



## ***Newhall Primary Academy and Nursery***

***“Aiming high; Reaching higher”***

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

Audience:	Parents School staff Local Governing Body
Approved:	May 2018
Other related policies:	Teaching and Learning, SEND, E-Safety, Safeguarding
Policy owner:	Headteacher
Policy model:	Newhall
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## Introduction

### The Early Years Experience

The Early Years Foundation Stage (Early Years) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Newhall Primary Academy and Nursery, children are able to join the Nursery at the age of 6 months. They will journey through the Nursery and join the Reception class in our main school building from the September in the academic year that they turn five.

The Nursery has three adjoining rooms, all offering an exceptionally high quality, engaging and stimulating 'learning-through-play and exploration' environment.

Our baby room (for children aged 6 months to 2 years) is called 'Blossom'. The room and outdoor area is well-resourced and we have cots for when the babies need a nap. Bluebell Room is for children from the age of two and the Snowdrop Room is for children from the age of approximately three. Each of the rooms have access to an outdoor play area and these two rooms have a concertina style dividing wall that can be opened, turning the room into one large space to allow for additional free flow if needed.

In partnership with parents and carers our highly experienced and professional nursery team tap into our children's interests and their natural inquisitive nature, enabling them to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

During a typical day in Early Years, the children paint, dig, plant, create, explore and learn actively through our wide and rich curriculum. The whole school ethos of 'AIMING HIGH' permeates through the Early Years as we encourage all children to become independent, lifelong learners. The characteristics of effective learning; thinking critically, making connections and solving problems is interwoven into the provision.

Our aim is to ensure that our children make rapid and sustained progress toward achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) as they move through the nursery and reception. Our EY curriculum enables every child to achieve exceptional, holistic outcomes through its 'mini adventure' approach. Fully emerging every child in their learning and widening and deepening their development through fascination, awe and wonder is at the heart of the curriculum offer. The children are supported by adults and their environment but are encouraged to achieve independence in learning.

Across the Reception year we work with uncompromisingly high expectations to ensure essential skills, such as Maths, phonics and reading, are successfully embedded. We use rigorous assessment methods to ensure every child has an exceptionally high level of school readiness to aid smooth and fully supported transitions into year 1.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to guide our assessment by contributing towards observations using our Tapestry app and through home learning activities.

## The Four Themes

The principles which guide the work of all Early Years' practitioners are grouped into four themes:

- **A Unique Child** - every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

These four guiding themes work together to underpin effective practice in the delivery of the EYFS and lie at the heart of all Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

### A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### Inclusion/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

All children and their families are valued at Newhall. Children are treated as individuals and have appropriate access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;

- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

## **Welfare**

It is important to us that all children in our academy are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all our children. Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

At Newhall we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years 2017. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Newhall we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

## Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children.

We do this through:

- An information/induction session for parents where they receive the Information packs and Academy and Nursery information which highlights start and finish times, uniform and informs the parents of the Academy and Nursery vision and aims.
- An opportunity to talk to the Early Years team and representatives from other areas of school life, e.g. PTA, Governors and Extended Provision Team .
- Asking parents to complete an admissions form, a medical form.
- Asking parents to sign permission slips for visits out of nursery/school, photographs of their child for assessment purposes and using the internet.
- Encouraging parents to talk to their child's key worker or class teacher if there are concerns.
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings providing information about other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Early Reading, Maths and Phonics.
- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our Nursery or Academy, usually through Home Visits.
- Ensuring children have the opportunity to spend time with their key worker/teacher before starting nursery/school during transfer sessions.
- There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Organising a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents / carers: Open afternoons, Class assemblies, Sports Day etc.;
- Inviting parents / carers to make comments relating to the children's achievements.
- Daily online diary completed on Tapestry by the Nursery Key Worker.
- Written contact through reading diaries in Reception as well as the acknowledgement that parents can telephone nursery/school to contact staff or the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team
- The children have the opportunity to spend time in their new setting before starting sduring 'preschool visit sessions' held throughout the year and transfer morning/afternoon;
- Offering parents / carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our Early Years classes and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning journals' online and classroom displays;
- Parents / carers are along with any other relevant messages/information, curriculum guidance booklets relating to the half-termly topic, invitations to help or to join the afternoon sessions as an observer.

All staff aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, every child has a Key Worker, in keeping with the requirements of the statutory framework for EYFS 2017. We have good links with local Preschools and settings. Where possible, visits are undertaken by the Early Years teachers and practitioners. Staff from Preschools and settings are welcome to Newhall to observe practice to support transition.

### **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Learning Journals on Tapestry. Play-based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

All areas of learning are accessible each day, all day within the Early Years classrooms.

### **Learning and Development**

Teachers and Early Years Practitioners provide the curriculum in the Reception classes. There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The three **Prime** areas are:

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

The four **Specific** areas are:

- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Literacy
- Expressive Arts and Design

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. Planning and guided children's activities will reflect the different ways that children learn.

## **The Characteristics of Effective Learning**

We support children by using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. The characteristics of effective learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes.

### **Playing and exploring – engagement**

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

### **Active learning – motivation**

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Religious Education and PSHE & C is also taught in the reception class following national and school-based guidelines.

## **Importance of play**

Through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

The EYFS setting at Newhall provides both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework.

