**Homerton’s Curriculum Statement**

We view Homerton as a Centre for everyone where staff and families come together to deliver a broad-ranging, interesting and exciting curriculum which aims to give all children the best possible start to life and their education.

**Intent**

To provide a warm, welcoming and inspirational Centre that everyone contributes to and feels part of, whether they are children, staff, parents, volunteers or those who train with us.

To help children develop shared common values of kindness, understanding and respect for each other.

For children to gradually develop an understanding of their own, and each other’s feelings and views, with adults supporting and helping them to develop self-regulation of their behaviour.

To help children to develop independence and confidence during their time at Homerton, a key factor if they are to become resilient adults in the future.

To follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum to provide a broad and exciting education across all seven areas of the curriculum which are: Personal Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

For staff and children to focus not only on what they learn, but also on how they learn. We use the EYFS ‘Characteristics of Effective Learning’, to support and encourage children as they play and explore, actively engage in their learning, and develop the skills of concentration and perseverance. Our aim is that they become independent critical thinkers, who are able to plan how best to execute their ideas, whilst problem solving along the way.

To have a creative, fun and playful approach to activities, fostering children’s curiosity about the world around them, and a love of life and learning. At Homerton this might be through our fortnightly specialist music lessons, cooking, or planting and growing projects in our gardens or at the Homerton allotment.

We aim to develop a deep love of rhyme, reading, and storytelling. This is achieved through a carefully planned developmental curriculum of nursery rhymes and songs, phonic circle time activities, core books, helicopter story telling sessions, and termly story trails for families in our garden.

To develop an understanding of Maths in many practical ways, especially at Circle times and lunch times, for example when children help by getting the correct number of bowls or spoons for the number of children on their table that day.

To celebrate the diverse and rich wealth of languages and cultures that make up the Homerton community of staff and families. We share, celebrate, and learn about each other through parents coming in and telling us stories in their home language, or explaining the festivals that are special to their families. We choose a language of the half term and learn words, numbers and songs in this language. Other celebrations include Chinese New Year, Diwali, Irish dancing, Christmas, birthdays and many more events which take place through the year. We also have an annual international 'bring and share' lunch for families in the Summer Term.

For staff to be fully involved with sharing their own passions and interests with children whether they be in cooking, sewing, growing food to eat, art projects, or learning about lifecycles when frogs come to our on-site pond to spawn. We find staff enthusiasms are both infectious, and a very good way of extending children’s knowledge and vocabulary.

**Implementation**

All staff put children at the heart of everything they do. They work sensitively to establish caring and nurturing relationships with children, developing activities and an environment that ensures that every individual child feels safe, happy, secure and ready to develop their friendships and learning.

Staff are knowledgeable about child development, and the areas of learning they teach. They ensure children have rich and varied experiences, working supportively together with families to make sure that every child has a positive, progressive time in nursery.

The curriculum is planned and sequenced with half termly medium term plans which build on children’s skills and knowledge through the year. These plans are reviewed regularly with staff and shared with parents and governors. The curriculum is broad-ranging, covering the overlapping areas of Personal Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy, Maths, Expressive Arts and Design and Understanding the World.

Both our indoor and extensive outdoor areas, are equally valued. We are fortunate to be able to provide so many opportunities for outdoor exploration and learning in our spacious and varied gardens as well as our allotment and Old Orchard garden. We have a Level 3 trained Forest school leader on the staff team. Children are able to make choices to play inside or out throughout their day.

Environmental awareness is encouraged in the children through the sharing of books, discussions at circle times, and many practical activities such as composting our snack peelings, recycling paper, or turning off taps and lights.

Parents are kept informed of activities and events which take place to support different areas of the curriculum via our weekly bulletin. Parents are also encouraged to get involved with supporting the curriculum by sharing their skills, languages, special cultural or religious events, all of which help to bring alive children’s knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

There is a focus on preparing children for their future, both in the short and longer term, ensuring children are ready to move onto Reception with the confidence, knowledge and skills that they need for happy and successful life.

Homerton adopts a ‘continuous provision’ approach where children can access various resources that are always available and plan projects for themselves with these. The environment is resourced and organised to support active, varied, independent, play-based learning. We ensure that the environment supports the staff’s pedagogy and understanding of how children learn.

A mixture of child-led and adult-led experiences are provided. The majority of time is given to active, free-flow indoor/outdoor play activity, following children’s leads. Adults provide enhancements to the environment based on observations of children’s interests and needs, designed to support emotional well-being, learning across the curriculum and engagement.

Planning is child centred and is based on children’s interests. It is flexible and responsive to children’s needs, informed by ongoing assessment, grounded in the EYFS framework and adapted to the different ages and stages of each individual child. It is strengthened by input from staff at all levels and regular evaluation. We use ‘in the moment planning’ as a way of observing, recording, reflecting on, and then planning next steps for children, involving and engaging parents in the whole process. The EYFS 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' form an integral part of the learning experiences provided for children as they play and explore, becoming active learners and creative critical thinkers.

The staff at Homerton have a great love of the outdoors and believe that being outside, and physically active, in these early years is vital for setting patterns for life. All are encouraged to enjoy being outside and taught about the health benefits that this will bring to them.

Our free-flow approach to the indoor and outdoor spaces gives children variety, freedom, and choice over the activities and environments they wish to learn and play in.

**Impact**

We observe children to ensure that they are happy and engaged in activities both in class, and out in the garden. Most children make strong bonds of friendship during their time here and have an understanding of working together as a class group.

We measure the impact of the above through our conversations with children as they share with us their excitement and delight when they have developed friendships or mastered a physical, intellectual or creative challenge that they previously could not do.

Children are confident talking to adults, and each other, about their skills and knowledge, whether in solving a mathematical challenge, or in the telling of a story at circle time.

Our parental feedback, both verbal and written, is very positive. Here are just a few quotes from recent parent surveys in February 2019 and 2020:-

‘The staff are wonderful’ ‘I always feel every parent is welcome to the nursery. We’re very happy about this’. ‘They make my daughter feel so special’, ‘All the staff greet my child by name’ ‘The staff are really friendly and always happy to talk about the children and what they do’. ‘Nurturing family atmosphere’ ‘I cannot think of how to improve the care and teaching…it has really superseded expectations and I think the whole team should be very proud of achievements and the level of teaching. You can clearly see staff care and the enthusiasm of all involved’. ‘Fantastic outdoor space’ ‘It’s a special place’ ‘exceptional environment-very happy’, ‘Love you Homerton – you all do an amazing job and we feel so lucky to have you’.

The fact that children often come to us on the personal recommendation of previous parents shows that we have had a positive impact on the lives of previous children and families.

Using ongoing observations and assessments we can see that substantial progress is made from individual starting points for all children, including for those who are vulnerable, or have additional needs.

We use a data tracking program known as ‘Target Tracker’ to monitor progress at three points through the year. This program shows us that the vast majority of children are achieving age-appropriate expectations, or above, and are well on their way to achieving the Early Learning Goals when they leave us.

The Local Authority then go on to monitor Homerton children at the end of their Reception year. This monitoring is shared with us and shows that by the end of their Reception year Homerton children are consistently achieving higher outcomes than some of their peers locally, and that they achieve consistently above the National average for their Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year.

Our feeder Primary schools tell us how well prepared the children from Homerton are to transition into primary reporting that they have a good understanding of behavioural, and practical, expectations. They are quick to settle into reception classes, are happy, enthusiastic learners, who are ready for the challenges ahead as they move onto the next stage on their educational and life journey.