

Curriculum Policy

Statement of Purpose

Within Torphins Playgroup we recognise the importance and value of high-quality early education and childcare (ELC). We are committed to providing a stimulating and challenging environment which will develop and broaden children's learning experiences, leaving them confident, eager, highly motivated and disposed to learn more. We aim to be responsive to each child's individual needs, including any additional support needs, and to build on the child's prior learning and natural curiosity.

In collaboration with all service users, staff and parents Torphins Playgroup has developed a shared Vision, Values and Aims which encompasses the ethos of the Playgroup.

In the design and delivery of the curriculum we will adhere to national guidance. As appropriate to the child's age and stage of development, our curriculum will be guided by:

- [Realising the Ambition: Being Me – National Practice Guidance on Early Years in Scotland \(Scottish Government 2020\)](#)
- [Curriculum for Excellence: Early Level \(Scottish Government\)](#)
- <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/how-good-is-our-early-learning-and-childcare/>
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/early-years-framework/pages/1/>

National Guidance

We will be guided by [Realising the Ambition: Being Me](#), which builds on the original guidance Building the Ambition and Pre-Birth to Three, that our babies and children deserve the very best experiences throughout their learning journey; before birth and beyond. The guidance covers the period from birth through early childhood into primary education.

Pre-birth to Three (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010) reflected on four key principles of the **Rights of the child, Relationships, Responsive care** and **Respect**. All four principles are as relevant and current today.

We will be guided by the guidance to:

- make links between practice, theory, and policy guidance to reinforce aspects of high-quality provision and the critical role practitioner's play
- build confidence and capability of those who work with children and families from pre-birth to starting school and beyond
- support improvement and quality by encouraging discussion, self-reflection and questioning about relevant practice
- provide advice on achieving the highest quality of ELC provision that will enable

young children to experience and to play their own part in Scotland being the best place in the world to grow up

Realising the ambition: Being Me is the national practice guidance for early years in Scotland. It aspires to support practitioners in delivering what babies and young children need to give children the best start in life and for sector practice that reflects the principles of nurture, and the importance of relationships.

For older children, we will also be guided by [Curriculum for Excellence: Early level](#) which builds on the solid foundations developed in the critical years pre-birth to three.

We embrace the values inscribed on the mace of the Scottish Parliament (wisdom, justice, compassion, and integrity) which underpin Curriculum for Excellence.

Our aim is to nurture each child's capacity to become a:

- Successful learner
- Confident individual
- Responsible citizen
- Effective contributor

Our curriculum will provide experiences and opportunities to foster these capacities.

Curriculum planning will follow the design principles of:

- Challenge and enjoyment
- Breadth
- Progression
- Depth
- Personalisation and Choice
- Coherence
- Relevance

Experiences and outcomes will support progress in learning. Across the eight curriculum areas; Expressive arts, Health and wellbeing, Languages, Mathematics, Religious and moral education, Sciences, Social studies, and Technologies.

Children's voices in their learning journey will be evident in the use of overarching principles of the CFE to include Play and the [SHANARRI](#) Wellbeing Wheel Framework for Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) which contributes to all of the outcomes in this framework.

Curriculum content will be driven by the experiences and outcomes for early level, described in Curriculum for Excellence, within the broad curriculum areas of:

- Health and wellbeing
- Languages

- Mathematics
- Social studies
- Expressive arts
- Religious and moral education
- Sciences
- Technologies

The principles and practice guidance within each of these curricular areas will support our understanding of subject importance, structure, progression, assessment, and its relevance within the wider curriculum. We will use this guidance to inform our role in delivering the curriculum.

All children have a right to a broad general education, so although our curriculum will be driven by children's needs and interests, we will ensure that they have access to a wide range of experiences across all curricular areas. The Scottish Government has identified health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy as key areas of learning and development for all and we will ensure that opportunities to foster learning and skills in these areas permeate our curriculum and all aspects of the setting's life. Seasonal activities and the celebration of festivals will form a backdrop to our planning as appropriate, rather than the key focus of learning, which will be dictated by children's needs and interests in conjunction with the guidance above. We will also be guided by 'Realising the Ambition: Being Me' with regard to what the young child needs, taking cognisance of its advice on experiences, adult input and environment.

Approaches to Learning

All children learn in different ways and we will employ a variety of approaches to learning and teaching. Our curriculum will be driven by children's needs and interests. We will ensure active and experiential learning with a strong emphasis on learning through play. We take a holistic view of learning and will ensure coherence of curricular areas and experiences, focussing on their relevance for the child. This will involve planned, meaningful interdisciplinary learning experiences for children. Co-operative learning and peer education strategies that allow for collaboration among children will be used to support and consolidate children's learning. We will constantly revisit experiences and outcomes to consolidate and embed learning. We will introduce cross-curricular themes as appropriate, ensuring rich, meaningful and challenging learning experiences for children.

