

**Newborough
C of E
Primary School**

**Early Years
Foundation Stage
Policy**

Policy Approved:

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Early Years Policy

Introduction

It is the privilege of the practitioners working in reception to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience, supporting and challenging the children throughout the day. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/carers, support staff and the reception teachers work effectively together to support children's learning and development. We build strong bonds with our families and strive to involve them in the children's learning.

It is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. At Newborough CE School, the overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five "Every Child Matters" outcomes.

The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles which we embed in provision and approach:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships; there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs promoting a commitment to continuous provision both indoors and out
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

The Early Years Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the **prime areas**, are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific areas** are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Aims

We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his/her full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

Specifically we aim to:

- Plan carefully structured activities and experiences from which children will develop their learning and build upon prior knowledge
- Provide a well-planned and resourced curriculum encompassing the seven areas of learning as specified by the Curriculum Guidance for Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Provide planning opportunities for children to experience the three 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' as stated in the Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Assess achievement and progress using the EYFS Profile
- Monitor each child's progress, celebrate their achievements, address any areas of difficulty and provide the more able with appropriate challenge
- Provide opportunities for all children to succeed in an atmosphere of care where they feel valued
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and pre-school settings
- Allow for opportunities for child initiated learning
- Provide specific provision for children with S.E.N.

The Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. It is paramount that our school is a place where children feel secure and confident, and are open to challenge to develop their independence.

Activities are planned for both the inside and outside; children have the freedom to move between the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the school day. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. These areas are organised to be at child's eye level, clearly labelled and organised. The resources and layout of the areas change according to the children's interests. They are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

Learning Through Play

At Newborough, we support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves.

Provision (Prime and Specific Areas)

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We recognise the importance of provision in this area, as it is instrumental in the development of all aspects of their lives and paramount in children reaching their full learning potential and developing a positive self-image. We offer opportunities for children to work individually or as part of a small or large group and interact positively with both children and adults in these scenarios. Consideration for others is promoted through turn-taking, sharing and listening to others points of view, we teach children to understand what is right and wrong, to respond in accordance with class and school rules and reward positive behaviour.

We plan for the development of independence and self-help skills and reward and praise children for effort, achievements and perseverance to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem. We provide activities and challenges to stimulate, excite and motivate children to take their learning forward. Activities are planned that promote emotional, moral, spiritual and social development alongside intellectual development. We encourage sensitivity towards the needs of others, respect for differing cultures and beliefs and the environment.

Physical Development

Planned opportunities for physical development will improve the skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. Children are provided with a variety of interesting and stimulating activities in games, gymnastics (floor and apparatus based) and dance. It helps children to gain confidence and feel positive about being healthy and active. This promotes a positive feeling of wellbeing. In the learning environment there are opportunities to develop fine motor skills by using a range of tools. Construction is celebrated with photos and display. Healthy eating is promoted through eating healthy food, free fruit is provided for all children at snack time, and meaningful conversations.

Communication and Language

Children are given time and opportunities to express and explore their thoughts, feelings, experiences and emotions in a wide variety of situations, including one to one, small groups and circle times. Adults listening to children should be supportive, patient, encouraging and be good role models themselves orally. A wide variety of interaction with peers and adults is encouraged.

Literacy (Reading and Writing)

Reading is a gateway to future learning and we recognise the importance of nurturing a love of books at an early age. A wealth of stories, rhymes and poems from different genres and cultures are read to the children. Discussion and reflection are actively encouraged. Opportunities for children to look at books independently or share with adults are provided through the class book corner. Children are encouraged to take story books home for parents/carers to read to them on a daily basis. Teaching of reading is introduced at the picture book stage (see English Policy for specific details). A rigorous and daily emphasis on phonic teaching is adopted through Letters and Sounds. Retelling of stories is encouraged through role-play scenarios. Once a week the reception children meet up with their Year 6 reading buddy to share books of their choice and work together on their next steps in reading.

Opportunities for mark-making and emergent writing are offered continuously both in and outdoors. A wide variety of instruments for writing are offered and correct pencil grip is taught and encouraged at all times. Children are taught letter formation in phonics and daily handwriting sessions with whiteboards, letter formation cards and with an adult in the sand and water table area. The children are encouraged to first mark make, then write simple words, moving onto captions and sentences in meaningful contexts. There is always a purpose for their writing and this helps to motivate and challenge the children. They're writing is celebrated and often displayed around the room. Children are encouraged to write for a wide variety of purposes and shown how different features of writing are used.

Mathematics

At this stage much of the mathematical work the children are involved in is of a practical and investigative nature. We follow a mastery approach where we focus on a deep understanding of numbers, including the composition of each number, subsidising (recognising quantities without counting) and automatic recall of number facts. Children are provided with opportunities for matching, sorting, counting, grouping, calculating, estimating and measuring all underpinned by valuable problem-solving and reasoning. Mathematical language is developed through modelling, stories, rhymes and play situations and mathematical understanding is developed through practical activities, games, songs, stories, ICT, investigative and imaginative play and is cross-linked with other curriculum areas. These opportunities enable the children to develop numerical patterns which they can explain and represent. It is imperative that children grasp good number knowledge, without moving on too quickly in the Early Years to enable them future success as they move up the school.

