Dear Parents and Carers,

The children have all settled amazingly well given the wider circumstances around Covid and we would like to thank you for your continued support and understanding with this.

Now that they are familiar with the staff and Nursery/Nest routines, the children are busily getting on with their learning through play and so after half term we will begin to make more in-depth observations in order to identify their individual learning styles and needs.

The particular observation method we use at Homerton is called ‘Planning in the Moment’. Planning in the moment is exactly what a responsive parent does every day with their child, it is also exactly what a skilful practitioner has always done. Every time an adult looks and listens to a child they are assessing and planning how to respond. The adult will be considering whether they can add anything in the moment to benefit the child and move them forward in their learning. If so, they will respond and interact accordingly.

How do we do this?

The nursery setting is organised so that each child can decide where to go, inside or outside, which resources to use, whether to be alone or with others and for how long they want to pursue an activity. By doing this they become deeply involved in their task and progress is happening constantly. However their level of involvement may drop for a variety of reasons: they may not know what to do or how to do something, or how to use a piece of equipment , another child may be disrupting their play or they may need something adding. When this happens, the child will seek help either from another child or an adult. This is when a skilful practitioner will step in and assess what is needed for the child to carry on to their ‘Next step’. This is what we would call a teachable moment. We will also be looking at the way in which each child learns and demonstrates ‘The Characteristics of Effective Learning’.

We would also appreciate and value your support in this process as you of course know your child best and there are skills which they may be confident to use in their home environment but not at Nursery. Each child will be given a period of time – a week or two weeks every term (dependent on how long they are in the setting) during which they will be a ‘focus child’ when practitioners will observe them. The week before your child’s focus time, we will send home a sheet for you to fill in which will help us learn about their current interests and what is happening in their lives at the moment so we can decide how best to support and develop their learning.

Following your child’s time as a focus child you will be given a paper copy of the observations we have made, including photographs so that you can share and celebrate your child’s learning with them. A copy will also be put in their Special Book which you will be given to keep at the end of your child’s time at Homerton.

We hope that you enjoy being involved in this process and please ask us if you have any questions.

If you would like to learn more about Planning in the Moment there is a book available, written by Anna Ephgrave and you will find information on The Characteristics of Effective Learning if you search *Development Matters in The Early Years Foundation Stage.*