

UNIT 3 ASSIGNMENT – Foundation to Caring

The task I have been set is to produce a booklet for a child care and education student, it is to explain how a setting can provide a positive environment for children. By creating this file I will learn myself, a lot about how settings can create a positive and stimulating environment for children

The setting I will be focusing on is a school nursery in a seaside town. The building is a large Georgian house and the nursery is situated on the ground floor.

To provide a positive environment in the nursery, the daily routines are planned, so it suits the children's needs, and the activities carried out are done with best interest for the children's learning and development. The staff work as a team and ensure that there is a high standard of hygiene and safety by cleaning all tables before and after being used, they also clean everything that the children come into contact with regularly. The staff also maintains a happy, relaxed atmosphere and parents are made to feel welcome, they are invited in when bringing their children to and from the nursery and they are told about what their children have been doing at nursery. There are a variety of displays in the nursery, both of the children's own work and of artefacts books and pictures, which are changed regularly to prevent them looking old and tattered, by having these, it helps to create a happy and bright atmosphere. If a display is of children's work, every child will have a piece of work on display, this promotes equal opportunities practice, and it will also boost their self-esteem. The nursery is set out so that the children can play happily and safely. The nursery is laid out in such a way that any child can gain from it. For example if a child has poorly developed gross motor skills, there is a lot of space for them to be able to move around. The lay out also affects the atmosphere in a nursery, if thought out well, it can make an old hall feel quite inviting.

In order to meet the required health and safety regulations, fire exits are clearly marked and free from obstructions at all times. There is plenty of space between furniture for easy movement. Fire procedures are told to everyone who uses the building, and fire drills occur regularly. As stated in the Health and safety at work act 1974 "All establishments should have written emergency procedures... an accident book for accurate recording of all incidents requiring first aid." (BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN PG 79) Emergency procedures are written and clearly displayed in more than one place. There is an accident book so that all incidents can be recorded; it is regularly reviewed to see if there is a particular area for concern. Children are encouraged to act sensibly and are regularly told what is expected of them in the setting. There are strict procedures for dealing with spillage of bodily fluid; for

example gloves are always worn and it is discarded of appropriately. All members of staff ensure that any door or gate that leads outside is closed, and any visitors to the setting are asked to fill in a visitor's book. Children love to explore, so staff in the setting try their best to make everywhere the children can get to, as safe as possible to avoid accidents. Most importantly responsible adults constantly supervise the children.

Each child in the setting has their own individual needs, but all of them have the same basic physical and health needs. For example every child needs fresh air and appropriate facilities for toileting and washing hands, the children are never told not to go to the toilet and windows are frequently opened during a day for fresh air. Some children get tired quicker than others do so in the setting there is an area where there are soft mats and blankets, where the children go to be quiet or sleep. Children need space to move around so they can develop their gross and fine motor skills, in the setting there is a lot of space between tables and there is a large outdoor play area. Children should be allowed water whenever they want it; a jug of water is kept full in every room in the setting.

It is important to provide children with a balanced diet because it gives them all the nutrients they need to keep them growing at the right speed. Some foods also help concentration, for example fish is a good "brain food", a balanced diet also helps keep children healthy and if a child is healthy they can do more exercise which will help them to be fit aswell as healthy. The child care worker in the setting can help children to explore different foods by involving them in the choosing and preparation of food. The child care worker has a responsibility to keep the area food is handled in clean and hygienic, also to make sure children with individual dietary needs are catered for suitably. By making healthy food look interesting, children will feel more inclined to try it, for example carrot sticks and cherry tomatoes look colourful and will interest children. If a care worker knows that a child doesn't like a certain food, they will not try to make the child eat it, children should be allowed to choose what they want to eat, but by having many different healthy foods out, it will encourage them to eat healthily. Snack times are good times for learning, as the children can try food from different cultures and learn about them aswell. Children can also learn about where foods come from and how they are made or grown.

This is an appropriate day's menu for a 4-year-old child:

BREAKFAST Cornflakes with milk,
Diluted orange juice.

LUNCH Cheese and broccoli bake with green beans
Vanilla ice cream with mixed berries

DINNER	Tuna pasta Pineapple in own juice
SNACKS/ DRINKS	Pitta bread, apple and pear slices Toast fingers with grapes and red pepper. Milk and water.

If there were a vegetarian or vegan in the setting, substitutes would be used. Similarly, if there were a child from a different culture that couldn't eat a certain food, it would be replaced by a suitable food.

The adult in a nursery setting has many responsibilities; one is to supervise the children at all times, to make sure they are safe and playing happily. The adults promote the children's imagination and further their play in order to work towards their objectives. The equipment and environment must be kept to an acceptable standard of cleanliness and tidiness; this is another responsibility of the adult. The adults also ensure that every child has access to all of the facilities in the setting, regardless of race, gender or any factor that makes them a minority. The staff in the setting work as a team, it is important to work as a team because everything runs more smoothly if the staff work together. Teamwork is good because each person has strengths and weaknesses that will be balanced out by others', also staff can support and even criticise to help each other. Working becomes more consistent working as a team, instead of different ways coming into practice, which could confused children and even parents. Often the best solution is found when working as a team, because everyone has had input. Some settings work within a "multi-disciplinary team, with representatives from a number of other professional groups." (BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN PG 59) An advantage of working within a multi-disciplinary team is that different professionals can help to provide a good pathway for children to work along to achieve their best, and fulfil their potential.