



Cragside Church of England Primary School  
 "A Love of Learning and a Thirst for Knowledge"

**Early Years Characteristics of Effective Learning**

	A Unique Child: Observing how a child is learning	Positive Relationships: What adults could do	Enabling Environments: What adults could provide
<b>Playing and Exploring engagement</b>	<b>Finding out and exploring</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing curiosity about objects, events and people</li> <li>• Using senses to explore the world around them</li> <li>• Engaging in open-ended activity</li> <li>• Showing particular interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play with children. Encourage them to explore, and show your own interest in discovering new things.</li> <li>• Acknowledge that some children may need some structured direct teaching prior to being able to independently explore resources.</li> <li>• Help children as needed to do what they are trying to do, without taking over or directing.</li> <li>• Join in play sensitively, fitting in with children's ideas.</li> <li>• Model pretending an object is something else and help develop roles and stories.</li> <li>• Encourage children to try new activities and to judge risks for themselves. Be sure to support children's confidence with words and body language and visual support and modelling.</li> <li>• Pay attention to how children engage in activities – the challenges faced, the effort, thought, learning and enjoyment. Talk more about the process than products. Comment and keenly observe.</li> <li>• Talk about how you and the children get better at things through effort and practice, and what we all can learn when things go wrong.</li> <li>• Allow appropriate time and repetition to process and respond to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended so they can be used, moved and combined in a variety of ways.</li> <li>• Make sure resources are relevant to children's interests and levels of development.</li> <li>• Arrange accessible flexible indoor and outdoor space and resources where children can explore, build, move and role play.</li> <li>• Help children concentrate by ensuring their comfort, limiting noise, and making spaces visually calm and orderly.</li> <li>• Plan first-hand experiences and challenges appropriate to the development of the children.</li> <li>• Ensure children have uninterrupted time to play and explore.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate supportive equipment to enable access to exploratory play.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for repetition and consolidation of learning.</li> </ul>
	<b>Playing with what they know</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pretending objects are things from their experience</li> <li>• Representing their experiences in play</li> <li>• Taking on a role in their play</li> <li>• Acting out experiences with other people</li> </ul>		
	<b>Being willing to 'have a go' (Empowerment)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating activities</li> <li>• Seeking challenge</li> <li>• Showing a 'can do' attitude</li> <li>• Taking a risk, engaging in new experiences, and learning by trial and error</li> </ul>		

	A Unique Child: Observing how a child is learning	Positive Relationships: What adults could do	Enabling Environments: What adults could provide
<p><b>Active Learning</b> <i>motivation</i></p>	<p><b>Being involved and concentrating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time</li> <li>• Showing high levels of energy, fascination</li> <li>• Not easily distracted</li> <li>• Paying attention to details</li> </ul> <p><b>Keeping on trying (Resilience)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persisting with activity when challenges occur</li> <li>• Showing a belief that more effort or a different approach will pay off</li> <li>• Bouncing back after difficulties</li> </ul> <p><b>Enjoying achieving what they set out to do</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing satisfaction in meeting their own goals</li> <li>• Being proud of how they accomplished something – not just the end result</li> <li>• Enjoying meeting challenges for their own sake rather than external rewards or praise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support children to choose their activities – what they want to do and how they will do it using their preferred mode of communication. *</li> <li>• Stimulate children’s interest through shared attention and calm over-stimulated children.</li> <li>• Recognise and respond to different learning styles.</li> <li>• Help children to become aware of their own goals, make plans, and to review their own progress and successes.</li> <li>• Describe what you see them trying to do, and encourage children to talk about their own processes and successes using their preferred mode of communication or by providing a suitable narrative.</li> <li>• Be specific when you praise, especially noting effort such as how the child concentrates, tries different approaches, persists, solves problems, and has new ideas.</li> <li>• Encourage children to learn together and from each other.</li> <li>• Children develop their own motivations when you give reasons and talk about learning, rather than just directing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children will become more deeply involved when you provide something that is new and unusual for them to explore, especially when it is linked to their interests.</li> <li>• Notice what arouses children’s curiosity, looking for signs of deep involvement to identify learning that is intrinsically motivated.</li> <li>• Ensure children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in activities.</li> <li>• Children can maintain focus on things that interest them over a period of time. Help them to keep ideas in mind by talking over/showing photographs of their previous activities. Revisit experiences from areas of interest.</li> <li>• Keep significant activities out instead of routinely tidying them away.</li> <li>• Make space and time for all children to contribute.</li> </ul>

