



BALHAM NURSERY SCHOOL

Home Learning Plan

(during the Covid-19 pandemic)

Policy produced: January 2021

Review date: January 2022

Introduction

Balham Nursery School fully reopened in September 2020 after lockdown due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. We had robust plans in place to welcome back our returning children and admitting new children to ensure a positive experience for all. However, we were aware of the likelihood that there would be further waves of the virus which could mean returning to in-school “bubbles” and possible further local and national lockdowns to contain virus transmission. We therefore considered our approach to continuing to provide education and support for our children and families in the event that some would have to stay at home for periods of time.

Our children are very young, aged from 2 years to 5 years, therefore the key element of our approach is to provide families with ideas, physical learning packs and online resources that will support them to engage in learning at home. We are mindful that Nursery education is not compulsory and so our aim is to encourage and inspire in a manner that does not overwhelm the children or their families.

Balham Nursery School is committed to working in close partnership with families, recognising each family is unique. We will therefore ensure that staff keep in regular contact with families in a professional and confidential manner.

Our Practice at Balham Nursery School

At Balham, the emphasis of our practice is on play and exploration, allowing the children to lead their own learning. It is through our observation of the children’s own interests that we aim to provide an environment where, in order to become independent learners and thinkers, children can:

- operate independently with plenty of time for deep engagement
- explore a range of materials
- engage in both open ended play and adult-initiated activities
- extend their thinking through communication
- use a range of equipment which will develop skills including gross and fine motor skills
- be safe

We believe that children learn most effectively when:

- their physical and emotional needs are met
- they are actively involved
- they can use their initiative
- they have confidence in themselves and in the adults around them
- they can follow an activity through without time constraints
- they can use language to plan, sustain, describe and review their activities
- parents are engaged with their children’s learning

Aims

This Home Learning Plan aims to:

- ensure consistency in the approach to home learning for all children who are not in school through use of quality online and offline resources
- set out expectations for all members of the school community in regards to home learning
- provide appropriate guidelines for online safety and data protection
- enable effective communication between school and families to support engagement with learning
- support our families to look after their health and well-being

Who does this policy apply to?

- A child who is absent because they are awaiting test results and the household is required to self-isolate. The rest of their school bubble are attending school and being taught as normal
- A whole class bubble who are not permitted to attend school because they, or another member of their bubble, have tested positive for Covid-19
- Children who are not in school due to a local or national lockdown, requiring the school to close to all but vulnerable and critical worker families.
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Flexibility of Learning

We realise the circumstances that cause our school to close will affect families in a number of ways. In our planning and expectations, we are aware of the need for flexibility from all sides:-

- parents may be trying to work from home and balancing work and home learning can be very difficult
- access to technology may be limited
- systems may not always function as they should

An understanding and willingness to adapt to these challenges is essential for successful home learning.

Expectation Management

We believe it is in the best interests of our children to continue learning through play based experiences at home. Bearing in mind the need for flexibility, no deadlines will be set. Teaching and support staff will provide detailed instructions and appropriate support for parents and carers with activities. All activities and resources will be developed with home learning and access to everyday materials in mind.

Our staff will:-

- share weekly home learning resources and activities linked to current planning through Padlet or email updates
- have regular contact with families via phone calls or email
- reply to messages, emails and give support and feedback during normal school teaching hours
- report any concerns or complaints shared by families to a member of SLT – if any safeguarding concerns, these are to be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

We will encourage our parents and carers to:-

- support their child's learning to the best of their ability
- know they can contact members of school staff for support or additional home learning resources
- refrain from screenshotting or copying any information, messages or posts to share on social media or any other platform
- understand that play is the most effective way for young children to learn and have realistic expectations of their ability to sit and concentrate
- provide appropriate supervision and support when children are using digital technology

Senior Leaders and Lead Teacher will:-

- coordinate the home learning approach
- monitor the effectiveness of home learning through regular meetings with school staff and feedback from parents and carers
- monitor the security of home learning systems including data protection and safeguarding considerations

The SENCO

- Ensuring that pupils with EHC plans continue to have their needs met while learning remotely, and liaising with other organisations to make any alternate arrangements for pupils with EHC plans and IHPs
- Identifying the level of support needed

Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Monitoring the school's approach to providing remote learning to ensure education remains as high quality as possible
- Ensuring that staff are certain that remote learning systems are appropriately secure, for both data protection and safeguarding reasons

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for managing and dealing with all safeguarding concerns. A DSL or Deputy DSL will always be on site when there are children in school. For further information please see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Appendices which have been updated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.