



Newtown C of E Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Ratification Date:	April 2019	Signed:	Miss Emma Howlett (HEADTEACHER) Mrs Janet Cane (CHAIR OF GOVERNORS)
Reviewed	November 2023	Signed:	Mrs Emma Howlett (HEADTEACHER) Mrs Glynis Wright (CHAIR OF GOVERNORS)
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School Vision

At Newtown C of E Primary School, our motto is enriched and sustained by our Christian values of **Love, Courage and Friendship**, rooted in the teachings of the Bible. We are guided by the call to *“love one another as I have loved you”* (John 13:34), *“be strong and courageous... for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go”* (Joshua 1:9), and *“a friend loves at all times”* (Proverbs 17:17).

As a school at the heart of an evolving community, we warmly welcome children and families from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. We are enriched by the unique qualities each child brings and value the talents and perspectives that help us grow together.

We are an aspirational school serving our community. We seek to know, understand and celebrate every child, nurturing their individual strengths and talents. We prepare our children to become confident, responsible global citizens in an ever-changing world, guided by our core values of love, courage and friendship.

Through **Love**, we show kindness, compassion and generosity, building a community where everyone feels safe, welcomed and valued. Through **Courage**, we persevere, meet challenge with confidence, and stand up for what is right with honesty and grace. Through **Friendship**, we grow together — encouraging one another, celebrating each other’s gifts, and looking to the future with hope and aspiration.

We live out these values by:

- Being a caring, welcoming and inclusive Christian community where staff, pupils, parents and governors work together in a safe and supportive environment, inspired by *“Above all, love each other deeply”* (1 Peter 4:8)
- Promoting the welfare and dignity of every child, safeguarding them from harm — including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying — in accordance with statutory guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Department for Education)
- Providing a rich, engaging curriculum that equips children with the knowledge, skills and character to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens, reflecting Christian teachings and British Values
- Building strong, positive partnerships with parents, the church and the wider community, and encouraging participation in local, national and global initiatives

- Fostering our Learning Behaviours of Resilience, Focus, Independence, Self-Regulation, Respect and Boundaries, encouraging children to act with integrity, perseverance and kindness in all they do

At Newtown, we want every child to know they belong, are cherished, and are capable of great things. Through **Love, Courage and Friendship**, we grow minds, shape futures and journey together in hope.

Principles

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up (DfE 2021).

The statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage states the four guiding principles that should shape practice in the early years.

These are:

- 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** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We believe that it is important to:

- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that fosters the intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children
- Ensure that all children have access to the curriculum and make progress commensurate with their developing abilities, irrespective of their gender, ethnic, social or religious background or special educational needs
- Enable children to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding that prepare them for continuing education
- Enable children to make an effective transition from home to school and to Year 1 and beyond

Aims

Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances (EYFS Framework, 2021). At Newtown CofE Primary School, we believe that all children should be provided with high-quality

education and opportunities that will enable them to become confident, enthusiastic, curious and independent learners. It is fundamental that we develop children's desire and love for learning.

At Newtown, we ensure that learning is irresistible, engaging and will challenge and support all children whatever their starting points. We are committed to supporting the personal and emotional needs of our children and this remains at the heart of our curriculum approach.

Our Early Years curriculum provides personalised learning, development and support. We continually observe, assess and plan so that our provision and practice is tailored to the needs and interests of the children. Our priority is that our provision provides a high level of engagement and active learning, through an enabling environment, high quality interactions, a range of skills-based activities, real life contexts and following the children's interests.

Learning and Development

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.

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

And four specific areas of learning

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

Achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning is through the **characteristics of effective learning**

- Playing and Exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically

In addition to the use of the Statutory Framework for the EYFS and guidance in 'Development Matters' to support our curriculum planning across the seven areas of learning, we create aspirations that we feel are important to teach our current cohort of children.

Our curriculum aspirations are based on our observations of the children within play, conversations with parents, pre-school transitions and using our knowledge of our local community and child development knowledge. This list is not exhaustive and our planning, practice and provision will respond to the current needs, next steps and interests of each

cohort of children.

An enabling environment, which is organised to meet the ever-changing needs and interests of the unique child is fundamental. In order to provide children with exciting, rich and irresistible learning opportunities, at Newtown our provision, planning and practice continually changes. A carefully planned, stimulating, purposeful and well-organised environment, both indoors and outdoors, can give children the confidence to explore and learn in a secure and safe, yet challenging space.

At the heart of our Early Years practice is play. We believe that play-based experiences enable children to make connections and develop new skills, in a context that is relevant and meaningful to them. Children become deeply engaged when they have autonomy and they are able to choose what they would like to do. If children are engaged, then this is when learning and development happens. Highly skilled staff observe, interact and respond appropriately in order to move learning on through play.

Maths, Literacy and Phonics skills will be delivered through discrete sessions and embedded through play within continuous and enhanced provision, as well as adult initiated activities where appropriate. At Newtown, we have adopted a strong Key Person approach and objectives will also be taught, through our 'Family Time'.

