

Newport Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

'Children develop quickly in the early years, and early years practitioners aim to do all they can to help children have the best possible start in life. Children have a right, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.' (Development Matters guidance)

Development Matters guidance helps adults to understand and support each individual child's development pathway.

The four themes of the EYFS underpin all the Development Matters guidance, which work together for the children in the EYFS:

**A Unique Child+ Positive Relationships+ Enabling Environments=
Learning and Development**

A Unique Child

Our Setting recognises 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 gathering times, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children in our setting are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our setting.

'Yes (we) always have the opportunity to speak to (our) child's key worker'

February 2013 EYFS Parent Voice questionnaire- 66% feedback

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

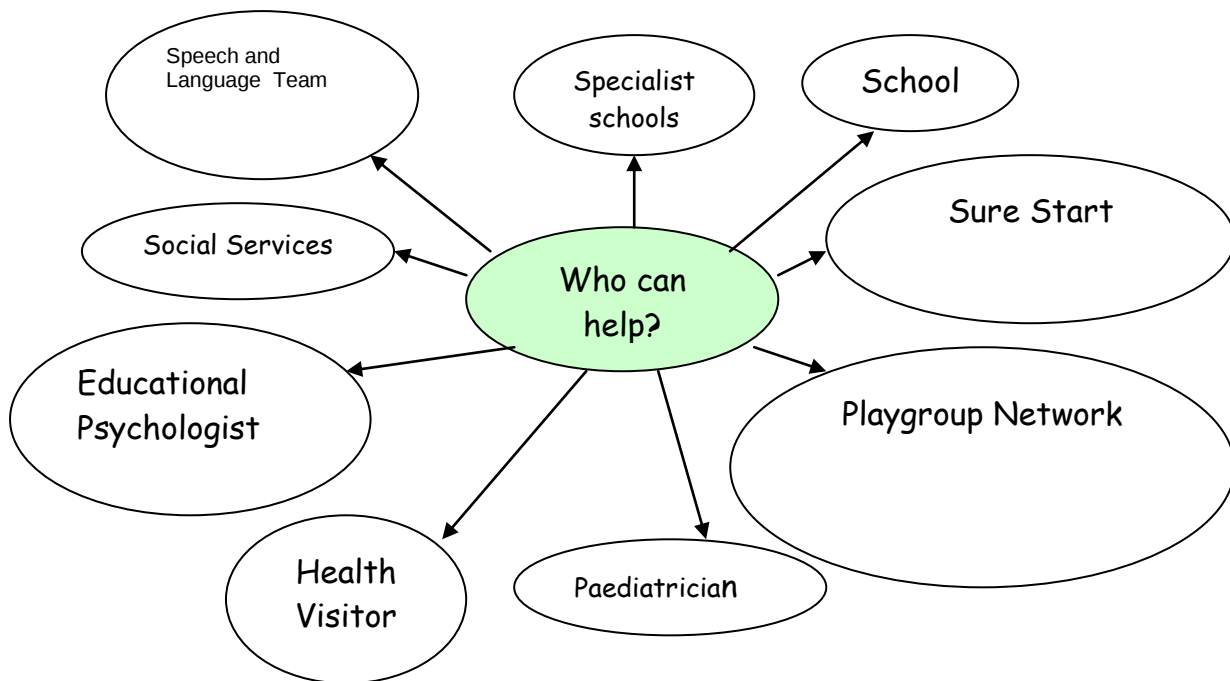
In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children

with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Providing a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence, which will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Providing opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
Provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development.
- Using 'real-life' resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Using and valuing what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Enabling choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and valuing their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability.
- Providing experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

Our setting is supported by a team of multi agency professionals as shown in the flowchart below. Procedures are in place to ensure parents/carers and practitioners are aware of the guidelines.



It is important to us that all children in the setting are 'safe'. We aim to develop our children's understanding 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 children.

Welfare

"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." EYFS 2008

Within our setting we understand that we understand that we:

- Promote the welfare 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

In our setting 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/Carers as Partners

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents/carers have played, and their future role, in educating the children. (100% of January 2013 EYFS parent voice questionnaire feedback- 'Excellent. You all do a wonderful job.' 'I wish I had it when I was at school.' We do this through:

*Inviting all families to visit the EYFS settings to encourage them to make an informed decision on the right setting for their child.

- Talking to parents/carers about their child before their child starts in our setting;
- Setting staff offer to visit all children in their home setting prior / during their start to the setting of their choice
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with setting staff on a number of visits before their official start, both with their parents/carers and with staff from feeder settings;
- Offering parents/carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our setting and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journeys' books.
- We actively encourage parents/carers to contribute to their child's 'Learning Journey' through discussion, photographs etc, we value this input;

Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner.

Encouraging parents/carers to leave (and support their child during self registration), then collect their child from their child's designated key worker area.

