'Individual Growth, Individual People'

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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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NEWARK **ORCHARD EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

Introduction

At Newark Orchard School, 'Early Years Foundation Stage' (EYFS) refers to children under the age of 5 and up to the end of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. Children in this group follow the EYFS framework which leads on to the National Curriculum.

The EYFS at Newark Orchard School is based on directions given in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage - Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.' (Published March 2017, effective April 2017)

Progression towards the EYFS principles is the fundamental starting point for establishing the learning pathway for individual pupils.

Our baseline assessments are taken from the assessments given in the child's Education, Health and Care Plan. Individual targets are derived from this detailed assessment and from discussion with the parents/carers, staff at any previous setting and initial observation. Continuous assessment and observation in the classroom further informs planning.

There are 4 themes which underpin the guidance - a unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments and individual rates of learning and development. Identified in the framework are 7 areas of learning 3 prime areas which are most essential for children's healthy development which are, 'Communication and Language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development' There are also 4 specific areas of Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the world and Expressive arts and design which all indicate progress children make towards the 17 Early learning goals. Due to the complex nature of the pupils attending Newark Orchard School from such an early age, the focus is on the 4 themes until the child is at the developmental stage to access individual subjects. This is in line with our curriculum policy which states that children working up to P4 will follow the Engagement profile.

Teachers of EYFS pupils will be expected to be familiar with 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage', and the 'Early years foundation stage profile: exemplification materials', which are a series of materials for practitioners assessing children's development at the end of the early years foundation stage (EYFS). Available from:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eyfs-profile-exemplication-materials

Equal Opportunities

A broad and balanced individual curriculum is developed with reference to the children's diverse needs giving due regard to gender, cultural, religious and linguistic needs.

Toys, equipment, books and music in the classroom reflect a multi-cultural society.

Girls and boys are given equal access to all activities.

Safeguarding

All necessary steps are taken to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare. It is a requirement of all staff to be aware of the Safeguarding policy and to have read part one of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' All staff are also required to sign the 'Disqualification by association' form

In order to meet the requirements of the EYFS, a paediatric First Aider must be present when an EYFS pupil is in school or is taking part in any off premises school activity. (A paediatric First Aider is not currently required due to small number of early years pupils, this only applies if the number of EYFS pupils increases)

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are recognised as the first educators of the child and are welcomed into school to discuss their child on an informal basis and/or work alongside school staff.

The staff make close working partnerships with parents and carers, so that the children feel happy being in school and their parents are confident to leave their children in school for the day.

Home/school diaries are used to exchange information between staff and parents/carers.

There are regular letters to inform parents/carers of school events.

Parents/carers will be encouraged to support the Home-School Agreement.

At the Annual Review Meeting, parents/carers will be asked to consider, after discussion, the Annual PEP for their child which relates to the outcomes detailed in the child's Education, Health and Care Plan.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Four guiding principles 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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year's provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in early year's settings. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

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

Due to the complex needs of the children in Early Years at Newark Orchard School, children will only be supported in the four specific areas when they are developmentally secure to do so. The four specific areas are;

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

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as follows.

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to develop their communication skills in a range of situations.

In the EYFS, children make their first step towards independence as an individual person.

Therefore, they need to learn to communicate with other individuals. Learning language skills through speech, Makaton signs and symbols is the basis for interaction and socialisation with other people and also for learning new skills. The staff work closely with the Speech and Language Therapist to devise appropriate communication programmes.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food. Where appropriate, children will be introduced to a sensory diet to support them to regulate their emotions. Sensory stimuli is also used with pupils to enhance their engagement.

In the EYFS, the children are encouraged to be mobile, are supported in the development of fine and gross motor skills and, where necessary, helped to maintain good posture through the use of standing frames, side lying boards and other physiotherapy equipment. Each child is helped to achieve their next stage of physical development whether it is holding their head up, holding a tool, being aware of their own bodies, learning to walk or running securely and safely.

The staff work closely with the Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapy team to devise physical management programmes, when required.

The children have access to an outside learning area for part of each day. Play activities initiated by children, as distinct from play as directed by adults, are recognised and promoted.