## **Objective-led planning/adult directed**

Newhall uses objective-led planning in order to provide specific learning opportunities and assessment opportunities for individual pupils. For example, there may be a focus on counting one more or one less as part of the mathematical development during a given week. The teacher or Early Years Practitioner will seek out a child or group of children as part of their Child Initiated Learning (CIL) and work alongside them doing whatever it is they are doing, in order to bring counting one more or less into their learning. This ensures that children relate their learning in a context, and is led by their own interests. It is the skill of the Early Years team to provide and enhance the environment to enable each child to make good or better progress.

As children in Reception prepare for their transition to Year One in the summer term, there will be more focussed adult-directed learning opportunities where children are withdrawn within small groups to replicate the type of learning that the children will need to be familiar with in September.

## **Observation**

Children within the Early Years are regularly assessed and observed to ensure that practitioners capture each child's progress and learning. Typically, observations are carried out during CIL activities, so that children are in an independent environment which best demonstrates what they have learned.

Each week, up to 10 children will be part of a focussed observation group whereby practitioners will observe the children across the seven areas of learning (both prime and specific areas). As Communication and Language (CL) and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) are threaded through all other areas of learning, these areas will always be observed or assessed along with other areas of learning. If a child is a focus child for a given week, there will be seven observations to represent the seven areas of learning. As a result, over half a term, there will be a minimum of 14 observations for each child.

Each child will be part of objective-led planning (at least twice a week in Reception), and children will also be observed and assessed; this will be in addition to any focussed observations taking place.

## **Reading**

Newhall Primary Academy and Nursery uses the Read Write Inc programme to teach phonics and reading. Children will be taught the first 30 sounds (set 1) and how to blend in the final year in Nursery. Any child who is blending independently could begin reading Ditties and will therefore start to bring these home to read.

In Reception classes, each child will be heard individually each week by an adult (on a rota where one week is the Class Teacher, and the other week is the EYP). This will be on a rota with individual reading opportunities, led by an EYP.



## **Equal Opportunities**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

## **Health and Safety**

At Newhall there are clear procedures for assessing risk which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment.

In line with the Early Years statutory framework 2017, at Newhall we undertake:

- A whole setting supporting children with medical needs policy ensuring that there are systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless there are exceptional circumstances, and then only if prescribed. (See Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy) Training is provided for staff where the administration of medicine requires medical or technical knowledge. Medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child and the child's parents and/or carers are informed on the same day.
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required.
- Milk and fruit are available during the session.
- All EYFS staff are paediatric first aiders and are accessible at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept.
- We practice our fire and emergency evacuation procedures
- Our E-Safety policy states how mobile phones and cameras are to be used and stored securely whilst children are in the setting. Cameras that are used in school must not be used for personal use by staff or visitors.

## **The Learning Environment**

The Early Years rooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active or take things more quietly. The rooms cover all learning areas, where children can find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Early Years has its own large enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children the ability to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning.

## **Transition from Pre-school settings**

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception class, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition into Newhall:

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and raise any concerns they may want to express.
- Children are invited to visit their reception class (where possible).
- Members of staff make visits to feeder settings. The number of meetings/visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition. Home Visits are carried out where parents and children can feel at ease in their own home and are able chat to practitioners in a less formal way.

If a child is moving from a different pre-school setting to the Newhall Nursery then the same process will be followed as for children moving into Reception but on an individual basis.

## **From Reception Class to Key Stage 1**

During the final term in Reception, the Early Years Profile (EYP) is finalised for each child. The EYP provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observations, relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year One teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

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Sample Reception Timetable:

Day	8.40 – 8.55	8.55 – 9.15	9.15 – 9.35 (Build up to 9.50)	9.35 – 10.30	10.30 - 10.50	10.50 – 11.30	11.30 – 11.45	11.45 – 12.45	12.45 – 12.55	12.55 – 1.15	1.15 – 3.00	3.00 – 3.15
Monday		Whole School Values  Assembly										or y
Tuesday		EY/KS1 Assembly										
Wednesday		Whole School Singing Assembly										
Thursday		KS2 Assembly										
Friday		Whole School Celebration  Assembly										

Sample Timetable for Snowdrop Room (Approx Age 3 +) and Bluebell Room (Approx Age 2+)

Day	7.30 - 9	9 – 9.15	9.15 – 9.30	9.30 – 11.15	11.15 – 11.35	11.35 – 11.45	11.45 – 12.30	12.30 – 12.45	12.45 – 1	1 – 2.35	2.35 – 2.50	2.50 - 3	3- 4.15	4.15 -5	5-6
Monday	Breakfast and Early Morning Self-selected activities	Welcome Time: Register, Weather and Date	Whole Class Input – Share Learning Challenges	Child Initiated Learning including:  <small>Focus observations-Objective-led/direct activity-Rolling fruit and snack</small>	Story and Song	Prepare for lunch/Going home	LUNCH – Self-selected activities available	Welcome Time: Register and Afternoon Routine	Whole Class Input – Share Learning Challenges	Child Initiated Learning including:  <small>Focus observations-Objective-led/direct activity-Rolling fruit and snack</small>	Story and Song	Prepare for going home/ Continue with Child Initiated Learning	Child Initiated Learning	Prepare for tea and eat tea	Self-selected calm down activities and story
Tuesday															
Wednesday															
Thursday															
Friday															