

Policy & Procedure



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

2024 v1

This policy is reviewed as required. It was agreed by the Governing Body of Newcroft Primary Academy on 1st July 2024

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Date: _____

Statutory Policy

Introduction

At Newcroft Primary Academy, we have Pre School setting for 3 and 4 year olds, in addition to our 2 Reception classes. The Pre-School and Reception classes are based adjacent to each other in the EYFS block and are managed by the EYFS leader, who is a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team. The Pre-School is ran on a day to day basis by a qualified teacher as the Pre School Leader.

Pre-School Intent

At Newcroft Primary Academy Pre-School, we offer all pupils high quality first-hand learning experiences, whilst allowing the children to build independence, resilience, creativity and to be aspirational. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community; our children learn to be inclusive and proud of themselves, where they come from and of our school. We offer experiences to develop children's cultural capital and recognise and value diversity in the wider community. The curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning from experiences at home and any previous settings. We guide children to recognise their own strengths and achievements, through experiencing success and developing their confidence and resilience to work towards their areas for development. Throughout their time in Pre-School, the children develop a sense of belonging to our school community, ready for their transition to Reception. We have ambitious targets for children to be Reception ready, meeting age related expectations as shown in development matters. They have the confidence and skills to make decisions and self-evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners. We work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school. Our fundamental aim is to ensure that pupils make excellent progress from their starting points and develop a love of school and of learning.

Pre-School Implementation

At Newcroft Primary Academy, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework. Our curriculum is taught through topic themes, which are enriched with classroom enhancements, opportunities and visitors. Topics are supported by high quality key texts. Our curriculum is flexible and responsive to children's needs and may be adapted, dependent on children's interests. Through our topic themes, we tailor the curriculum to follow children's interests and provide opportunities, support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge, and ensure children meet their next steps. We prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories, key vocabulary and providing time for quality interactions with adults and between peers. Children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books, the school's rigorous approach to reading, and the systematic teaching of early phonics. A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision; Children use and develop taught skills on a daily basis. Children are supported to learn to work together, manage their feelings and ask questions through skilled adult facilitated play.

Pre-School Impact

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children, from their own starting points, make excellent progress from their baseline assessments. Foundation Stage staff use formal and informal observations to make formative assessments, which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace. End of term summative assessment compares children's attainment to age related, on track, expectations using the Development Matters statements.

Reception Intent

In Reception at Newcroft Primary Academy, we offer all pupils high quality first-hand learning experiences, whilst allowing the children to build independence, resilience, creativity and to be aspirational. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community; our children learn to be inclusive and proud of themselves, where they come from and of our school. We offer experiences to develop children's cultural capital and recognise and value diversity in the wider community. The curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning from experiences at home and any previous settings. We guide children to recognise their own strengths and achievements, through experiencing success and developing their confidence and resilience to work towards their areas for development. Throughout their time in Reception the children develop a sense of belonging to our school community, ready for their transition to Year One. We have ambitious targets for children to be National Curriculum ready, meeting age related expectations and the summative Early Learning Goals. They have the confidence and skills to make decisions and self-evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners. We work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential. Our fundamental aim is to ensure that pupils make excellent progress from their starting points and develop a love of school and of learning.

Reception Implementation

At Newcroft Primary Academy, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework. Our curriculum is taught through topic themes, which are enriched with classroom enhancements, trips and visitors. Topics are supported by high quality key texts. Our curriculum is flexible and responsive to children's needs and may be adapted, dependent on children's interests. Through our topic themes, we tailor the curriculum to follow children's interests and provide opportunities, support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge, and ensure children meet their next steps. We prioritise creating a 'language rich' environment through the use of songs, nursery rhymes, stories and providing time for quality interactions between adults and between peers. Children are encouraged to become early readers through enjoyment of books, the schools' rigorous approach to reading, and the systematic teaching of phonics. A vital aspect in the development of essential knowledge and skills is the use of continuous provision. This means that children are using and developing taught skills on a daily basis. The children are supported to learn to work together, manage their feelings and ask questions through skilled adult facilitated play.

Reception Impact

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that children, from their own starting points, make excellent progress from their baseline assessments, both academically and socially. Class teachers and Early Years staff use formal and informal observations to make formative assessments, which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace. End of term summative assessment compares children's attainment to age related, on track, expectations using the Development Matters statements. At the end of their reception year children are assessed in relation to their progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The children leave reception with the skills and attitudes they need to be ready for to move into Year 1 and the National Curriculum.

