

Newnham Croft Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Information Booklet

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to Newnham Croft Primary School. We look forward to meeting you on many occasions in the future. We hope you will enjoy sharing with us the pleasure that your child experiences as they learn in our Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage curriculum is fundamental in preparing your child for all their later learning. Through well-planned play and structured activities, your child will be encouraged to learn and develop the skills they will need to grow physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Within a safe environment, we plan to teach your child effectively, and promote your child's all round development through the provision of a balanced and broadly based curriculum that responds to their needs and interests.

A unique child

At Newnham Croft Primary School we believe every child is a unique individual with their own characteristics and temperament. We understand that your child will progress and develop in individual ways and at varying rates and we ensure that learning is tailored to suit your child's needs. Discussion between you and your child's class teacher is an invaluable tool to ensure that your child has the best start to their time at Newnham Croft Primary School.

Parents as partners

Partnership with parents is an important part of education. Children learn best throughout school when parents and teachers work together. You are your child's first and most important teacher. Talking and playing with your child as much as possible is the best way that you can help them to learn and develop. When your child starts our Foundation Stage we will ask you to complete a booklet called *All About Me*. The information you provide about your child's level of confidence, interests and development is valued and will help us to understand your child better. We also want to know if your child has a medical condition, disability or special educational need. This is important so that we are able to plan ahead for your child to be properly supported and fully join in the life of the school. We hold parent/teacher consultations several times throughout the year, but if you would like to meet with us at any time appointments can be made. A written report is produced for you at the end of the summer term. We will also keep you informed through school newsletters, the school website, our notice board and parent mail system.

Play and exploration

In the early years of your child's life, play is crucial to their development and learning. Playing and talking are the means through which young children learn about themselves and the world around them. At

Newnham Croft children in the Foundation Stage are offered a varied provision. We have an outdoor learning environment, which is available everyday – whatever the weather and a wildlife area! The children learn through a carefully planned programme of structured play.

Each day the children are able to choose from a range of play activities. They will be encouraged to work with staff at small group ‘focus’ activities and will all participate in some short, whole class activities. Staff work alongside the children and are able to adjust teaching to meet the needs of individual children. As children progress through the Foundation Stage the level of focussed activities and whole class teaching gradually increases, although learning through play is still central. Planned activities provide opportunities for children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience and children are encouraged to become independent and confident.

Through the curriculum, children work towards Early Learning Goals, within the seven areas listed below. Learning is structured around the ‘characteristics of learning’. This means that children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking, which takes place both indoors and outside.

Areas of learning and development

We follow “The Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage” and work towards a set of statements called the “Early Learning Goals”. This curriculum helps us plan for the developing needs of each child and acknowledges that the needs of a 3 year old are very different from the needs of a 5 year old. Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through 7 areas of learning and development.

Children will usually develop the **3 prime areas** first:

Communication and language; Physical development and Personal social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for your child’s healthy development and future learning. At this stage in their development special attention is paid to speaking and listening as this lays down a solid foundation for future and further learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in 4 specific areas: ***Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the world and Expressive arts and design.*** These seven areas help us plan the learning environment, activities and experiences.

Communication and language

Your child will learn to listen attentively in a range of situations. They will listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They will also follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They will answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

Physical development

Your child will have a chance to develop their physical skills using climbing equipment, bikes and small

equipment such as balls and beanbags. Holding a pen or pencil needs considerable co-ordination and practice in making small movements with hands and fingers and therefore we place great emphasis on activities which allow children to develop these skills. We will also support the children in developing an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, Social and Emotional Wellbeing

We aim to develop children's personal and social skills through a structured programme of experiences and support which will help them to develop a positive sense of themselves and others. We aim to support children's emotional well-being to help them know themselves and what they can do.

Literacy

To prepare your child for a world full of print in all its forms we aim to provide meaningful experiences to improve children's competence in communicating, speaking and listening, reading and writing. The children will be given a wide range of opportunities and encouragement to develop their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes.

Mathematics

Maths enters all areas of children's learning and we aim to give the children meaningful contexts in which to develop their mathematical skills through practical and fun activities. We draw on a wide range of resources and the whole school environment to support the teaching and learning of Mathematics.

Understanding the world

We use ICT throughout the curriculum, including the use of our computer suite, ipads, cameras, floor controlled robots and voice recording equipment. Our extensive and well developed outside area allows us to explore the curriculum and extend children's learning in exciting and challenging ways. Learning will be supported by offering opportunities for the children to use a range of tools safely: encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environment and in real-life situations.

Expressive arts and design

Creativity is an exciting and stimulating way for children to explore and learn about the world around them, developing their ideas through music, dance and visual arts.

Progress

Throughout the Foundation Stage your child's progress in all 7 areas of learning will be continually assessed through observation and ongoing record-keeping. This leads to the final assessment made at the end of the Foundation Stage, called the "Foundation Stage Profile". We assess how the children are learning and developing, noting their Characteristics of Learning, through regular observations. We use information that we gain from these observations to document their progress and where this

may be leading them. All of our ongoing assessments help us to plan to meet your child's needs and to carry them forward in their learning and development. We also welcome any information that you can provide about your child's learning at home.

Learning Journey

Throughout the Foundation Stage your child's work will be recorded via an electronic Learning Journey called 'Tapestry'. This includes pieces of work, observations, photographs and assessments of both self-initiated and teacher led activities. You will be able to access your child's Learning Journey online and make your own highly valuable contributions toward this. Your child's Learning Journey helps us to celebrate together his/her achievements and developments.

Home learning support

Before starting school, you can support your child's learning and development in many ways. When starting school your child will be encouraged to be personally independent. You can help by:

- Encouraging your child to dress and undress themselves. Try to allow a reasonable amount of time to do this. Creating a dressing up box at home will help by making dressing and undressing fun.
- Encouraging your child to tidy up toys, books and games after using them

You can help your child's social and emotional development by:

- Talking with your child and encouraging your child to talk with other children and other adults
- Encouraging and supporting your child to play co-operatively with other children

You can help your child with the early stages of reading, writing and mathematics by:

- Encouraging an enjoyment of books and stories; visiting the local library and sharing stories with your child.
- Encouraging your child to join in with rhymes and songs.
- Providing your child with a variety of writing equipment to encourage drawing and writing skills, labelling your child's pictures with his or her name and perhaps some writing. Your child may want to copy your writing if he or she is ready – lower case letters other than for initial letter of name.
- Helping your child with simple mathematical skills, e.g. matching and sorting everyday objects, counting objects or playing with water at bath time; pouring, filling and emptying, handling money when shopping and singing counting rhymes together such as '1,2,3,4,5 once I caught a fish alive'.