

## Our Values

**T** rue - We are who we say we are, no hidden agendas, no politics, just us

**R** elentless - Our dedicated team is committed to giving their best at all times

**U** nderstanding - We are passionate about caring, without judgement or preference

**S** afe - Here, children are in safe hands at all times

**T** rained - Only by continuously improving do we maintain the highest standards of care

**E** xciting - Every child is here to enjoy a fun and stimulating experience

**D** iverse - We embrace the uniqueness and celebrate the equality of the whole Children's Respite Trust Family

## Our principles:

### Child Led Learning

We provide children with opportunities to participate in the decision-making process of their own learning. The joy they experience from completing tasks independently fosters healthy growth in self-esteem and competency.

We value the child's voice and recognize that learning can be significantly enhanced when children are co-constructors in their learning.

### Enabling environment

Our approach ensures that children benefit from a balanced mix of adult-directed learning experiences, which focus on teaching specific areas such as knowledge, skills, dispositions, and concepts, as well as child-initiated learning. Both methods are recognised as essential for the effective and holistic development of children.

### Positive Relationships

We highly value the involvement of all our parents, carers and professionals in contributing to a joyful community. When children see their parents feeling comfortable in their environment, they feel safe and secure. Therefore, we actively involve parents in various aspects of children's learning, including storytelling, supporting educational visits, and participating in community events such as our care events.

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## Learning at Little Stars

The majority of learning is play-based and occurs both indoors and outside.

There is a balance between experiences that are initiated by adults (directed learning) and those that are initiated by children.

Adults start with the interests and strengths of the child, assuming that every child is a capable learner. We use "in-the-moment planning" to adapt to the environment or activities to spark children's interests.

Parental participation is essential. The parents of each child teach us a lot about that individual. For children, parental encouragement and the right home learning environment are essential. We want to maintain a strong partnership with parents as this will contribute towards effective learning and outcomes when all working together as a partnership.

Every child is seen as a unique individual. We are dedicated to making sure that all children who use our services, feel welcome, and that our activities promote their welfare and development. We consider the particular requirements of each child and adapt the activities to be inclusive and accessible. We will develop a plan in place for your child so that the key worker can support his or her unique needs and development, assisting with their achievement to learn.

We use various strategies to help achieve this, for example 'now and next cards', visual timetables, staff have various visuals on their lanyards to help enhance communication, etc. There are also visuals up on display around the centre to help guide children. To encourage communication, staff members have received Makaton level 1 training.

Play that is experimental is embraced at Little Stars. Building bridges over puddles with friends and stimulating sensory play are just a couple of the rich and diverse activities and experiences we have planned for the children in an effort to spark their curiosity, keep them engaged, and encourage sustained shared thinking. Awe and wonder are intentionally planned for, for instance via planting, caring for, harvesting, and tasting/smelling our herbs as well as by physically seeing the life cycles.

### Within our curriculum we have created curricular goals:

- **Explore** – Exploring relationships
- **Safe and Secure** – Secure enough to know who to go to, to find help
- **Grow** – Create a nurturing environment.

## Settling in and Initial Planning and Assessment

Planning for and evaluating the Prime Areas of the Curriculum takes precedence throughout the first half of the academic term. Staff members take the time to get to know their key children and their families, but they also work closely with all the children to support them adjust to Little Stars and gain confidence in their new surroundings.

Ahead to a child's first day, we contact parents on the phone, visit children at home, and then have the children come in for a session at our setting with their key person. The child's interests will be kept in mind when planning the provision that use this information as a starting point.

When assessing progress in the Prime Areas, practitioners will use Birth to 5 Matters and developmental journals, and we will utilise our Communication and Language Tracker to keep track of every child that enters. This helps us identify children who might not be displaying skills that are age-appropriate so that, if required, we can schedule further support.