Understanding the World

Crucial knowledge, skills, problem solving, exploring and understanding will help them to make sense of the world. The children are exposed to a range of topics, frequently based on their interests and are taught how to reflect on these experiences, discussing them in depth. We make use of our natural surroundings to look closely at objects and living things in the woodland area, pond, gardens and field. Through learning about festivals and celebrations from all faiths, we encourage children to respect and value different beliefs and encourage visitors to help in this process. This is essential when living in a multi-cultural society, and to help to develop respectful and caring children who appreciate and care for those around them and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design

This area of learning includes art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. At Newborough, we offer a stimulating environment to develop individual creativity and freedom of expression through role-play scenarios and small-world play etc. We provide a range of activities and a variety of media to stimulate and inspire using all the senses and opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensional form. Children experiment and develop skills with musical instruments both natural and man-made and respond to a wide variety of music from a range of cultures to stimulate imagination, movement, creativity and oral response. We also teach a repertoire of songs linked to topics, assemblies and class productions.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

At Newborough we undertake assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the children contribute to the assessment process. Baseline assessments are made using Development Matters and EYFS Profile where appropriate.

Formative assessment

This type of assessment informs everyday planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, video and information from parents. Observations may take the form of a detailed case study on an individual child, a group observation, or a snapshot recorded on a post-it note. Each child has an individual Learning Journal in which this evidence is stored. We plan for observational assessment when undertaking our medium and weekly planning.

Summative assessment

The EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against age related expectations (divided into months). It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It is completed at the end of each term by the class teacher. When requested, the teacher undertakes Local Authority moderation.

Parental Involvement

At Newborough, we acknowledge and value the contribution made by parents. We recognise the parents as the child's first educators. It is important that parents and teachers share information, interests and concerns about their children and we encourage close liaison between home and school. In addition to twice-yearly parents evenings, parents receive an annual progress report. We welcome additional appointments with the class teacher throughout the year to discuss areas of concern. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's education and we welcome parents working in partnership with school in a number of ways:

- Sharing information on the home visit
- Supporting their child with daily reading and weekly phonics homework
- Mystery Readers
- Helping in the classroom and on school visits
- Making contributions towards topic work – loaning of artefacts, bring in babies, giving talks etc
- 'Superstars' displays in cloakroom of recent home learning
- Curriculum and phonic evenings to support learning and progress
- Termly class assemblies and the Christmas nativity play

Parents are kept informed of events, activities etc by way of half-termly newsletters, curriculum maps or specific written correspondence from school.

Pre-School Liaison and Nursery/ Pre-School Transition

In the Summer Term, parents of pre-school children are invited to an induction meeting. This focuses on ways of preparing children for starting school, gives an overview of the curriculum, and explains pre-school visits and new-intake arrangements for the Autumn Term. The class teacher makes visits to the local playgroup and nursery to meet the prospective pupils and liaise with the practitioners. During the school year prior to starting in Reception, we plan for nursery groups to visit the school at different times.

Children are offered two taster sessions [one morning and one afternoon] in their future classroom to familiarise themselves with their teacher, support staff, peer group and class environment in the Summer Term. Videos and pictures of the classroom are shared with parents and children on the school website to allow children to feel familiar with their new classroom environment. Pre-school settings forward children's individual Records of Achievement to the Reception class teacher for viewing, EYFS data is collaborated, any further discussions with nursery key workers are made.

During the first week of term the Reception teacher will visit the pupils and their parents at home. In the second and third week children start school on a part-time basis. This is such an important part of our transition as the children get to spend time with their peers and new teachers in smaller groups building their confidence and settling them into our school routine. On week four all pupils attend full-time, allowances in special circumstances may be made for individual children. During the first few weeks Reception children will have their own separate playtime and class assemblies.

Reception to Year 1 Transition

Reception and the Year 1 teacher have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible. At Newborough School:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the reception year
- Reception practitioners plan for more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer terms, encouraging less dependence on adult support
- Reception children meet the Year 1 teacher during assembly, playtime and other whole school activities during the reception year
- The children in reception receive an 'all about me' envelope from the Year 1 teacher and then return their own 'all about me' envelopes to introduce themselves
- An EYFS Profile end of year class summary is passed on to year 1 teachers
- Reception and Year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- Reception children visit their new Year 1 class and teacher for a morning session in July
- Where possible, the year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Outside agencies inform, liaise and offer a range of support for children starting school. We aim to visit these children in their pre-school settings to discuss arrangements to ensure the best transition for them. On entry and ongoing assessments will also highlight specific areas of need and these will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice. (Refer to the Special Needs Policy for specific details).

High Attaining Children

It is important to us that all children feel challenged and motivated to learn. Those with higher learning potential will be identified both at the start of the year in a baseline and also throughout the year. Challenge is provided in the classroom for all children through differentiated work, specific questioning and targeted groups or 1:1 work. We develop children's reasoning and problem solving skills building their perseverance and resilience, often asking them to explain their understanding in a range of ways, applying their knowledge to varying situations. Children are provided with rich learning opportunities to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding at level of greater depth. These opportunities may include access to targeted problem solving challenges in the continuous provision. Children will be encouraged to discuss their reasoning and recordings with an adult after displaying resilience with the task independently. On occasions, more able children will be presented with the opportunity to work with other children and teach others how to use specific skills.

Safeguarding

Please refer to 'Safeguarding Children' Policy.

Health and Safety

Please refer to 'Health and Safety' Policy.

Equal Opportunities

At Newborough School we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher and EYFS leader, and will be reviewed every three years.