

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others.

Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

How Personal, Social and Emotional Development can be observed in our setting:

The children's day is structured to provide a reassuring amount of consistency without being too rigid. The environment, indoors and outdoors, is well resourced with open-ended materials to provide the children with plenty of opportunities to play with things that interest them. Children can use a "choices" board to let staff know if there is an activity, they would like that is not currently out, encouraging them to choose and then help access any materials they need.

We provide a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour. We talk to children about feelings and emotions, helping them to find the language to express themselves effectively. Where appropriate we use disputes or moments of tension between children as learning opportunities by talking to the children about the effect their behaviour may be having on others.

We have a wide variety of story books, jigsaws, games and dressing up for the children that can help them understand about differences, right and wrong, emotions and well-being. Throughout the session staff read to groups of children and spend time with individual children.

We use snack time as a time for social communication/interactions and talk about healthy eating etc. Through physical, imaginative play, music and singing, reading and shared stories, children develop the skills to interact and socialise with others. Table-top toys and games encourage sharing and co-operation. Role play helps them learn how to discuss, negotiate and share in situations where they feel comfortable. Play activities at the pre-school do not have set outcomes therefore allowing children to play with small-world toys or with sand and water and develop this play differently each time with different outcomes. This actively helps children to achieve as they can decide what happens next and this control gives children confidence in their ability and leads to high self-esteem.

A daily "time-line" is used during registration enabling children to understand, for example, whether today they are having lunch at pre-school or whether today is a "Musical Friends" day or not. This helps to reassure anxious children by preparing them for what will be happening during the day. The importance of children feeling emotionally comfortable and secure for them to be able to learn effectively is shared with parents and an effective key person approach is in place.