



## **DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S SPIRITUAL AND EMOTIONAL GROWTH**

**(The policy for physical development is intimately connected to this policy)**

### **Our intent is:**

- To help children to identify themselves as valued members of a secure group from which they can grow into confident, aspiring adults.
- To foster the spiritual, moral and emotional growth of each child as an individual and as part of a wider community.

At Educare Small School we believe that if we are to make a difference to the society of the future we must help our children to grow and develop with the appropriate attitudes and values. The values of respect, fairness, honesty and responsibility underpin everything we do.

We believe that a balance and focus of the body and mind is important to enable young children to learn and develop. We consider that children need to be relaxed, calm and confident before they take on new learning. We are not only concerned with what children learn but the way in which they learn it. This strand of our curriculum is given equal time and we value all opportunities that arise to focus on it from the Kindergarten through to the oldest children.

We actively teach children how to name and identify their emotions and how to take time to self-regulate, recognising that mental health and emotional well-being are essential prerequisites to learning and vital skills for life.

### **In order to achieve this:**

- We value every child and adult for their contribution to the school.
- We take every opportunity to enhance and boost children's self confidence and self esteem.

- We use the principles of the Alexander Technique
- Alexander teachers are part of our team.
- As part of every school day, we use simple movement exercises, some unique to the school and others from a variety of disciplines. These are movements and activities designed to support physical, emotional and mental health.
- We all learn how to relax into a short period of constructive rest every day.
- We encourage an awareness of nutritional and physical wellbeing.
- We encourage staff and adults involved with Educare to enhance and develop their own physical and spiritual wellbeing.

**The following activities are organic and change and grow with time and need, they form an important part of the school day and children understand why they are in place.**

### **Circle Times:**

Circle times are used frequently and especially when the whole school joins together. They give everyone an opportunity to speak and interact with each other and allow everyone to feel valued and important. Circles are used to celebrate occasions and successes and to decide issues, they are also used to teach skills which will help children communicate and interact with each other and the wider world.

### **The Alexander Technique:**

The Alexander Technique teaches us

- How to be present.
- How to focus.
- How to be peaceful in our bodies and minds.
- How to find good posture
- How to balance movement and stillness.
- How to find time, space and ease

Alexander in Education helps children to learn more happily and effectively. It helps classroom teachers to more effectively manage themselves in the classroom and beyond. This helps to reduce, manage and even eliminate stressful situations. It supports everyone's mental health.

As a result of our work with our Alexander Teacher, the principles of the Technique run through the school day. We give children an awareness of what constitutes good use and how to maintain it in an environment which is designed to encourage it. We do this in the following ways:

- By using The Ready List
- Teachers encourage children to think about how they are going to carry out a task before they do it.
- The Alexander teacher works with children in groups and as individuals.
- The Alexander teacher works with staff so that they learn alongside their children.
- School furniture has been reduced to a minimum. As far as possible, any school furniture is at the correct height and position for each child. Children are encouraged to use the floor.

### **The Movement Circle:**

The school day starts with the Movement Circle. This represents a coming together as a group and is designed to help children in a variety of ways, including: becoming calmly organised, gaining focus and developing coordination. By the end of Movement Circle, everyone is ready to play and learn.

### **Quiet Time:**

After lunch, the whole school takes part in Quiet Time. This is a short period of constructive rest which aims to calm and re-focus each child before the afternoon. As children grow older we introduce ways to meditate, reflect and visualise.

### **Healthy Food and Water policy**

Evidence shows that water helps healthy brain and body function and that the food we eat can affect the way that children learn and behave. We encourage parents to provide a balanced packed lunch which their children will enjoy and eat. We make the sharing of food and the coming together as a group a pleasurable and social occasion in a comfortable and calm environment.

### **Adult Health and Wellbeing:**

Educare values the health and wellbeing of its adults because it has a direct impact on our children. We accommodate all adults who need time to talk or discuss issues.

**Educare Small school believes that when childhood education is a shared responsibility between parents, teachers, community members and the children themselves, it is the beginning of a lifelong process which allows each child to develop his or her potential as a**

**whole person. A holistic approach to education is fundamental to our philosophy.**

**This policy was last reviewed March 2025 and will be reviewed again in March 2026.**