

# Newport Infant School

## Early Years Policy

Date of Policy Creation	Spring Term 2013
Policy Lead	Governing Body
Date of Policy Adoption by Governing Body	March 2013
Frequency of review	Three yearly
Review Due	Spring Term 2016

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At Newport Infant School we aim to offer the best possible environment for children to learn and to prepare children for life in a diverse society and to view learning as a life long pursuit. All aspects of the curriculum and a child's education are interdependent and inter-related.

## **AIMS**

- To ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- To ensure that no child should be excluded or disadvantaged.
- To ensure that early years experiences build upon what children already know and can do.
- To promote independence, confidence and a sense of responsibility.
- To create a happy purposeful atmosphere.
- To provide active learning experiences, giving children the opportunity to explore practical activities, make decisions independently and promote problem solving skills.
- To provide structured teaching activities which start from what the child already knows, understands and can do.
- To provide equal access to the Early Years Curriculum for each child regardless of race, gender, disability or social group.
- To provide well organised, rich and stimulating experiences.
- To encourage children to explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves.
- To ensure that we work in partnership with parents.

## **PRINCIPLES**

The principles which guide the work of all Early Years practitioners are grouped into four themes:

- A Unique child - every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships - children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and adults
- Enabling Environments - the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- Learning and Development - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

Early Years Education underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting positive attitudes and developing:

- Communication and Language skills.
- Personal, Social and Emotional skills.
- Physical development.
- Reading and Writing.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the World.
- Creative development.

### **Induction and Admission procedures:**

We aim to work in partnership with parents to support each individual child and carefully manage the transition into school:

- School Prospectus.
- Induction meeting with parents held in the term prior to entry with the Head Teacher, Early Years Co-ordinator and Class teacher.
- Admissions form for parents where they provide information about their child.
- Staggered entry - parent and child introduction with Head Teacher providing parent with opportunity to discuss any concerns/worries.
- Home Visit- an opportunity to meet the child in their home environment and share information.
- 'Stay and Play' session - an opportunity for parents and child to visit their class and meet the teacher.
- 'Story time' sessions with the Class teacher to welcome the child with their parent/carer to school.
- Induction sessions for the child to be introduced to their class, peers and teacher.
- 'Open Lunch' for parents and children to share a lunch time session with the rest of the school.
- Liaison between staff and pre-school settings.
- "Reading meeting" held within the first weeks of term to inform parents how they can support their child at home with reading.

The Reception children are admitted into the school in single entry.

### **The Curriculum**

We aim to provide an effective education for young children in the Foundation Stage based on the objectives in the EYFS. The EYFS begins at birth and continues to the end of Reception.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is divided into three prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

And four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematical Development
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts

The Early Learning Goals summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all children should have gained by the end of Reception.

We aim to ensure continuity and progression by building on the learning experiences which children have met during pre-school and prepare them for the National Curriculum.

Teaching methods will accommodate the different ways children learn by planning in a range of different ways to include a multi-sensory practical approach building on the concrete rather than the abstract and to establish an ethos in which individual achievements are valued. Opportunities are planned around the needs and interests of each child.

### **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**

The ways in which children engage with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

#### **Playing and Exploring:**

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

#### **Active Learning:**

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- 

#### **Creating and Thinking Critically:**

- Have and develop their own ideas
- Make links between ideas
- Develop strategies for doing things

The development of language and literacy skills is an on-going process and underpins all learning. We use Jolly Phonics and Letters and Sounds for daily oral/aural activities.

There is a balance of organisation to include whole class, small group, partner and individual sessions/activities. Adult taught activities are led by both the class teacher and class teaching assistant. Other adults work under the direction of the class teacher to support and guide the children's learning.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

To aim to support a positive self image, respect for others, social skills and a positive disposition to learn.

- Self-confidence and self-awareness
- Managing feelings and behavior
- Making relationships

### **Physical Development**

To support the development of coordination, control, manipulation and movement.

- movement and gross motor skills
- co-ordination, balance and fine motor skills
- spatial awareness
- health and self-care
- use of small and large equipment

### **Communication and language**

To develop speaking, listening and understanding skills and to support reading and writing.

- Language for communication and thinking
- Listen to stories
- Respond to others
- Follow instructions
- Express themselves effectively
- Develop own narratives

### **Mathematical development**

To develop understanding of problem solving, Reasoning and number in a range of contexts.

- number (counting, recognizing and ordering)
- Calculating and problem solving skills
- shape, space and measures

### **Understanding the World**

To support the development of knowledge, skills and understanding to make sense of the world.

- People and communities
- Technology
- The world

### **Expressive Arts**

To support curiosity and exploration and share their thoughts, feelings and ideas.

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative - express ideas through design and technology, art, music, dance and role-play

The curriculum is interrelated and interdependent and one experience may provide a child with opportunities to develop across several areas of learning.

Within the curriculum there is flexibility to accommodate the needs of all children, including those who need additional support or have particular needs or disabilities.

We promote positive attitudes to diversity and difference to help children learn and to value different aspects of their own and other people's lives.

