

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy 2023 –2024

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1. Aims

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.
- Children will make progress towards achieving their individual outcomes from their EHCPs, ensuring the right support and adaptations are made for all pupils to make progress based on their individual SEND needs.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- That the best outcomes are achieved for all pupils through ongoing staff development and supervision.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024.

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for group and school providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

3. Structure of the EYFS

Children within EYFS at Newfield are aged 2 to 5. Children within the EYFS age range will start school in the Explorer's provision. The Explorer's provision incorporates EYFS and key stage one children into mixed age and ability classes.

Pupils will be placed in small classes, with high staff to pupil ratios. The class groups of children will be carefully considered, taking into account the individual pupil's needs, abilities and ages. The school day starts at 8:45am and finishes at 3:15pm.

Daily routines are extremely important within an EYFS provision and for learners with SEND. Pupils will have a clear understanding of expectations through clear daily routines, so they can develop their independence and self-regulation skills. Each class will structure their daily timetables to include regular and predictable routines which will include; circle times, play provision, planned adult input focused on individual and curriculum outcomes and access to outdoor provision. Each day will include a phonics session and a 'Drop Everything and Read' session. There will also be opportunities to access other learning environments throughout the week, such as the sensory garden, the hall for physical development activities, the school computers and the sensory studio and sensory rooms. Children will be cued into transitions through individualised and whole class support, using a total communication approach which may incorporate visual and auditory cues.

4. Curriculum

Our EYFS pupils follow our Explorer’s Curriculum pathway. This is an adapted EYFS and key stage one curriculum that ensures all pupils at all ages are accessing a broad and balanced curriculum due to the mixed aged classes. All our learners at Newfield have complex additional needs and we understand the importance of ensuring the best for every child. These first few years are crucial for children, so they can form positive relationships and engage in learning. At Newfield School we acknowledge and celebrate the differences in the needs and learning styles of our younger children. The Explorer's provision supports an integrated approach moving from EYFS through to year two. The EYFS Framework and Key Stage One National Curriculum has informed our curriculum and approach used within the provision. The thematic curriculum follows a three-year cycle.

Although the Explorer’s curriculum at Newfield has been developed for all children throughout EYFS and key stage one, it ensures pupils within EYFS have the principles and practice embedded into the provision, based on best practices outlined in the statutory and non-statutory guidelines from the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2024) and Development Matters (2023).

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. 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 prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

The pedagogy of Explorer’s provision ensures a clear focus on the Characteristic of Effective Teaching.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

At Newfield the curriculum coverage ensures that practitioners can make appropriate adaptations to ensure the best outcomes for pupils. For each of the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, the pedagogy and adaptive practice are considered as follows;

- Playing and Exploring – children are encouraged to explore their environment with as much independence as possible. Some children require additional support to be able to handle objects or explore them safely, so staff aim to do this while enabling children to ‘have a go’ and explore as freely as possible.
- Active Learning – staff create opportunities for active learning by planning activities and providing resources accessible for the children. They may be involved in a range of therapy programmes which are integrated into their learning experience to create opportunities for them to be actively involved in their learning activities.
- Creating and Thinking critically – a thematic approach helps children make links and begin to develop the skills of thinking critically and creatively. Staff provide experiences that optimise the children being able to think through problems and find solutions for themselves. Some children may have significant cognitive difficulties so all experiences will be accessible to them at an appropriate level.

The Explorer’s curriculum maps outline the breadth of the thematic coverage, guiding teachers to the key skills and knowledge covered throughout each term. The curriculum ensures flexibility to use pupils’ interests to engage them in learning, whilst also ensuring pupils can embed their skills and make progress based on their individual development steps.

4.1 Planning

Our staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Practitioners use the Explorer’s framework to consider the small steps needed to work towards the Early Learning Goals for our EYFS pupils, considering their barriers to learning and using adaptive practice to ensure the best progress can be made for each individual whilst also exposing them to a broad range of learning experiences. Practitioners have planning support materials through the curriculum maps and medium-term plans and curriculum planning meetings led by the EYFS/ Explorer’s curriculum leader to support the curriculum delivery. In planning and guiding children’s activities, staff reflect on the diverse ways that children learn and include these in their practice using a wide range of approaches. All pupils at Newfield have complex needs and staff will consider when additional support is required from other relevant services such as Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational therapy and other relevant services.

Practitioners should plan their individual lessons to ensure that all seven areas of learning are incorporated into their weekly timetables and use their knowledge of each individual pupil to plan adult input to teach specific skills, based on individual needs linked to the key focus of learning within the curriculum maps. High quality texts are used throughout each theme, which teachers will plan to use to enhance learning and introduce key vocabulary. All staff should have an awareness of the pupil’s developmental stage and what their next steps will be, using the Explorer’s Framework and shared planning within class teams. This is effective

when there is ongoing professional dialog between all staff and planned activities offer opportunities to develop these skills through high quality adult interactions.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play provision, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interactions.

