

Essex Wildlife Trust

Nature Nursery: Observation, Planning and Assessment Policy and Procedure

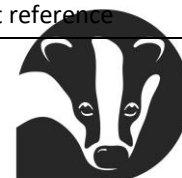
A policy describes what we do and how we do it as an organisation. It is a set of agreed principles which set out a course of action adopted by our staff and volunteers. It will often include acceptable methods, behaviours, and an approved procedure. It is usually internal, although some organisational policies are expected to be publicly accessible.

Version Control

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When review is completed, please send to: businesssupport@essexwt.org.uk

Version	Date	Changes made by	Reason for change
2	28/11/2022	J Burlingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update to new company format - Update to include accurate job titles within the organisational structure of SLT, OLT, Nature Nursery Structure and Safeguarding responsibilities - Updated where appropriate to refer to any new company system requirements
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarification of use of EyLog system and rules around photographs, linking to E-safety and Safeguarding policies - Inclusion of details on recording second setting information - Addition of information re curriculum resources - Addition of section on Key Person supervision sessions
3	14/11/2023	J Burlingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update of EYFS document reference



Essex
Wildlife Trust

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Nursery, we are committed to providing high quality, comprehensive and compliant EYFS learning, development and care. This is consistent with the framework set out by the Department of Education:

“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 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.” EYFS 2021

- 1.2 Part of this framework involves suitable observation, planning and assessment of the children within the Nature Nursery and therefore this policy identifies the key areas and requirements.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy is aimed at all staff and practitioners, including volunteers, within the Nature Nursery.

3. Purpose of Policy

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to define the methods and procedures used to ensure compliance of our Observations, Planning and Assessment within the Nature Nursery and to highlight the commitment of Essex Wildlife Trust to promote and maintain a high quality learning environment.

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Nursery strives to provide EYFS learning, development and care which is considered to be outstanding.

5. Procedures

5.1 Observations

Nursery staff will spend time with each child interacting and observing each child. During this time they might:

- 5.1.1 make handwritten or electronic notes
- 5.1.2 take photos or videos
- 5.1.3 speak with parents and carers, or other educational settings, to gather a picture of how a child learns and their interests.

This information, in combination with their own child development knowledge, and the guidance of the Development Matters Statements within the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, will be used to assess each child’s progress, support their development and plan stimulating and engaging experiences.

5.2 Assessments

“Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. In their interactions with children, practitioners should respond to their own day-to-day observations about children’s progress and observations that parents and carers share” *EYFS 2021*

- 5.2.1 At the Nature Nursery we use online assessment tool called ‘EyLog’, where each child has an individual profile/portal where photos and videos, comments and work samples can be uploaded. Staff can quickly link these to the areas of learning and show the impact of our curriculum and how a child is developing. Parents receive email notifications and are able to view their child’s progress throughout their time in Nature Nursery. Parents are encouraged to upload photos and comments to create a rounded picture of the whole child both in nursery and at home.
 - 5.2.1.1 The photographs taken by Nature Nursery staff will be stored on the original tablet used to take the picture for a maximum of three months. Photographs will then be deleted. The photographs taken will adhere to all other Nature Nursery policies and procedures regarding Safeguarding, Planning and Assessment; Health and Safety and Toileting, Nappy Changing and Intimate Care.
 - 5.2.1.2 Tablets remain on the site and are stored securely at all times when not in use.
 - 5.2.1.3 Photographs are uploaded to the EyLog programme to support observations, assessment and planning. EyLog uses the Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) to encrypt all communication between the server and the tablets. All data is stored on secure Cloud-based servers in data centres located in the UK and all data is regularly backed-up onto redundant systems. Parents are able to access information on their child via secure systems and can **only** access their child’s portal.

5.3 The 2 year progress check

- 5.3.1 This a statutory assessment carried out between the ages of 24-36 months, summarising our ongoing assessments, giving a picture of how a child is progressing at the age of 2. Any concerns about a child’s development can then be supported effectively.
- 5.3.2 The 2 year old progress check is carried out in collaboration with parents/carers and, when possible, health visitors. The progress check does not need to be carried out if a child has already received this from the health visitor.

