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09 Early years practice procedures

09.14 Children's rights & the fundamental British Values

Policy statement

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up

The Four 'Overarching Principles' of the EYFS shape our practice these are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). (EYFS Statutory Framework 2024)

We also understand our role in protecting the rights of our children according to the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Sticky Fingers Pre-school believe that all children have basic needs, and it is their **universal right** to have these met to ensure each child in the world can develop to their full potential.

At Sticky Fingers Preschool we put the "Rights of the Child" at the centre of our planning. We reflect the needs of all children within the setting and uphold the right for our children to become **strong, capable, resilient and listened to**.

- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.
- We follow the united nations convention on the rights of the child and The fundamental British values of *democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs* are already implicitly embedded in the 2014 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and are further clarified below, based on the *Fundamental British Values in the Early Years* guidance (Foundation Years 2015) Separately, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act also



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places a duty on early years providers "to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism" (The Prevent Duty 2023).

- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- We promote children's right to be *strong, resilient and listened to* by enabling children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- We help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults.
- We work with parents to build their understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of safeguarding all our children.

What it means to promote children's rights and entitlements to be '*strong, resilient and listened to*'

To be **strong** means to be:

- **Secure** in their foremost attachment relationships where they are loved and cared for, by at least one person who is able to offer consistent, positive and unconditional regard and who can be relied on. This would be the key person and buddy. (*See 09.03 The role of the Key person policy*)
- **Safe and valued** as individuals in their families and in relationships beyond the family, such as day care or school;
- **Self assured** and form a positive sense of themselves – including all aspects of their identity and heritage;
- **Included equally and belong** in early years settings and in community life;
- **Confident in abilities** and **proud** of their achievements;
- **Progressing optimally** in all aspects of their development and learning;
- **To be part of a peer group** in which to learn to negotiate, develop social skills and identity as global citizens, respecting the rights of others in a diverse world; and
- **To participate and be able to represent themselves** in aspects of service delivery that affects them as well as aspects of key decisions that affect their lives.

To be **resilient** means to:

- **Be sure** of their self worth and dignity;
- Be able to be **assertive** and state their needs effectively;
- Be able to **overcome** difficulties and problems with democracy (Making decisions together).
- **Be positive** in their outlook on life;
- Be able to **cope** with challenge and change;
- Have a **sense of justice** towards self and others;
- To develop a **sense of responsibility** towards self and others; and
- To be able to **represent** themselves and others in key decision making processes.

To be **listened to** means:

- Adults who are close to children recognise their need and **right to express and communicate** their thoughts, feelings and ideas;
- Adults who are close to children are able to **tune in** to their verbal, sign and body language in order to understand and interpret what is being expressed and communicated;



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- Adults who are close to children are able to **respond appropriately and, when required, act upon their understanding** of what children express and communicate ; and adults **respect children's rights** and **facilitate children's participation and representation** in imaginative and child centred ways in all aspects of core services.

The Fundamental British Values

Whatever the children's background, it is our responsibility to ensure the children have respect for all by supporting children to develop a positive sense of themselves. This will help them feel confident to speak up, be heard and have their opinions valued. They also need to begin to understand that their way of life may be different from others, but that it is still as valuable and that it is possible for everyone to live together peacefully, each person being a valuable part of our multicultural world. By teaching children these British values from a young age, it builds the firm foundation for them to grow into well rounded adults and helps develop an accepting, tolerant society.

The fundamental British values of

Democracy, or making decisions together (through the prime area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development)

- As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness, practitioners encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging them to know that their views count, to value each other's views and values, and talk about their feelings, for example, recognising when they do or do not need help.
- Practitioners support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

Rule of law, or understanding that rules matter (through the prime area of Personal, Social and Emotional Development)

- Practitioners ensure that children understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences.
- Practitioners collaborate with children to create rules and the codes of behaviour, for example, the rules about tidying up, and ensure that all children understand that rules apply to everyone.

Individual liberty, or freedom for all (through the prime areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Understanding the World)

- Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take risks on an obstacle course, mixing colours, talking about their experiences and learning.
- Practitioners encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example discussing in a small group what they feel about transferring into Reception Class.

Mutual respect and tolerance, or treating others as you want to be treated (through the prime areas of Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Understanding the World)



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- Practitioners create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.
- Children should acquire tolerance, appreciation and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions.
- Practitioners encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours, such as sharing and respecting others opinions.
- Practitioners promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural or racial stereotyping.

In our settings it is not acceptable to:

- Actively promote intolerance of other faiths, cultures and races
- Fail to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate girls and boys
- Isolate children from their wider community
- Fail to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

References

EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670fa42a30536cb92748328f/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_-_based_providers.pdf

The Prevent Duty

(2023)https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e84b6008eef600115a5679/14.258_HO_Prevent+Duty+Guidance_v5d_Final_Print.pdf

United Nations Convention on Rights of a child (UNCRC)

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>