past 2 years and have kept all the diaries, as we have returning siblings the children really enjoy reminiscing and show a sense of pride in their families. The children will have their own personal learning journals which will comply of their learning stories and artwork the children will be able to show an awareness of their own unique strengths, abilities and learning style and be willing to share their skills and knowledge with others during small group activities.  For children under 3 years, we will ensure that the themes being followed in our pre school zone, are also followed in the younger children's areas as this adds familiarity and consistency and they move up the rooms over the years.

**Exploring and Thinking**
The theme of Exploring and Thinking is about children making sense of the things, places and people in their world by interacting with others, playing, investigating, questioning, and forming, testing and refining ideas. Children use their senses, their minds and their bodies to find out about and make sense of what they see, feel and experience in the world around them. They gather information and develop new skills, including thinking skills. They form ideas and theories and test these out. They refine their ideas through exploring their environment actively and through interacting and communicating with adults and with other children. Much of this happens through play and other experiences that allow children to be creative, to take risks, and to make discoveries. As they learn, they retest their theories adjusting them to take on board new discoveries and new experiences. In early childhood, most children develop physically and cognitively through exploring their environment, though some have disabilities that make this more difficult to achieve. As well as building knowledge and developing skills, children also need to develop positive dispositions and attitudes towards learning. They have an innate drive to get to know the workings of their world. The adult can foster learning by planning activities for them through which they can experience success as learners. This means planning activities that are suited to children’s individual needs and connect with their experiences and interests while at the same time challenging them to extend their knowledge, refine their skills, and work together to solve problems.

At Nanny McFiFi’s  we will give each child the opportunity to learn and make sense of the world around them, our room will be divided into the different areas the home corner, art table, library, table top activities, cosy corner, shop, construction, sand area, water and messy play table. All these areas will give the children the opportunities to engage, explore and experiment and use physical skills including skills to manipulate objects and materials. Our outdoor activities and extensive play area allows the opportunity for the children to learn about the natural environment and its features. The times that the children re bought together and all age groups get to mix, creates a whole new environment to learn in.  Babies often see what the older children are doing and like to copy and practice new actions and activities.  We encourage this is a safe and supervised way.

Our dance and singing activity will also provide the platform for the children to collaborate with others to share interests and to solve problems confidently. Large group activities will give the children a chance to make decisions and take increasing responsibility for their own learning and through group discussions at circle time the children can express their opinions and ideas for these group activities. The garden will also allow the children to act on their curiosity take risks and be open to new ideas and uncertainty. The library/bookcorner has a wealth of quality of books that will help the children to explore new ideas. Our flashcards will be used at circle time and small group activities that will help the children use letters, words, sentences, numbers, letters and words). Games such as black nd white memory cards and hidey boo also provide the medium for the children to use all of their senses in a playful manner, all the time learning. Our calendar, which we use each morning enables the children to explore and learn ideas such as colours, numbers, days, months seasons but mostly concentrates of first words and communication.

**Communication**
The theme of Communicating is about children sharing their experiences, thoughts, ideas, and feelings with others with growing confidence and competence in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. Communicating involves giving, receiving and making sense of information. Children do this by using nonverbal means of communication, talking, listening, thinking, and understanding. In time, the skills of reading and writing enrich this experience. Communicating is a two-way activity; as well as learning to share their experiences with others children also learn to interpret what others are sharing with them. They communicate in many different ways including facial expressions, gestures, body movements, sounds, language and for some children, through assistive technology. Children’s language is more than words, phrases and sentences. It includes art, dance, drama, music, poetry, pictures, sculpture, signing, and stories. While most children eventually master spoken and written language as their key means of communicating, they continue to speak through their gestures, body movements and expressions to a greater or lesser extent. Some children with special educational needs may need additional and consistent support throughout their lifetime to practise, learn and perfect the art of non-verbal communication. Being a good communicator is crucial to children’s development. The adult encourages children to communicate by listening to them, interpreting what they are saying, responding to them, and by modelling good communication. The adult also provides an environment which motivates children to interact with each other and the adult, and with the objects and places in it. By capturing children’s interest and curiosity and challenging them to explore and to share their adventures and discoveries with others, this environment can fuel their thinking, imagination and creativity, thereby enriching communication. These early experiences support children in becoming confident and competent communicators.

At Nanny McFiFi’s communication is essential for the smooth running and for a positive atmosphere and environment for the children to develop. Music is an important part of our routine the children will be given the opportunity to engage in all types of music from playing musical instruments to using different objects and items as instruments and also using their voices. The children will be able to engage in group activities involving music and drama allowing them to use a range of body movements, facial expressions and early vocalisation to show feelings and share information. At Nanny McFiFi’s we will strive to ensure that children who don’t have English as their first language share the same opportunities and experiences, using visual aids at all times to help the children gain an understanding and provide learning opportunities. We will support and encourage the children to combine non-verbal and verbal communication to get their points across through aids and props at circle time and large group activities. Through our recent training in Speech and Language we have learnt the importance of reassuring parents of children whos English is not their first language that whilst learning this new language a lot of children will go through a silent period which could last up to 8 months and not to worry about this. We have also learnt that children who are proficient in their home language first will acquire English much quicker. We will continue to reassure parents the benefits for their child to perfect their home language at home and dismiss any common misconceptions that they should abandon their own language to solely learn English. Communication is also paramount between staff and the parents and this will be achieved through monthly newsletters, information sharing and also our open-door policy which allows the parents to call in anytime if they have any issues or for updates on their child’s development. We also encourage the use of the app and WhatsApp to send and receive messages, as well as Spanish lessons (with Ellie) and German lessons (with FiFi) We will involve the parents in this area. We will encourage children with different languages to share with the group engaging with the parents also helping the children be positive about their home language and know that they can use different languages to communicate with different people and in different situations.  Within our Hatchlings and owlets areas, children are constantly engaged, this is through speech, flash cards, singing, facial expressions, play and making sounds and modelling play.