

Aims and Objectives

Mission Statement

Chestnut Playgroup aims to provide a high standard of care and Early Years education in our friendly, safe and stimulating environment, where your child is happy, healthy and can express themselves confidently. We work in partnership with parents/carers to lay the foundations for your child's education and develop your child's learning as an individual; knowing how to inspire and nurture them as they learn through play.

We aim to enhance children's development and education by encouraging parents/carers to understand and provide for their children's needs. We firmly believe that parents/carers are their children's first educators and it is in the interest of the children that both the playgroup staff, parents/carers work together to provide the children with the best foundation to their educational life.

Research shows how valuable children's early years experiences are for their future education and we wholeheartedly support the view that children learn through play and that the more play, the more learning is achieved. Research has shown that children need to play to help develop the neural pathways in their brain.

At Chestnut Playgroup, we implement the EYFS framework. We follow the child's lead, which enables us to support and extend their skills. This is achieved by building on their awe and wonder, their experiences, and their knowledge. Enticing them to leave our preschool as confident, resilient learners.

At Chestnut Playgroup we also:

- Recognise a child's many visual and verbal languages that they use to express themselves. These include their use of fantasy, play, visual and performing arts, which helps them to explore and represent their perspectives in their own terms.
- Assign space for children's voices to be heard. To have spaces, in which they can communicate and be heard, and which provide tangible proof that their views, feelings and concerns have been valued and are taken seriously.
- Make time to give children information that is relevant, makes sense to them and focuses on what they want to know so that they can make informed decisions, and ensure that the context is one in which children can ask questions and negotiate understanding.
- Provide genuine choice to participate in decision-making processes in which their perspective, their feelings, aspirations, concerns, views about their learning, social and health care are taken seriously. Genuine choice also relates to ensuring that children have the option of choosing not to participate and that the context is appropriate for children to comfortably contribute.
- Subscribe to a reflective practice to ensure that our attitudes, values, assumptions, prejudices and practices empower young children's expression of their feelings, experiences, views, concerns and aspirations rather than hinder them. This involves checking that young children's voices are taken seriously in matters that are relevant to them.

In addition to this, we run our sessions in a free-flow environment; wherever possible and when circumstances allow, giving children freedom to choose between inside and outside space, selecting freely from a wide range of activities whilst being safe and observed within the play space. Open access to toys, games and activities are available to children inside as well as access to 'snack' and drinks.

Outside the children have access to a covered play area where further activities are available to them and the wider garden space with static play equipment, grassed area, vegetable beds and fruit trees, and wildlife area. Having the garden space at our disposal is a great asset to Chestnut Playgroup and one that few settings have available. Emphasis should be placed on this and the outside space should be developed and managed to ensure that it is a usable and enjoyable area to play and learn throughout the year.

In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim to provide children with clear learning and development goals so that they are achieving their potential during their time at Chestnut Playgroup. Our Keyworker system ensures that each child is treated as an individual (a unique child) and they are observed, assessed and next steps are planned for them to achieve and develop.