

# **Smallville Nursery**

## **Early Years Policy April 2026**

***To be revised April 2027***

Smallville Nursery is committed to ensuring that every child receives the best possible start in life, enabling them to achieve their full potential. We recognise that early childhood experiences have a profound and lasting impact on development. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is valuable and forms the foundation for lifelong learning, well-being, and achievement. Parents entrust us with their children's care, and we aim to provide an environment that is safe, nurturing, and conducive to learning, in line with the EYFS statutory framework.

### **Legislation**

Smallville Nursery's early years provision is guided by the statutory requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Childcare Act 2006, and the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance 2024. These frameworks ensure the safety, welfare, and development of all children, support inclusive practice, and provide clear guidance on safeguarding, learning, and assessment expectations.

### **A Unique Child**

At Smallville Nursery, we recognise that every child is a competent and capable learner, with their own strengths, interests, and learning styles. Children develop at different rates and in individual ways. We promote resilience, confidence, and a positive attitude to learning by offering praise, encouragement, and opportunities for celebration. Our approach is designed to nurture each child's potential and support their individual learning journey.

### **Positive Relationships**

We believe that secure, respectful, and professional relationships form the foundation for learning and development. Strong relationships with children and their families enable children to become confident, independent learners. We foster communication and partnership with parents to ensure consistency and shared support for each child's development.

### **Enabling Environments**

Our learning environment is thoughtfully designed to stimulate exploration, creativity, and growth. We observe and assess children's interests, needs, and abilities to plan challenging, achievable, and play-based activities. Children access outdoor spaces daily, where a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities promotes physical development, curiosity, and problem-solving skills.

### **Learning and Development**

#### **Playing and exploring**

Play is central to learning. Children explore, investigate, and make sense of the world through structured and unstructured play experiences. They develop social skills, self-regulation, and creativity, while practicing problem-solving and communication.

#### **Active Learning**

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and engaged. We encourage independence, decision-making, and ownership of learning to foster confidence, curiosity, and persistence.

#### **Creativity and Critical Thinking**

Children are encouraged to think critically and creatively across all areas of learning. Staff support this process by asking open questions, offering encouragement, and providing resources that can be freely accessed and moved to extend learning opportunities.

### **Parent and Carer Partnership**

Parents are children's primary educators, and we value their contribution to their child's development. Smallville Nursery fosters strong partnerships with families through:

- Induction meetings and stay-and-play sessions before a child starts nursery.
- Regular discussions with key workers regarding progress, learning observations, and shared achievements.
- Opportunities to contribute to planning and learning journeys.
- Parent workshops, reading sessions, and collaborative activities throughout the year.

### **Inclusion**

We are committed to providing every child with equal access to learning opportunities. Our curriculum and planning consider each child's experiences, background, culture, language, abilities, and needs. Early identification of additional needs allows us to provide tailored support in collaboration with parents and external agencies, ensuring every child can achieve their potential.

### **Welfare**

The safety and well-being of children is paramount. We educate children on boundaries, rules, and safe risk-taking while fostering independence and life skills. We comply fully with the EYFS welfare requirements and statutory guidance to protect children's physical and psychological well-being.

### **Areas of Learning**

The EYFS framework identifies seven areas of learning, divided into Prime Areas and Specific Areas:

#### **Prime Areas:**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

#### **Specific Areas:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Prime areas form the foundation for curiosity, learning, and social development, while all areas are interconnected to support holistic growth.

### **Observations, Planning, and Assessment**

Children's learning is observed and recorded to inform planning and future activities. Observations contribute to individual Learning Journeys, shared regularly with parents. Planning is flexible and responsive to children's interests, achievements, and developmental needs, based on the Development Matters statements within the EYFS curriculum. Assessments combine formal and informal observations to track progress and ensure each child receives appropriate support and challenges.