5.4 Key person role and ‘second’ settings

- 5.4.1 Each key person will use these observations, assessments and checks to help plan a stimulating curriculum for each child, by bringing in new resources to extend a previous play experience, or provide materials which might motivate and enthuse. In addition, other educational (‘second’) settings may request information on children within our Nursery, and we can share information and ideas as appropriate, to ensure provision is consistent and supportive. Parents will be provided with appropriate forms to share with additional settings for completion as necessary.

5.5 Planning

- 5.5.1 Planning is fluid and operates on a whole group level, small group or individual level depending on the nature of observations, interests and assessments. The planning, observation and assessment cycle can occur within seconds or can be pre planned over a period of time.
- 5.5.2 Staff meet regularly to plan out whole nursery or small group learning experiences which maybe based on weather, seasonal changes and any other opportunities which occur such as planting in the meadow or a special visit.
- 5.5.3 Staff will use the 'Early Years Nature Curriculum' to ensure child receive a wide range of experiences and learning opportunities. In addition, staff will have access to a range of relevant resources as needed to support and enhance planning and activities. This may include research papers, published books or websites, and information gained from attending other external meetings and forums.
- 5.5.4 Each key person will be responsible for planning for individual learning experiences for each of their key children. For example our curriculum intent might be to provide a range of different tools for children to access in order to develop critical thinking or noticing a child has a rotational schema so providing resources that will support the child's specific learning preferences.

5.6 Key Person supervision

Staff taking on the role of key person must have supervision meetings

5.6.1 Structure

- 5.6.1.1 Supervision meetings are held every 4 weeks for key persons. For part-time staff this may be less frequent but at least every 6 weeks
- 5.6.1.2 For key persons working term-time supervisions should occur at the above frequency
- 5.6.1.3 Key persons are supervised by the Nature Nursery Manager or appropriate deputy
- 5.6.1.4 Supervision meetings are held in a confidential space suitable for the task

5.6.2 Content

The child focused element of supervision meetings must include discussion about:

- 5.6.2.1 the development and well-being of the supervisee's key children and offer staff opportunity to raise concerns in relation to any child attending. Safeguarding concerns must always reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and not delayed until a scheduled supervision meeting
- 5.6.2.2 reflection on the journey a child is making and potential well-being or safeguarding concerns for the children they have key responsibility for.
- 5.6.2.3 promoting the interests of children.
- 5.6.2.4 coaching to improve professional effectiveness based on a review of observed practice/teaching.
- 5.6.2.5 reviewing plans and agreements from previous supervisions including any identified learning needs for the member of staff.
- 5.6.2.6 During supervision staff can discuss any concerns they have about inappropriate behaviour displayed by colleagues, but must never delay until a scheduled supervision to raise concerns

5.6.2.7 Staff are reminded of the need to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children that have occurred during their employment. New information is referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Human Resources

5.6.3 Recording

5.6.3.1 Key person supervision discussions are recorded on a supervision form. This is retained by the supervisor and a copy provided to the key person

5.6.3.2 The key person and supervisor must sign and date the minutes of supervision within 4 weeks of it happening and disagreements over recorded content must be minuted.

5.6.3.3 Each member of staff has a supervision file that is stored securely at all times

5.6.3.4 Concerns raised during supervision about an individual child's welfare may result in safeguarding concerns not previously recognised as such. If this occurs these are recorded on a safeguarding incident form, reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and placed on the child's file. The reasons why the concerns have not previously been considered are explored.

5.6.4 Checking continuing suitability for work

5.6.4.1 Supervisors will check with staff if there is any new information pertaining to their suitability to work with children, including any changes in relation to their household members.

6. Appendices

This policy is to be read in conjunction with wider Essex Wildlife Trust Policies and Procedures

6.1 EYFS - Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (up to date version available via Government website)

6.2 Safeguarding Children, Young People & Adults at risk policies and procedures Part 1 and 2