



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Setting: Castle Newnham School

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A. RATIONALE

At Castle Newnham we aim to provide an excellent standard of education for all of our pupils and this begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our EYFS policy is designed to support our children to become independent learners through the use of continuous provision. We aim to provide an environment that is safe, fun, happy and inspiring for our pupils and help them to achieve their full potential as individuals. We encourage exploration, resilience and questioning to help build a strong foundation for their future learning. Teaching and learning is inspired by our CORE Values - Community, Opportunity, Respect, Excellence.

B. AIM

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

C. PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 EYFS Framework

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

D. PROCESSES

Structure of the EYFS

Reception: 90 full time places split across 3 classes and lead by a full time EYFS phase lead.

EYFS Lead: Jo Kearney-Collins

We offer a continuous provision approach to learning for the duration of Reception. The children have continuous access to high quality resources which will allow them to flourish as both independent and collaborative learners. We enhance what is on offer on a regular basis linked to the children's learning and interests. This is done to extend and support the learning of the children. The day is weighted towards child initiated learning activities, promoting ownership of independent learning.

Each Reception class has their own classroom, in which they have a designated carpet space used at key times throughout the day e.g. register, intentional teaching, story time. It is all open plan and has easy access to the outdoor learning environments. During some points of the day, the doors linking the classrooms are also opened allowing children to share the space across the classes. The children in reception are encouraged to move between the three rooms freely.

Areas are clearly set up in each classroom. Each class has their own maths, writing and reading areas. Children have access to many high quality resources that are clearly labelled with both words and pictures to allow the children to tidy up after themselves - encouraging independence.

Access between the classroom and the outdoor area is always on offer. Children are given access to the outdoor learning environment throughout the seasons, whatever the weather. Suitable outdoor clothing is required - waterproof coat/all-in-one, wellies etc. Children are given the opportunities to engage with each other and problem solve. Allowing them to build on these skills now gives them the tools they will need to become independent, successful learners as they progress through the school.

The role of the adult is crucial in the running of continuous provision. Throughout the day they are on hand to model language, the correct use of resources and to provide support and extension for learners. Focus activities (intentional teaching and adult led activities) are delivered by all members of the EYFS team and are assessed using either EvidenceMe, verbal feedback or marking in books (where appropriate). Assessment is informed by our curriculum guidance and checkpoints and next steps are planned for. Adults have access to EvidenceMe throughout the day with the use of tablets and are expected to upload their observations along with a photograph. Observations using Evidence Me are in the moment and relevant for each child. Evidence Me is used in partnership with parents so they can support learning at home and have access to next steps.

During child initiated learning activities the role of the teacher/TA is to observe, extend and interact with the children through questioning and through engaging children in sustained conversations about their learning. Teacher focus groups are also completed each day, these are planned to support the learning and further develop the children’s knowledge and skills as well as further challenge.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. These then cascade into 17 Early Learning Goals which all children in Reception are consistently assessed against.

Within the 7 areas of learning, 3 areas (known as the prime areas) are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The remaining 4 areas are categorised as the specific areas.

<i>Prime Areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communication and language ● Physical development ● Personal, social and emotional development
<i>Specific Areas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Literacy ● Mathematics ● Understanding the world ● Expressive arts and design

Alongside the areas of learning, we also use **The Characteristics of Effective Teaching & Learning** to help our children become effective and independent learners. We use these in focussed, independent and guided tasks. They are:

Playing and Exploring – Engagement
Active Learning – Motivation
Creating and Thinking Critically – Thinking

Throughout the EYFS we plan activities to give children rich and exciting learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. At the start of the year it is heavily adult-led and as the year goes on there are more opportunities for child-initiated learning. We aim to progress this by creating young inquisitive learners. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Our outdoor learning area provides an extension of that inside. All the learning areas that are set up are done so to ensure the children are given as many learning opportunities as possible.

Assessment

At Castle Newnham, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes.

During the first 6 weeks of the child's entry into reception practitioners observe and work closely with the children in order to form a baseline assessment of the children's starting points. A baseline judgement is given for each of the 17 Early Learning Goals. These judgments are made using observations from school, alongside discussions with the parents/carers and any information gathered from previous settings.

Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff input observations on to EvidenceMe which is then shared with the parents/carers. EvidenceMe is an easy and accessible tool that enables the user to upload a photo and a comment of the learning they have observed. These can then be linked to the CoETL & The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers which can be uploaded to EvidenceMe and can be commented on by the relevant members of staff.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers as well as Year 1.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development, through the use of EvidenceMe and parent/carer consultations. Parents and/or carers are offered support in developing their own subject knowledge by the staff and are also given home learning tasks which are tailored to their child's needs.

The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Transitions

We know that starting school and moving up into a new class can be a difficult and daunting task for both children and parents/carers. The importance of making these transitions as smooth as possible is of the utmost importance to staff at Castle Newnham. The main transitions covered in EYFS are; Home or Preschool to reception and reception to KS1.

Opportunities are given to the children and parents/carers to visit the school before they apply with us at open mornings/afternoons.

Starting School questionnaires are filled out by the child's parents/carers and Pre-school prior to starting school.

Parents/Carers are invited into school to meet the Headteacher, Deputy Head, Head of Early Years and EYFS Staff for an information session in June. During this visit, they are also given an information pack to prepare them for the start of their school learning journey.

We also offer 2 Stay and Play sessions, usually in July. This allows the children to become familiar with the setting and staff. Parents/Carers are invited to stay for the first session and then leave their child independently for the second session.

Once the settling in sessions have taken place, the classes are then decided upon.

During the Summer term of Reception, we start to introduce the idea of moving to Year 1. The children will have story time in their current classroom with their new teacher as well as visiting their new classroom. They will then spend two transition days with their new teacher.

In the Autumn term of year 1, whole class teaching is kept to a minimum whilst the children adapt to the new National Curriculum expectations. By January of Year 1, the expectation is that all teaching is whole class and children are working independently with some support.

Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

E. MONITORING, ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher and governing body every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy/procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy & procedures	See Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health & Safety Policy
Administering Medicines Policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
Emergency Evacuation Procedure	See Health & Safety Policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for a parent failing to collect a children and for missing children	See Safeguarding Policy
Procedure for Dealing with Concerns and Complaints	See Complaints Policy