



4.1 Early Years Policy

Policy statement:

The Bumblebee Children's Charity aims to:

- provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age;
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop;
- add to the life and well-being of those in the local community; and
- offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

Parents

Parents are regarded as members of The Bumblebee Children's Charity who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

- valued and respected;
- kept informed;
- consulted;
- involved; and
- included at all levels.

As a charity, we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going.

Membership of The Bumblebee Children's Charity carries expectations on parents for their support and commitment.

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as parent/carers in attendance with their child.
- has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
- is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
- is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

Children's development and learning

How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by The Bumblebee Children's Charity helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

<u>Characteristics of Effective Learning</u>	
<u>Play & Exploring – Engagement</u> Finding out and Exploring Playing with what they know Being willing ‘to have a go’	<u>Active Learning – Motivation</u> Being involved and concentrating Keeping trying Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
<u>Creating and thinking critically – thinking</u> Having their own ideas Making Links Choosing to do things	

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. The Bumblebee Children’s Charity uses the practice guidance Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the practice guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it. Staff support the development of children using elements of the EYFS Characteristics of effective learning as set out in the table above.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

Learning Journeys

Parents are asked for feedback at the end of each session which is incorporated in that observation sheet and is one of the ways in which the staff and parents work in partnership. This information is added weekly to the child’s online learning journal through a system called Tapestry. Your child’s Learning Journey helps us celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress. This information will enable staff to identify your child’s stage of progress. You and the staff will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

By incorporating the parent's perspective, we gain valuable insight into the children's development. This allows us to create personalised goals for each child and regularly evaluate and update these goals every term. Our aim is to provide the highest level of care and support for every child.

How parents take part at The Bumblebee Children's Charity

Bumblebee recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making a welcoming and stimulating place for children and other parents, such as:

- exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff;
- taking part in sessions with their child;
- sharing their own special interests with the children;
- helping to provide, make and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- building friendships with other parents.
- Offering help to other parents by being parent representatives

Learning opportunities for adults

As well as gaining qualifications in early years care and education, staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early years care and education.

The Bumblebee Children's Charity also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years care and education, as a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, through the Under 5 magazine and publications produced by the Alliance received by email.

The session

We organise our sessions so that the children can work at a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small group activities which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others. We plan activities for the children that are challenging but achievable with little or no support to help them to build their confidence and to form a 'can do' attitude.

Snacks and meals

The Bumblebee Children's Charity makes snack time a social time at which children eat together. Parents are encouraged to share information about their child's dietary needs and Allergy Risk Assessments are carried out. Parents bring in their own snack for their child's needs.

Policies

Copies of all of the policies and procedures are available on request for you to see at the school. Policies help us to make sure that the service provided is a high quality one, and that being a member of The Bumblebee Children's Charity is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents/carers.

Safeguarding children

The charity has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'.

Our employment practices protect children against the likelihood of abuse and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

Special needs

The Bumblebee Children's Charity meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have, working to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2015).

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Bernadett Patai

Management

We have a board of Trustees who manage the charity with the support of the staff:

- managing finances;
- employing and managing the staff;
- making sure that it has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high quality service; and
- making sure that they work in partnership with the children's parents.

An Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all of the children who attend The Bumblebee Children's Charity. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan.

Fees

The Bumblebee Children's Charity is an independent charity that provides sessions to children free of charge.

Starting at The Bumblebee Children's Charity

- The first days - We want your child to feel happy and safe with us.
- After we receive a referral we arrange a short assessment of the child over the phone, then invite the family in for a taster session where we can observe the child to find the most suitable group for his/her needs. Once the child is settled, we make further assessment and carry out an initial observation where we ask the parents to fill in a form about the children's medical history.
- Clothing - We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities. It may also be worth noting that as we do engage in messy activities and whilst we try to find craft materials that don't stain, most do!
- Tapestry – we will show you how to use the online journal
- Parents are welcome to join our private Facebook group called The Hive where we/they can share information and events or discuss different topics with each other

References:

[Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance 2024](#)

[SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)

This Policy was adopted by The Bumblebee Children's Charity and will be reviewed yearly.

Date 22.01.24

Name of signatory Lindsay Warne

Role of signatory Charity Administrator

Signed on behalf of the Trustees