We will use the [Benchmarks](#) that have been developed within Curriculum for Excellence to make clear what learners need to know to be able to progress through the levels and provide clarity on the national standards expected within each curriculum area at each level, the benchmarks will support practitioners to understand standards and identify children's and young people's next steps in learning to provide consistency in teachers' and other practitioners' professional judgements. The Benchmarks set out clear lines of progression in literacy, English, numeracy and mathematics, and across all other curriculum areas from Early to Fourth Levels.

Evidence of progress and achievement will come from a variety of sources including:

- observing day-to-day learning within the playroom/environment
- observation and feedback from learning activities that takes place in other environments, for example, outdoors
- learning conversations; and
- planned periodic holistic assessment

Outdoor Learning provides rich opportunities for children to learn in exciting, absorbing, imaginative and meaningful ways. We will seek to make good use of these opportunities in and around the setting and further afield. Outdoor learning is an approach to learning that is integral to the curriculum. It takes place in a range of contexts such as the grounds of the setting, the local area and day trips. Its purposes include health and wellbeing; we will encourage investigation and exploration, physical activity, and personal and social development. Torphins Playgroup will use the Scottish Government's '[Out to Play](#)' document to provide guidance and advice for our practitioners on how to access outdoor spaces to create safe, nurturing and inspiring outdoor learning experiences. See also '[My World Outdoors](#)'.

We will support learning outdoors to engage children and young people in many different ways. Our practitioners will act as facilitators, using multi-sensory and experiential approaches to provide learning experiences for all.

The [Outdoor Learning: Practical guidance, ideas and support for teachers and practitioners in Scotland](#), resource introduces practitioners who are not familiar with outdoor learning to exploring ways of taking children outside. It provides a route into continuing professional development and suggestions for embedding outdoor learning as a whole-school approach. It serves to illustrate the potential of outdoor learning as an effective approach to learning and teaching within the context of Curriculum for Excellence

Practitioners may find using the [snippets](#) helpful when:

- considering the benefits of outdoor learning
- planning programmes of support for specific groups or individual children
- undertaking continuing professional development activities linking to outdoor learning

Learning Environment

Torphins Playgroup will provide a safe, stimulating indoor and outdoor environment, where children feel secure and confident to explore, to experiment, interact and take up new challenges in their learning and development. The learning environment will be stimulating and rich in opportunities that foster inquiry, communication and language development. We will be responsive to children's needs, interests and preferred approaches to learning.

Role of the Adult

Staff will provide nurturing and caring support for children's learning. They will observe and monitor children's learning and use this knowledge to plan for progression, intervening skilfully to support shared thinking and foster new learning. They will also use this information to help identify children with additional support needs and to develop individual programmes of learning and support as required. Parents will be encouraged and supported to participate in their child's learning within the setting and in the home. We value their knowledge of the child's prior learning and their role as prime educator of the child.

Planning for Progress

We will identify and build on the child's prior learning. We will set out clear goals for children's learning and development, which will be flexible enough to respond to the breadth of starting points indicated by the children themselves, or their parents. Through observing, talking to and listening to children, staff will monitor and record individual children's progress in Learning Journals. Parents are able to view, comment and contribute. The information gained will be used to ensure that children's needs are being met and that they are being offered activities and experiences which are relevant and meaningful to them.

Individual profiles/records of development will be kept for each child on Learning Journals, which children and their parents will be encouraged to contribute to, along with the staff. The information contained in the file will be shared with parents informally during day to day activities. Information will not be disclosed to any other person without the consent of parents.

Transitions

Transition times for the child (home to setting, within the setting, across settings and onward to primary school) can be times of great uncertainty and anxiety for them. We will handle these sensitively and positively and will be responsive to the individual child. We will ensure good lines of communication with child, parent and all colleagues involved to plan carefully for each transition, aiming to make it an exciting and positive experience that leaves the child feeling confident and secure. This may involve a variety of activities such as a series of visits in preparation for the transition or ensuring familiar activities and routines across settings. The [early level](#) of CFE for most children spans the period of time from age three until the end of Primary 1. It supports a smooth transition in learning between ELC and primary school.

We will work together with our children and their families to support positive transitions. Using the Care Inspectorate Practice Note to support positive transition experiences. [elc-practice-note-2-transitions.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](https://www.careinspectorate.com/early-childhood/early-level/early-level-practice-note-2-transitions.pdf).



Transition programmes will effectively build on prior learning to support curriculum continuity and progression to meet the needs of all children. In order to ensure a continuum of learning we will share information about the child's learning and development with relevant colleagues through meetings and transition records as appropriate. Parental permission for this will always be sought.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. This will be achieved through both formal and informal observation of staff practice, planning and the children's progress records.

March 2024