



## OPAL- Observing Play in Learning: Your child's learning journey at Little Carne Nursery

### What do we want for our children at Little Carne Nursery?

We aim for our nursery to be a place of possibilities where children will be nurtured, where their individual interests and talents will be valued and developed.

As a result, we hope that children's well-being will be high. They will have a belief in themselves and their abilities. They will know that they are loved, that they are strong, capable and unique. They will have resilience and the perseverance to keep on trying when things are challenging.

We want children to have the confidence to try new things, to take risks and be physically active. We want children to be able to communicate their ideas, beliefs and feelings, choosing different ways to do this. Some children will choose to dance, others to build or draw or sing. They will have experienced and remembered a wide range of words through stories, rhymes and poems. They will have the skills to make friends and will show kindness to others. They will know how to look after themselves, their friends, their school and the environment.

They will know about important mathematical and scientific concepts. They will have an understanding and respect of the world around them and the world beyond. They will have a desire to learn and be ready for their next stage in education.

## How do we observe children and monitor progress?

**We have developed a model of effective, meaningful and principled assessment of young children's learning.**

By **effective**, we mean a method of assessment that ensures that all children are supported in reaching significant milestones.

By **meaningful**, we mean that the observations made inform our everyday practice and curriculum. By gaining an insight into children's thinking, feeling and needs we can plan our environment and actions to provide future possibilities for learning.

By **principled**, we mean that our focus is on **observing to understand** children. We will not test children or seek unnecessary knowledge. Children are recognised as individuals, not as a percentage in a pie chart.

We will not spend unnecessary amounts of time writing observations or gathering evidence of children's learning. We believe that if we are **capturing** the moment, we cannot be **part** of the moment. Instead we have structures in place that enable us to regularly discuss each child as a team and with their family.

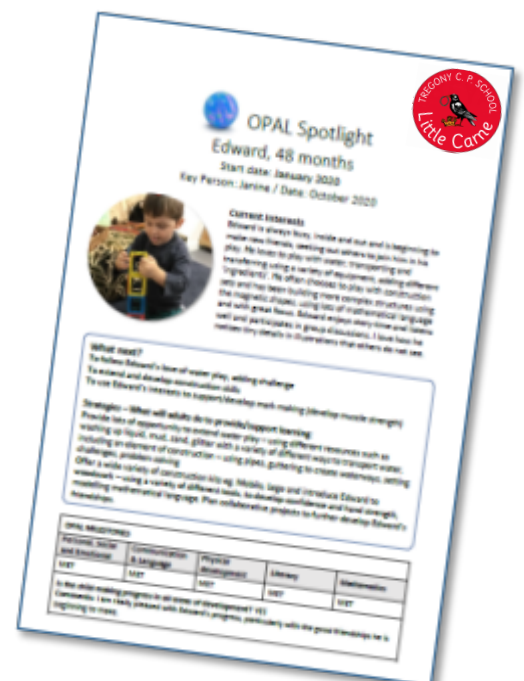
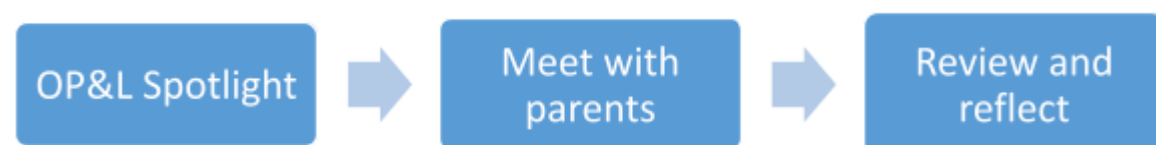
## Observation of Play and Learning (OP&L)

**Your child's learning will be closely monitored in collaboration with you to ensure they are supported to reach significant milestones for their age.**

OP&L works on the basis of having very simple, six-monthly child developmental milestones, which we use to monitor children's development. These milestones reflect what we believe a 'typical' child should be able to achieve. We know that not all children will have 'typical' development. OP&L allows us to tell and celebrate each child's story and focus on the support they need from us.

The observations and assessments that we make are called 'spotlights'. We observe children's innovation, their creativity, their ideas, their intents and feelings. The insight that we gain enables us to discuss, reflect and plan our environment to support and shape future learning.

OP&L follows a simple, three step cycle:



## What to expect?

There will be many opportunities throughout the year for us to come together to talk about your child and their learning.

**Welcome** - When your child joins us at nursery, you will be invited to a Welcome meeting, held via zoom to talk about our ways of observing children.

**Settling in:** Soon after your child has started nursery, we will meet with you to talk about how your child has settled in and to share a video of your child at nursery. We will look at the child development milestones together.

**Parent Drop In:** We will hold a drop in session every term, giving you the opportunity to come in, have a look around and chat with your child's key person.

**Spotlight:** Each child will have two 'spotlight' points in the year. We will invite you into our nursery to share the spotlight and talk about your child's learning and development.

We will give you the email address of your child's key person, for when you have important information to share.

**\*Please note, Tapestry (our online Learning Journal platform) will not be used as a formal observation and assessment tool any longer. We believe that valuable and careful observation and assessment is not achieved through the use of iPads to evidence and provide written observations, as to capture the moment, means we cannot be IN the moment. Instead, it will be used for sharing wow moments, photos, videos and spotlight forms at set points in the year. These will be limited to a maximum of 6 per term.** There is also the option to contribute to your child's profile, where you can add photos or descriptions of significant moments in your child's development that you would like to share with us.

**We look forward to working with you, providing happy times and a happy childhood.**