The outside play facility is a vital component of the learning and play experience offered to children in their early years and is used both formally and informally during the school day. Our Specialist Teaching Assistant works with the children on structured programmes of sensory and play throughout the week.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

This area of the curriculum is extremely important in the EYFS. It is concerned with the child's ability to function happily in an environment away from their home. Although some children may have transferred from another setting, for many it will be the first time that they are separated from their parents. The children are helped by the staff to settle in and relate to the adults quite quickly and later to the other children. Each child is seen as a valued member of the class so that a sound self-image and self-esteem is promoted.

The learning of skills through play is seen to be as important as the learning of skills through structured teaching.

Self-help skills are extremely important; therefore each child's targets reflect the aim of achieving independence in feeding, toileting and dressing. These are devised with advice from parents/carers and appropriate health trust team members.

Religious Education (RE) is taught through a cross curricular approach as part of the EYFS curriculum. Children attend collective worship and hear stories and celebrate festivals in assembly, with the other Primary classes and termly with the whole school.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to begin to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading and mark making materials to ignite their interest.

Sensory resources and objects of reference are also used to allow pupils to experience stories

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, recognising, ordering, understanding and using numbers and to find, match and describe shapes

The children in the EYFS are introduced to number work first by exploring a variety of single objects. They are then given smaller objects that can be handled and explored in groups of two

or three. Some children will progress to counting up to ten or more objects and be taught to recognise numbers. They also use sand and water in a variety of forms. They explore form and shape using different bricks, puzzles and toys Space and spatial awareness is presented through movement and direction.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

EYFS children are encouraged to explore and investigate their environment in class, the playground, around school and on trips into the parks and town centre of Newark. Time is presented in its most simple form such as a visual daily timetable incorporating Makaton signs and symbols plus objects of reference. They are encouraged to appreciate and observe the weather often by first hand experiences.

The children experience handling natural and manufactured objects. They handle and taste different foods and observe the changes produced by cooking. They begin to use simple tools construction toys and have access to a range of ICT, including a multi-sensory environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance and role play.

Singing and responding to music in a variety of ways is an important part of the curriculum for all the EYFS children.

They are able to hear a wide variety of classical, popular and world music in the classroom and can respond to it in dance and movement sessions in the hall. Children are encouraged to express themselves through art and design activities. The use of the Soundbeam encourages children to use movement for cause and effect.

Children are encouraged to explore different media and materials, developing their ability to make choices and communicate likes and dislikes; this is in addition to the development of their fine motor skills. Imaginative play is encouraged.

Each child's targets are linked to the content of their Education, Health and Care Plan.

Admissions

Children may start at Newark Orchard School on either a full-time or part-time basis after they had been admitted via the issuing of an Education, Health and Care Plan by the Local Authority (LA). Any part-time arrangement is temporary and is purely to meet the needs of the child at a particular time.

Individual transition programmes are designed to suit individual children and families. These are flexible and adaptive.

Inclusion and Access

All children will have access to the local community where appropriate.

Staff continually seek opportunities which are relevant to pupils to further develop links with the community and community activities.

Other Professionals.

A close working partnership with other professionals supports the teacher to plan and carry out Individual targets. Other professionals and staff within school may give specific advice, e.g. establishing appropriate seating, work stations and equipment to be used by an individual child or a particular moving and handling plan. Paraprofessionals also lead regular Rebound and Hydrotherapy sessions when part of a pupil's individual programme.

The School Team

The school team comprises Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Personal Care Assistants who, along with parents/carers and fellow professionals, work together to facilitate progress for all pupils. We endeavour to promote 'Individual growth for Individual people'.

Reporting

Parents/carers are informed on a regular basis about progression and any matters relating to their children.

Issues and concerns are shared with the Team Leaders and the Deputy Head Teacher for the department through daily morning meetings, department and teaching, learning and assessment meetings.

Pupil progress is reported formally to their parents/carers in their Annual Review and in their end of year report.

Parents/carers have the opportunity to discuss each area of development at the Annual Review meeting. Other professionals are invited to attend this annual meeting to support the child in developing his or her full potential.

Resources

The classes are well resourced with indoor toys, educational equipment, books, outdoor play equipment and space is available and is adjacent to the classroom. The 3-14 Department accesses the budget for the provision of new equipment to benefit the youngsters within the department.

The EYFS pupils have frequent access to a specially designed multi-sensory interactive room.