Introduction to the Foundation Stage

We place a great deal of emphasis into preparing our children to start with us in both via Pre-School or Reception and to welcome their families to our Newcroft family. Our welcome and support programme includes:

Pre-School Induction

Upon application, parents and children are invited to a 'Stay and Discover' session in the setting. This is an opportunity for the children can explore their new indoor and outdoor classrooms and meet the teaching staff they will be working with. The Pre-School manager will explain the routine,

give funding information, share key information and confirm a start date. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss their child. They are provided with a new starter pack which includes important forms and questionnaires about their child.

Reception Induction

During the summer term prior to children starting in Reception we offer the following:

- An induction meeting for all parents to meet the staff, listen to a presentation about the Reception year at Newcroft, tour the school, visit the Reception base and collect their personalised pack for their child. This pack includes important forms, information about school routines, transitional activities, school readiness support, start dates, and opportunities for parents to apply for/ speak to us about Pupil Premium funding.
- Class teachers visit the children in their current pre-school setting (or at home if they do not access childcare) and obtain key information from their key worker. They talk to each child and work through the 'Welcome to Newcroft' induction booklet. This booklet is then left with each setting.
- Class teachers will talk individually to all parents to discuss key information about their child prior to them beginning their Reception year.
- Children will attend, with their parents, a 'Stay and Discover' session, in the Reception base, Where they can explore in their new indoor and outdoor classrooms, meet their new classmates and the teaching staff they will be working with. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss their child.
- All children begin full time in Reception in the August after they turn 4 years old. Newcroft has a full-time transition programme for entry into school during the first week.
- If children attend Newcroft Pre-School we offer an extended transition process during the second half of the summer term.

Curriculum Content

Our school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, alongside Development Matters as a basis for our curriculum. Activities and experiences are shaped by our Early Years team (based on our children), around our knowledge and skills progression map for each area of learning.

There are 7 areas of learning, 3 Prime and 4 specific:

The 3 Prime Areas are:

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

The 4 Specific Areas are:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The Pre-School curriculum is based around the three prime areas with additional work on the four specific areas. The Reception curriculum continues to work on the prime areas but also expands much further on the specific areas.

Our curriculum is also modelled around the Characteristics of Effective Learning, giving children as many experiences and possible, to enable them to explore, enjoy, experience disappointments and thrive in our setting:

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and have a go;

- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements;
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Reading in Pre-School

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum in Pre-School. Texts are carefully selected to engage children with themes, explore new concepts and foster a love of reading. Teachers and support staff read whole class texts and stories daily to children. The Pre-School curriculum topics feature key literature from a wide range of genres that are shared with all pupils through continuous provision and directed learning tasks. A variety of texts are rotated regularly in our classroom book corner. Children also have regular visits to the school library.

Phonics sessions are held daily as a whole class or in small groups. The sessions follow the school's phonics scheme, Success for All Phonics (SFA). Using the First Steps to Phonics programme provides a progressive approach to initial phonics teaching and learning. Children are gradually introduced to phonics by first embedding phonological awareness, focusing on all seven aspects of Phase One phonics.

Reading in Reception

Reading is the heart of our whole school curriculum at Newcroft. We place a great deal of emphasis at all stages of a child's journey through primary school, on reading for pleasure, word recognition and word comprehension. Synthetic phonics is taught rigorously in Reception. Teachers and support staff read whole class texts and stories daily to children. The Reception curriculum topics feature key literature from a wide range of genres that are shared with all pupils through continuous provision and directed learning tasks.

Parents are very much part of this reading focus. We invite parents to a phonics and reading meeting in the early Autumn term to explain our strategies and how they can support and help at home. They are given phonics packs to support them. We have a dedicated phonics and early reading area of our website to support parents throughout the year.

We endeavour to read with all children and change their books weekly in Reception. Parents are asked to support us in reading with their child, at least 3 times per week. Parents are able to use the phonics levelled book (phonetically matched to the phoneme they are learning in their phonics), from our phonics scheme, Success for All Phonics (SFA). This is also available to parents on the on the SFA portal for use at home. We also send a 'library' reading for pleasure book that parents can share with their child to promote enjoyment for reading.

Teaching and Learning Methods

In the EYFS, we ensure that there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities across the day. The interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to complete a task or activity with them; at other times they will participate in a child's activity, extending it where possible. Pupils may work in small groups, larger groups or 1:1 with an adult.

Each day we follow a timetable with set routines in place. We set aside times each day when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional sense, gathered on the carpet as a class, or in smaller groups. In these slots we focus on our topic work, maths, literacy, phonics, and stories. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning: learning as a group, listening to the teacher and to other children, taking turns to answer, sitting still etc.