Across each week children have access to these play -based learning activities regularly throughout each day as part of the provision:

- Reading Area
- Construction/ Small World
- Sand/ Water
- Role Play
- Creative Area (including malleable, mark making, fine motor activities)
- Provision beyond the classroom – outdoor learning, sensory spaces, play areas, computers, and hall spaces for physical development.

Mathematical learning will also be embedded throughout the play provision alongside the specific lesson time each week.

The Newfield Teaching and Learning policy states that 'we focus on teaching the way students learn best.' The use of a holistic approach to draw on a wide range of adaptive practices ensures teaching is relevant and appropriate for each child. Practitioners will apply the Newfield Teaching and Learning policy to ensure that every child can access the Explorer's curriculum. Practitioners are supported to have the skills to be consistently outstanding practitioners, through regular professional development and a robust monitoring and feedback cycle.

5. Assessment

At Newfield School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals (ELG), 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. Alongside the EYFS profile, the Explorer's framework shows the smaller steps of progress pupils are making towards the ELG and these are assessed termly to check pupils progress using the Explorer's framework assessment book. This is captured using Evidence for Learning. Additionally, pupils are assessed against their EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) outcomes, and again this progress is captured using evidence for learning.

Pupils' progress is shared with parents through annual reviews and termly parent consultations. The information regarding their progress on the Explorer's framework (which is inclusive of the ELG) and their EHCP progress is shared during these meetings.

EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

6. Working with parents and carers

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. Starting school is a big transition for our youngest learners and at Newfield we value the importance of starting a positive relationship with each family when they join.

Before a child starts at Newfield, we will meet with the family at their home to get the key information about each child and their needs. A key member of staff will also visit the child in their current setting to observe and gather handover information.

The child will then be invited into school for transition visits, giving them opportunities to see the learning environment, key places around school and meet staff and pupils who they will share a class with. Parents and/or carers will have opportunities to meet the class teacher, and other key professionals during this transition process, including our Family Well Being Coordinators.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Each child's progress is shared with parents through our assessment processes outlined above. Parents and/or carers also receive regular personalised messages via Class Dojo to share what pupils have been learning about during each week and any relevant information regarding their care needs.

Each child is assigned a key person, which will be their class teacher, and they will help to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. As well as the class teachers, parents and/or carers can also contact the Family Well Being Coordinators for additional support. We encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's learning. We will share information about learning at home and events at school where parents can be involved throughout the year.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We recognise that 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. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

We make sure that the appropriate statutory staff to child ratios are maintained in our setting to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety. The EYFS Framework outlines these ratios, however due to the complex needs of our pupils, staff to child ratios are much higher than the guidance and will be based on individual needs of children and their ages. Therefore, we determine ratios guided by all relevant ratio requirements and by the needs of the children within the group.

We have at least 1 person with a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate on the premises and available when children are present, including on outings. This PFA certificate is renewed every 3 years as required.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years and throughout the Explorer's provision by;

- Ensuring children have an opportunity to brush their teeth in school each day. We follow Public Health England guidance on supervised toothbrushing to make sure that it is evidence-based and safe. [Improving oral health: supervised tooth brushing programme toolkit - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364222/Improving_oral_health_-_supervised_tooth_brushing_programme_toolkit.pdf). Key staff receive training on promoting Oral Health.
- Offering a range of foods for children to try and supporting them to make healthy choices in line with Newfield's Food and Nutrition Policy.
- Regular hand washing and personal care routines.
- Regular opportunities to be active both indoors and outdoors.

7.1 Supervision for EYFS Staff

Staff supervision is now mandatory in all early year's settings (EYFS Framework 2024).

The main beneficiary of supervision should be the service user, so in the case of Newfield School, our pupils who attend and their families. Effective supervision ensures the delivery of efficient and safe care through regular monitoring of practice, professional support and the identification of an employee's training and development needs. It also supports increased staff retention which ensures continuity of care for children.

Supervision should provide opportunities for staff to:

- discuss any issues – particularly concerning children's development or well-being; identify solutions to address issues as they arise; and receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.

All identified key workers of Reception aged children (class teachers) will receive regular supervision.

This will be half termly.

This will be provided by The EYFS Curriculum Lead.

Any member of staff can request additional supervision at any time.

All our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our school's child protection and safeguarding policy. The above procedures relate to specific additional practices in EYFS as outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Katrina Heywood, EYFS Lead 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 or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Medical Conditions in School Policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Fire and Lockdown Procedures
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy & Pupil Security Policy
Procedures for Missing Children	See Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See School Complaints Policy