- Encouraging parents/carers to complete annual Foundation Stage questionnaires, so that the Foundation Stage Leader can analyse feedback to inform next steps in our curriculum, environment or effectively liaising/ supporting parent/carers. (66% return of January 2013 EYFS parent voice questionnaire)
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers such as: Share days, celebration days, fundraising, home link activities, Sports Day, easter egg and Halloween hunts.
- To enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child

read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary.

- Arranging and encouraging parent/carers to attend half termly next steps in your child's learning meetings- particularly Literacy and Mathematics. We also hold informal workshops where each key worker demonstrates practical activities using everyday resources which parents/carers can continue at home to develop learning. 93% of January 2013 EYFS parent voice questionnaires say that parents/carers 'can support their child with learning at home.'
- There is a formal consultation meeting for parents/carers each term at which the key worker and the parent/carer discuss the child's progress. This is an opportunity for parents/carers to share their views and experiences together with staff to help celebrate children's achievements, and identify their child's next steps;
- We offer parents/carers regular opportunities to meet with other professionals from multi-agencies.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In our setting all our practitioners are regarded as key worker; a key worker is responsible for the collation of Learning Journeys. Parents/carers are encouraged to work closely with their child's key worker as we recognise that parents and families are central to a child's wellbeing and practitioners should support this important relationship by sharing information and offering support to learning in the home. Opportunities will be made to share information about a child's learning and development. Where a child receives care from more than one setting (Playgroup Network, childminders, after school club etc), we aim to forge links. Our Setting's Practitioners regularly meet with colleagues from Playgroup Network to discuss our shared children.

Enabling Environments

Within our setting we recognise that the environment plays an integral role in supporting and extending the children's learning and development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. The commitments are focused around observation, assessment and planning; support for every child; the learning environment and the wider context - transitions, continuity and multi-agency working.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the early years takes the form of continuous 'catch as you can' observations and half termly individual long observations which involves the key worker and other

adults as appropriate. These observations are appropriately evidenced /referenced to our Development Matters stages recorded in children's individual 'Learning Journey' books and used to inform next steps in learning. They also contain information provided by parents/carers and other settings. Judgements made are done so collaboratively through weekly setting meetings and are used to inform the planning and intervention (responsive planning).

In our setting, we use SIMS to record judgements against the EYFS developmental matters; previous information from parents/carers and other settings will be used to help form a baseline judgement. This information along with the 'Learning Journey' is then shared with our feeder schools and forms a discussion with staff to support transition of our children.

The Learning Environment

Our setting provide a rich and varied environment which supports a child's learning and development- informed by data findings, It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in a secure and safe yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. We wholly recognise and promote the importance of the emotional environment, communication friendly areas and the indoor/ outdoor environment. We firmly believe the environment is the third teacher; we recognize the importance of continuous provision as essential to good practice.

"Early years settings which effectively promote children's learning through play ensure that they offer a suitable, safe context for learning which includes a range of appropriate resources. There will be clear rules, discussed with the children, about how to access those resources, and encouragement to share and take care of them." (EYFS - Effective practice: Play and Exploration 2007).

The setting is organised into areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently indoors and outdoors, such as let's pretend, sand and water, small world, creative workshop, fine motor area, science, exploration, multi sensory, numeracy world, music world, quiet reading area, writing areas and phonics- reinforcing the skills that have been taught during key worker teaching (particularly phonics, Action Words, Writing and numeracy focus). Writing and related non-fiction/ fiction books are available in all areas at the appropriate reading level. Our Foundation Stage setting has its own enclosed outdoor area and children have free flow access. 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 facilitates children's exploratory play, use of their senses and being physically active and exuberant. Large scale role play (Writing proformas in role play interest all been a focus during writing sessions), construction/creative and physical climbing trails Differentiated questioning is on display in all areas and is appropriately used by adults to scaffold children's learning.

As practitioners we plan activities and resources to set the scene for children's learning and development based on reacting to data findings, previous observations, environmental factors and home experiences. As practitioners we act as play partners by making connections between new information and by being aware of what they already know, by planning motivating learning experiences for each child individually. We ensure that children have opportunities to be outside on a daily basis all year round.

Learning and Development

The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**, which move through all areas of learning-

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

In our setting we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We also recognise that children are different types of learners, in making observations on children we are identifying and building on children's developmental schema and to develop a range of meaningful and powerful play based learning opportunities.

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and pre-occupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our settings. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching across the school.

Play

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."

We do not make a distinction between work and play Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as 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.

Active Learning

"Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Children are actively encouraged to make decisions on their choice of play through 'plan, do, review'. This also supports creativity and critical thinking. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning.

Areas of Learning

Development Matters is made up of three Prime areas of learning which move through to support development in all other areas-

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society-

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

The Prime and Specific areas of Learning and Development together make up the skills, knowledge and experiences appropriate for children as they grow, learn and develop.

Although these are presented as separate areas, it is important to remember that for children everything links and nothing is compartmentalised.

The challenge for practitioners is to ensure that children's learning and development occur as an outcome of their individual interests and abilities and that planning for learning and development takes account of these.

Signed

L. Prest (EYFS Lead) To be reviewed February 2014

01/2/'13