By the Summer term in Reception, the children will experience more adult directed tasks, and more detailed whole class sessions as they prepare for their transition to Year One.

Learning through Play

In the EYFS learning through play is a fundamental aspect of our approach. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. We provide children with stimulating, active play experiences, in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child-initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities, is very important to us. Play activities may include a mix of:

- Child initiated activities – children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- Adult initiated activities – practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult directed activities – children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

It is often through children's play that we see how much of the learning children have understood and taken on.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS but is not onerous and does not require staff to spend considerable time record keeping. On-going formative assessment forms a crucial part of daily practise in the EYFS at Newcroft. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in EYFS, we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their on-line 'Tapestry' journal. In Reception children will also use writing books and maths folders to evidence their learning.

Reporting in Reception

On entry to Reception, we carry out the Reception Baseline Assessments (RBA) for each child and the school's own observational baseline to gauge the children's on entry levels. Throughout the year, the class teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Senior Leadership Team, showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. At the end of the Foundation Stage, the class teacher completes the EYFS profile for each child. Each child's level of development is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals. Teachers indicate whether children are meeting 'expected levels' of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels 'emerging'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the child's end of year report and is shared with their new Year One teacher, for next steps planning.

Pre-School to Reception Transition

Pre-School and Reception teachers work together to provide an enhanced transition for the children. During the second half of the summer term, we start transition sessions, which include:

- Small groups of children visiting the Reception provision during Reception play time and whole school assemblies.
- Pre-school using the Reception outdoor classroom one morning a week.

- Reception teachers leading story time and circle time in Pre-School.
- Pre-School children regularly visiting Reception teaching staff.

Reception to Year One Transition

Reception and Year One teachers work together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage One as smooth as possible. At Newcroft Primary Academy:

- Children are encouraged to develop independence when dressing and undressing and when organising their personal belongings throughout the Reception year.
- Reception practitioners plan longer more structured activities to be undertaken during the summer term, encouraging less dependence on adult support.
- Reception children meet Year One teachers during assemblies and other whole school activities during the Reception year.
- End of Year assessments against the Early Learning Goals learning are shared and discussed in transition meetings between teachers and support staff.
- Reception and Year One teachers meet to discuss individual needs of all children.
- Reception children have a range of opportunities to visit their new Year One classrooms as well as the Year One teachers visiting the Reception classrooms.

Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that the relationship between home and school is crucial to a child's development and happiness. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and feel comfortable in our setting and encourage parents to speak to us informally through discussions on the playground, phone calls or messages via the home school diary or via WEDUC.

At the start of the school year in the first half term, all parents are invited to their child's first parents evening. At this time, teachers discuss with the parents how their child has settled into school. This time also gives parents the opportunity to raise any concerns or worries that they may have about their child. We invite parents into the settings to work alongside their child, in the Autumn and Spring term. This is a fantastic opportunity for parents to see their child learning, happy and settled in their setting.

At Newcroft, we use the on-line learning journey 'Tapestry'. All parents have a unique password that allows them to contribute to their child's journal and make comments about things they have done in school. We only record key moments in pupils progress on Tapestry, to support staff in making ongoing formative assessments. The Tapestry record is an opportunity for parents to experience taste of what life is like in EYFS; is not a journal of a child's day, which the school deem to be workload heavy for staff. Our staff instead focus their time on the children, helping them to achieve their best. There are many other opportunities for parents to 'get involved' with that is happening including: workshop sessions, open mornings, half termly newsletters and website updates.

Health, Safety and Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, happy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We are a 'healthy school.' Our children receive free fruit from the Government scheme, as a snack each day at school. All children in Reception are offered a free school lunch, but are also given the opportunity to bring in a healthy packed lunch from home. We are able to cater for food allergies.

Staff meet their safeguarding duties, set out in the Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. Mrs Sara Aukland (Head teacher) is the school's Designated Safeguarding Leader, supported by a team of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Members of staff use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in Reception. These photographs may be used in children's books and on 'Tapestry', in class displays, and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs. Staff follow the Symphony Learning Trust ICT Acceptable Use policy.

We take all accidents seriously log all incidents (see First Aid policy and Accident, Incidents and Near Misses). We are able to accommodate pupils with medical needs, as outlined in our medical needs policy. Pupils who need regular medication may need a Care Plan to be written for them, in partnership with parents.

At Newcroft, we encourage all children to start school without nappies but can support children struggling with this. We acknowledge that young children often have 'accidents' have stocks of spare clothes and change anyone who needs it. For those who have persistent accidents or who need a significant amount of support in changing, an intimate care plan may be written for them, in partnership with parents.