



Newnham Croft Primary School

Vision

At Newnham Croft our children are at the heart of everything that we do. We believe that Newnham Croft is a special place – caring and inclusive – where the guiding principles are teamwork and respect for all. Newnham Croft is an aspirational school, where learning is exciting, challenging and creative. We aim to foster a sense of self belief and purpose in our children to equip them for the opportunities that life presents.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Policy confirmed by the Teaching and Learning Governing Body Committee of Newnham Croft Primary School on:

Date:

Signature:

At Newnham Croft we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage (EYFS) describes the phase of education from a child's third birthday (encompassing their time at pre-school) until the end of the reception year when the child reaches 5 years old. The EYFS learning goals set out what most children are expected to achieve by the end of the Reception year.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings. <http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-2014/>

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
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning (see below), using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and within the wider context
Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skills across a number of learning areas.

Three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

Children are also supported through the 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

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Characteristics of Effective Learning We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties; and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to think about and develop their own ideas; make links between ideas and develop strategies for achieving their aims.

Our EYFS team writes long term and medium term plans using the EYFS framework based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas and builds on the interests of the children. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS, with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we take into account the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

The Learning Environment -The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc. Children have access to both inside and outside area across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor learning space known as the Wild Garden. We are also a Forest School. Being outdoors offers opportunities for achieving their aims in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, and these are shared with parents. In the Autumn and Spring terms, parents are invited to attend a parent/teacher consultation.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide parents with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. This information is also shared with the Year 1 teacher who will be receiving each child.

Parents as Partners and the Wider Context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care.

Parents/carers contribute to their child's learning both at home and in school. Parents/carers are welcome to join the class each week to share books and to accompany the children on visits during the term. We value contributions from parents/carers regarding home languages, festivals, culture and experience. The children enjoy sharing their learning during whole school events such as open afternoons.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on visits and inviting members of the community into our setting.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Newnham Croft, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and with outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language therapists. Please see our separate policies on Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy; Inclusion, Equality and Community Cohesion Policy; Policy Statement on Equality and the Newnham Croft School Disability Plan.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare are paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, and follow set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Child Protection and Educational visits.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries. Children attend introductory sessions to the Reception classes to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. In the first weeks of the Autumn term, staff visit children at home to allow for a friendly meeting with their new teachers in their own environment. This also allows for parents to raise any questions they may have regarding starting school. Following this, children start school on a part-time basis for 3-4 weeks, allowing for gentle transition into the school routines, and also enabling the staff to develop knowledgeable and supportive relationships with the children.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children. The children visit their new class and teacher during the summer term in preparation for the new school year.

During the autumn term the Year 1 curriculum is adapted according to the needs of the children.