	A Unique Child: Observing how a child is learning	Positive Relationships: What adults could do	Enabling Environments: What adults could provide
<b>Creativity &amp; Critical Thinking</b> <i>thinking</i>	<b>Having their own ideas (Taking initiative)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinking of ideas</li> <li>• Finding ways to solve problems</li> <li>• Finding new ways to do things</li> <li>• Shows imagination, spontaneity and innovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the language of thinking and learning: think, know, remember, forget, idea, makes sense, plan, learn, find out, confused, figure out, trying to do.</li> <li>• Modify the use of language and vocabulary to match children’s need and level of understanding.</li> <li>• Model being a thinker, showing that you don’t always know, are curious and sometimes puzzled, and can think and find out.</li> <li>• Encourage open-ended thinking by not settling on the first ideas: What else is possible?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In planning activities, ask yourself: Is this an opportunity for children to find their own ways to represent and develop their own ideas? Avoid children just reproducing someone else’s ideas.</li> <li>• Build in opportunities for children to play with materials before using them in planned tasks.</li> <li>• Play is a key opportunity for children to think creatively and flexibly, solve problems and link ideas. Establish the enabling conditions for rich play: space, time, flexible resources, choice, control, warm and supportive relationships.</li> <li>• Recognisable and predictable routines help children to predict and make connections in their experiences.</li> <li>• Routines can be flexible, while still basically orderly.</li> <li>• Plan linked experiences that follow the ideas children are really thinking about.</li> <li>• Use mind-maps/visual resources to represent thinking together.</li> <li>• Develop a learning community which focuses on <b>how</b> and not just what we are learning.</li> </ul>
	<b>Making links</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making links and noticing patterns in their experience</li> <li>• Making predictions</li> <li>• Testing their ideas</li> <li>• Developing ideas of grouping, sequences, cause and effect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always respect children’s efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea.</li> <li>• Talking aloud helps children to think and control what they do. Model self-talk, describing your actions in play.</li> <li>• Give children time to process talk and think/use preferred mode of communication.</li> <li>• Value questions, talk, vocalisations and signs and many possible responses, without rushing toward answers too quickly.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Choosing ways to do things (Independence)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning, making decisions about how to approach a task, solve a problem and reach a goal</li> <li>• Checking and reflecting how well their activities are going</li> <li>• Changing strategy as needed</li> <li>• Reviewing how well the approach worked</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support children’s interests over time, reminding them of previous approaches and encouraging them to make connections between their experiences.</li> <li>• Model the creative process, showing your thinking about some of the many possible ways forward.</li> <li>• Sustained shared thinking helps children to explore ideas and make links. Follow children’s lead in conversations/actions and responses, and think about things together.</li> <li>• Encourage children to describe/share problems they encounter and to suggest ways to solve the problem.</li> <li>• Show and talk/communicate about strategies – how to do things –including problem-solving, thinking and learning.</li> <li>• Give feedback and help children to review their own progress and learning. Talk/communicate with</li> </ul>	

		<p>children about what they are doing, how they plan to do it, what worked well and what they would change next time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model the plan-do-review process yourself.</li> </ul>	
	<p>A Unique Child: Observing how a child is learning</p>	<p>Positive Relationships: What adults could do</p>	<p>Enabling Environments: What adults could provide</p>
<p><b>Emotional Well-Being</b></p>	<p><b>Showing emotional literacy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing and recognising a range of emotions</li> <li>• Managing a range of emotions</li> <li>• Demonstrating that they feel safe and secure and have a sense of trust</li> <li>• Demonstrating a growing understanding of the moral culture of their environment</li> <li>• Showing resilience in adverse situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a strong ethos and set of shared values that are embedded in day to day practice.</li> <li>• Provide an ethos which values the opinions of others and is characterised by openness.</li> <li>• Ensure each child and family has a constant and consistent key person to help them develop a sense of trust and security.</li> <li>• Nurture warm, loving relationships between the child and their key person.</li> <li>• Provide positive, warm role modelling by adults, both in their relationships with other adults in the setting and with parents and children.</li> <li>• Welcome, greet and say goodbye to children and families.</li> <li>• Encourage trusting and secure attachments which enable the key person to learn about the home culture, identity and every child's unique interests and needs, e.g. home visits.</li> <li>• Ensure that relevant practitioners have detailed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a secure and welcoming environment that helps children and parents make attachments and friendships.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities, time and a range of resources to encourage children and adults to talk about and express their emotions, e.g. puppets or role play to demonstrate and explore scenarios about social interactions, feelings.</li> <li>• Develop strong home school partnerships in order to forge trusting and authentic relationships.</li> <li>• Use visual cues, signs and symbols to support children in naming and expressing feelings.</li> <li>• Provide clear and consistent routines and boundaries to enable children to feel safe and secure.</li> <li>• Display photos of children and their families.</li> <li>• Share personal experiences; special events, holidays, cultural identities and celebrate similarities and differences.</li> <li>• Ensure constancy, consistency and security of the</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Being connected</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing evidence of attachment</li> <li>• Showing evidence of attachment to peers and the wider community</li> <li>• Demonstrating</li> </ul>		

	<p><b>Demonstrating positive self-esteem &amp; self-worth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing self confidence</li> <li>• Showing respect for their culture and beliefs and those of others</li> <li>• Taking responsibility</li> <li>• Demonstrating an awareness of their own needs</li> <li>• Showing they feel valued by expressing own needs and values to others</li> <li>• Showing a sense of humour</li> </ul>	<p>information about the home language and experiences of the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work together with the child and family to help them understand the process of separation.</li> <li>• Model emotional literacy by naming, expressing and commenting on feelings.</li> <li>• Nurture relationships between children through planned cooperative experiences such as listening, turn taking and social modelling, e.g. can I play with you? What's your name?</li> <li>• Model strategies and behaviours consistently to support positive learning behaviour, e.g. empathy, Conflict Resolution steps.</li> <li>• Give opportunities for children to think, reflect and clarify and to receive full attention when they look to an adult for a response.</li> <li>• Listen to, value and respect the views and ideas of all children.</li> </ul>	<p>environment to help children to develop trust and security.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an environment that supports children to make choices, plan and become autonomous learners.</li> <li>• Provide uninterrupted time for play and extended activity that supports children to become intrinsically motivated.</li> <li>• Provide a stable, safe environment to enable children to cope with change and challenges.</li> </ul>
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