We may start planning in more depth about how the children will access the curriculum after they are established and able to use the environment. We also promote learning that is centred on the interests of the children (Planning in the Moment). We will swiftly begin utilising the particular curricular sections for the ready children.

We will intervene if we suspect a child may be experiencing developmental problems. Understanding these younger children and the areas in which they require care is crucial. We will keep establishing a solid rapport with the parents and encourage them to offer their children the additional support they require. The curriculum will continue to be inclusive for all children. It is crucial that we put our efforts towards supporting, scaffolding, and assisting children in overcoming learning obstacles.

## How we will link the curriculum for our SEND children

All of our children will get a curriculum of the highest calibre, as is our commitment. All children, including those with special needs and disabilities (SEND), have a right to a comprehensive and equal academic and social curriculum that is accessible to them, as well as to be fully integrated into all facets of daily life. We work to provide a fully inclusive atmosphere where every child may thrive, feel comfortable, and achieve the highest results because we think that every child should be valued equally in education.

To support our baseline evaluations for children with SEND we engage in, in-depth discussions with parents and carers and get input from other specialists (if they are involved). The goal is to comprehend what the child already knows, understands, and is capable of doing, as well as the individuality of their play behaviours, learning tendencies, and interests, all of which can serve as solid building blocks for learning and development.

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Every child may realise their full potential, have authentic experiences, have a feeling of belonging, and be happy thanks to our method. This then enables us to help the entire family by providing guidance, building trusting connections, and equipping parents and carers to comprehend their child's educational path.

Every child has a right to the whole Early Years curriculum. Some may find it challenging to complete some tasks and learn all that is outlined; some children who first seem vulnerable may flourish later in the year, and children have a variety of interests and experiences to draw from. In our commitment to inclusivity, we think that "scaffolding up" is a better strategy than "differentiating down." Children with SEND are exposed to the ideas and skills in our wider curriculum in appropriate breadth and depth through "scaffolding up" their learning. Children are integrated with their peers as part of the larger curriculum. Strategies and activities that were initially developed to encourage the inclusion of children with SEND to allow them to engage more meaningfully in play and learn with developmental differences have been woven into our curriculum. However, we have discovered that these techniques are advantageous to all children, enhancing their social and self-help abilities, communication and language skills, behaviour, physical development, and attitude toward learning and exploration. They do serve as the basis for our supply.

## Our 3 Curricular Goals

1. Explore - Exploring Relationships	
Why?	We want children to have the opportunity to connect with a range of individuals, and be inspired to develop secure and trusting relationships with peers and adults
First milestone: Children to be confident accessing the same space as their peers.	Children will be encouraged to interact in the same space and play with their peers. Staff will support and demonstrate appropriate relationships, either with visuals or by prompting.
Component	Have photographs of each up around the setting. When supporting peer relationships encourage same space play.

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<b>2. Safe and Secure</b> - Secure enough to know who to go to find help	
<b>Why?</b>	We want children to have the tools and understanding to know who to find when they need help.
<b>First milestone: Children to be confident to ask for help from an adult.</b>	There will be photographs of all staff members. Visuals of each staff member will be available along with Makaton to help reinforce communication. Staff will introduce songs that focus on names and repetition. Staff members will build secure bonds with each child, to enable them to feel safe.
<b>Component</b>	Partnership with parents and other outside agencies

<b>3. Grow</b> - Create a nurturing environment.	
<b>Why?</b>	We want children to feel they are in a nurturing environment that promotes growth.
<b>First milestone: Grow herbs in the garden, nurture them, smell them, then cook or create with them.</b>	Grow herbs in the garden, nurture them, smell them, and then cook or create with them. Children take note of the various herbs and plant varieties in the garden and examine and explore them. Children are prompted by adults to participate in gardening every day.
<b>Component</b>	Key worker interventions, garden activities

This policy was adopted by: Michelle Hulse	Date: 16/09/2025
To be reviewed: September 2026	Signed: <i>M Hulse</i>