### **The Classroom Environment**

Each classroom is specifically organised for the younger child; to give them space they need for their activities; to encourage them to make choices and develop independence by having equipment and materials readily available; to provide them with resources that inspire and encourage them to initiate their own learning; to provide interactive displays that reflect the community the children come from and the wider world.

The active learning areas include:

Seating for table top activities.  
Construction equipment.  
Creative / wet play area.  
Book corner.  
Writing table.  
Role play.  
Small world play.  
Sand play  
Outside environment with large apparatus and ride on toys.  
Computers and tablets.  
Interactive displays.  
Carpet area for story and whole class work.

Equipment is clearly labelled and during the induction period the children are shown where to select and how to be responsible for the items they need during child initiated and teacher directed tasks.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum provides opportunities for:

- Different starting points from which the children develop their learning, building on what they can already do (see Assessment - Baseline)
- Child initiated activities that promote learning and enable children to learn from each other.
- Differentiated activities to meet the needs of all children including those who work at a level exceeding the requirements of the early learning goals.
- Multi-sensory Learning.
- Exploration of ideas in a planned learning environment, indoors and outdoors.
- Direct teaching of skills and knowledge.
- Creative and imaginative play activities that promote the development of language and concepts.

The Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of Reception. Some children will have exceeded the goals. Others will be working towards some or all of them (emerging).

### **The Role of Play**

Play underpins the delivery of all the EYFS. Children have opportunities to play indoors and outdoors. It is through play that they develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.

Through play children can:

- Explore and develop learning experiences in a safe and secure environment that help them make sense of the world.
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Take risks and make mistakes.
- Communicate and co-operate with others.
- Think creatively and imaginatively.

## **Structured Play**

Play is a very important way into learning. While we recognise the need for children to have free play and explore the toys and equipment, we also see the importance of directed structured play to support learning and to challenge children. The role of the adult is to observe and reflect on children's play and to build on this by planning and resourcing a challenging environment.

**Adult Led** - where the adult interacts with the play and influences and guides its outcome.

**Adult Directed** - where the child engages with an activity set up by the adult.

**Child Led**- where the child makes their own decisions about the kind and outcome of the play from a given range.

**Child Initiated** - where the child has complete decision making and directional control of the play

Examples of play based opportunities:

### **Sand and Water Play**

Pouring skills, emptying skills

Estimating

Capacity

Using appropriate language

Solving problems

### **Role Play**

Extending language

Dramatising roles and/or characters

Play writing

Shopping

Household chores

Taking turns

Playing co-operatively dressing up

Setting a table for eg 4 people - using imagination

Developing counting skills

Sequencing events

### **Bricks and Construction**

Manipulative skills

Imagination

Co-operation

Working to a task

Measuring

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Comparing  
Testing strength  
Technological thinking  
Join and combine

### **Small World Play**

Imagination  
Drama  
Role Play  
Geographical - directions  
Co-operative play  
Language development  
Mathematical - sets of cars, people, animals etc  
Mathematical language - shape, size

### **Small Equipment**

Eg jigsaws, beads  
Co-ordination  
Spatial awareness  
Manipulative skills  
Sequencing  
Pattern making

### **Plasticine, Clay or Dough**

Manipulative skills: rolling to squeezing - change the shape, wet/dry texture

### **Assessment**

Assessment helps us identify what the child already knows, understands and can do; their learning style; how they interact socially; how they respond to the curriculum and their individual learning need. It is used to plan the next steps in a child's developmental progress. It therefore is integral to informing planning.

The EYFS Profile provides a reliable, valid and accurate assessment of individual children at the end of the EYFS. Information on children's progress is shared with parents at Open Evening and in the end of year reports. The EYFS Profile informs parents about their child's development against the ELGs and the characteristics of their learning.

Baseline Assessment in all areas of learning is made during the child's first two weeks in school. Assessment is seen as a continuous process and is made both in planned activities and spontaneously.

**Formative Assessment** (ongoing assessment) is based on observations, photos, work in books and informs everyday planning.

**Summative Assessment** is a summary of all the formative assessments. The EYFS Profile is completed by teacher no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It identifies children who are emerging, expected (achieving a good level of development) and exceeding.

Assessment procedures are in line with the main school and set out in the Assessment Policy.

The EYFS profile supports the transition to KS1 informing Year 1 teachers of the children's learning and their characteristics of learning to ensure teachers plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

### **The Role of Parents**

We aim to work in partnership with parents to support each individual child and ensure no child is disadvantaged. We do this in the following ways:

- Induction process
- Home/school agreement
- Open days/evenings
- Newsletters
- Reading record books
- Jolly Phonics
- Maths homework
- Curriculum webs
- News from Home slips

### **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

Parents are satisfied with their child's development.

Children feel settled, secure and self-confident.

Children are developing a positive attitude to learning.

Children are becoming more independent, are able to follow directed tasks and initiate learning activities for themselves.

Children achieve their individual learning targets.

Children are developing socially and becoming more able to interact and co-operate with their peers and adults.

Staff are aware of the knowledge, skills and understanding the children need to acquire to achieve the early learning goals.

Staff are aware of how the children learn and can identify their individual learning needs.