Observation Assessment and Planning

As part of our early years practice, we are guided by the belief that children's interests are in the moment and need to be responded to immediately to gain the full value of the child's curiosity. Through observation, high-quality interactions and assessments, adults are able to respond sensitively and appropriately to plan next steps accordingly.

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. "Assessment is about individual children and their learning, not rows and rows of data. It's about knowing which children are getting on well, so that they can continue to be challenged and stimulated. It's about everyone knowing in a setting which children might be at risk of poor progress, and giving them extra help when it's needed." (Julian Grenier, 2021)

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process at Newtown. Examples of this are:

- Observing and interacting with the children
- Objective led planning
- Tapestry
- Weekly meetings to discuss the children's interests, needs and next steps
- Scrapbook to show the children's learning journey throughout the year

There are two statutory assessment points throughout the year:

The Reception Baseline Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks

in which a child starts reception.

Assessment at the end of the EYFS

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1.

Quality of learning

Effective learning takes place where pupils:

- Feel secure, valued and confident
- Are interested in what they are doing and are making appropriate progress
- Are given first hand experiences within which they can explore and experiment
- Enjoy their learning, which is rewarding and satisfying
- Can learn from each other and through spontaneous interaction with peers and adults
- Can practise, consolidate and extend previous learning and experiences
- Are involved in practical activity, enquiry and purposeful play
- Are using the outside and indoor environment
- Can talk about what they are learning
- Are engaged in purposeful play which moves their learning forward
- Follow a routine which flows smoothly with minimal transitions

Quality of teaching

- Effective teaching takes place where: -
- Staff have high aspirations for all children
- Staff have a clear understanding of child development and how children learn
- Staff plan, co-operate and work as a team
- Activities have clear learning aims and objectives and are purposeful and clearly planned
- There is a balance of self-chosen, adult initiated and directed activities
- Children's play is supported and extended sensitively
- There is a good use of space, materials and equipment
- Staff are flexible and explore opportunities that occur spontaneously
- Planning reflects children's interests and builds upon previous experiences
- Staff have high expectations and knowledge based on each child's ability
- Independence in learning is extended in a secure environment
- Children have full access to and use of the inside and outside environment
- Staff work directly with the children (key person scheme is embedded into this system)

Working in Partnership

At Newtown, we believe that it is vital to build strong working relationships with home and the wider community in order to offer a holistic approach to the education of each child. We value our partnerships and endeavour to actively maintain these by sharing information, ideas, expertise and our knowledge within our team and with parents, carers,

colleagues and other professionals.

Within our role of enabling partnerships we: -

- Meet weekly as the EYFS team to discuss assessments, planning, individual children, research
- Work with the local community to develop learning opportunities within the curriculum
- Parents and carers are actively encouraged to have a full part in their child's education.
- There are frequent and regular opportunities for parents to come into school and work with us. e.g. stay and play, coffee mornings, special days.
- Hold regular parent workshops on relevant areas of their children's development e.g. reading, phonics, maths
- Encourage relevant learning tasks to be continued at home
- Operate an 'open door' policy, whereby parents can come and discuss concerns and developments and celebrate successes in an informal manner
- Parents are informed of what is going on through Tapestry, the noticeboard, suggestions and regular messages home
- Online learning journals are maintained and available to parents
- We contribute to the school website to give parents access to school activities

Health and Safety

- Risk assessments are in place for the indoor and outdoor Early Years environment
- The children are encouraged to use the opportunities provided for supervised risk taking, as this provides safe, secure but adventurous and stimulating opportunities for the children to learn both independently and with adult support. This gives confidence and allows activities to be approached with a positive attitude

SEND and inclusive practice

In the EYFS we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes, to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn alongside their peers. At Newtown, we provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs. We recognise that some children may have additional needs that may require particular intervention and support especially if this has been identified as part of our transition process with our parents and pre-schools. At all times, we will work alongside each child's parents and any relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and help the child and their families to access the support they need. All children will be given a settling in process when joining the EYFS according to their individual needs. However, We rarely place children on our SEND register in EYFS as we recognise that the children are all developing at an individual level. Where we believe a child may have additional needs that have not previously been identified, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish the child's needs and to secure any action that may be required.

Transition to Newtown

At Newtown, we believe that transition is a 'process' not an 'event'. Planning for a smooth and thorough transition starts as soon as possible, and well in advance of the September start date. We endeavour to build relationships with pre-school children and their parents and carers that are new to our school.

To ensure the best transition we: -

- Offer weekly 'ready for school' sessions for our new intake, their parents/carers and preschool staff
- Share information about our school at the new parents meeting
- Visit all preschool feeder settings to meet the children in a familiar setting and gather transition information
- Use written information from preschools to inform early planning
- Visit all children and parents at home to share and gather important information
- Share information with key adults for children with additional needs
- Run a key person system to ensure all children are nurtured as they begin, and throughout their journey in Year R

Transition between Reception and Year 1

- Reception teachers to adapt timetable throughout the year to support readiness for Year 1
- An EYFS profile/Characteristics of Effective Learning is moderated and discussed with the Year 1 teachers
- Year 1 staff spend time in Early Years getting to know the children and their needs e.g story swap, observations
- Year R and 1 staff to moderate with one another