

# Nawton Community Primary School

## Early Years Foundation Stage

### Rationale

At Nawton Community Primary School we see the Early Years Foundation Stage as crucial in securing solid foundations that our children continue to build on. This is so important as we know that; what our children learn in these first years of life will stay with them forever and children’s early education is the best investment we can make in ensuring their future success.

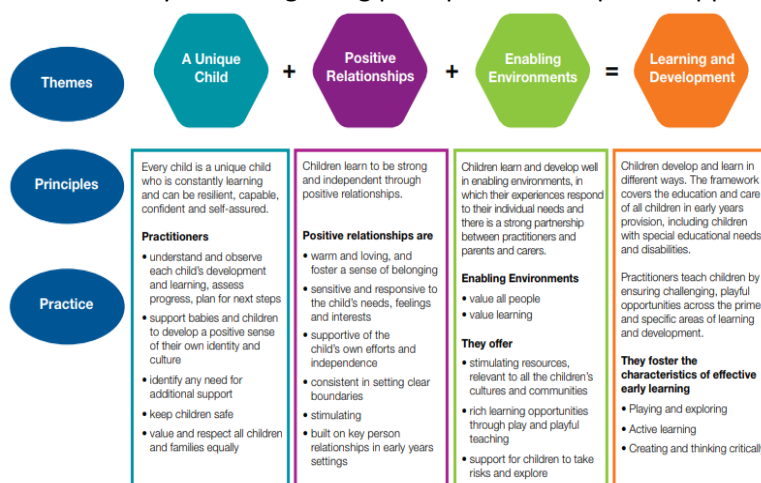
### Intent

It is our intent that our EYFS will;

- Have a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- Offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate newly acquired knowledge, explore and test out new skills;
- Enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop socially, imaginatively, physically, verbally, intellectually and emotionally;
- Prepare children to achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of their foundation stage year by ensuring that all children have made good or better progress from their individual starting points;
- Encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere;
- Support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as co-operation and sharing;
- Help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing resilience and confidence to achieve goals.
- Ultimately prepare children with the knowledge, understanding and skills needed for the next stage of their learning journey in Key Stage 1.

### Implementation

Our practice in the EYFS is led by the four guiding principles that shape our approach at Nawton.



- Every child is unique, who is constantly learning and is 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 individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

We follow the EYFS curriculum and ensure that the learning opportunities and experiences we provide are clearly linked to the seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three of these areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (Dfe 2014:1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the Prime Areas.

The Prime Areas are;

- **Communication and Language** – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Moving and Handling, Health and Self Care
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour, Self Confidence and Self Awareness

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge. The specific areas are;

- **Literacy** – Reading and Writing
- **Mathematical Development** – Number and Shape, Space and Measures
- **Understanding the World** – People and Communities, The World and Technology
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

Throughout all areas of learning and at the heart of the EYFS are the “**Characteristics of Effective Learning.**” We strive to develop these key characteristics as they highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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.

All of the crucial skills, knowledge and vocabulary that we teach are presented to the children progressively throughout the year. These encompass a range of topics, which are designed with the children's interests in mind and support children to develop their experience and knowledge across a range of themes.

## Teaching

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities across the day. Although much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and the child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and skilfully question what the child is doing. In some cases the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible.

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for the children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge and are planned to meet the specific needs of the group.

Each day we set aside times when the children come together to be taught in the more traditional senses, gathered together on the carpet as a class. During these sessions we focus on maths, early reading (RWI), story and topic. These sessions help to develop vital habits of learning; learning as a group, listening to an adult, sharing ideas, taking turn to answer questions and sitting still.

### **Planning**

Our planning is always relevant to the stage and age of the child. What we plan supports and further develops their learning and development. Planning is informed by the observations we make of the children. Without observation, planning would simply be based on what we felt was important, fun or interesting but it might not necessarily meet the needs of the children.

We believe that many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and we find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. Our topics are broad to ensure we have progression of knowledge and skills but also to allow us the flexibility to follow children's interests, seasonal/cultural themes, local and national events. Where possible we link to key texts and rhymes to develop communication and language skills and promote a love for reading.

Our long term plans maps out the knowledge and skills we expect children to gain throughout their time in EYFS to prepare them for learning in Key Stage 1, and build on previously taught concepts, knowledge and skills.

Our medium term planning is topic based and maps out the learning journey of specific knowledge and skills. It highlights experiences and activities that are appropriate to develop new learning, including visits and visitors, books, songs and rhymes that will enhance the learning experience.

Our short term planning is more detailed and draws upon the knowledge gained from observations. These plans are specific to groups of children and individual needs, they are annotated and adapted as the week progresses. Short term planning includes the school's weekly maths planning and enhancements made to the continuous provision planning. There is also weekly planning in place for nursery phonics that includes literacy and language. In Reception children follow the RWI phonics scheme.

### **Classroom Environments**

Teaching and play in the Early Years is a balancing act, there is no right or wrong way to do this. However, what we need to consider is how we ensure that the classroom environments support the learning that occurs when children initiate this for themselves. Environments play an important part in the Early Years and are often referred to as the third adult.

Our learning environments are carefully planned throughout the year and they adapt and change with the needs of the children. Our provision is planned and designed to help children remember long term what they have been taught and integrate new knowledge and skills into wider concepts, often those children initiate themselves. We ensure that we have high quality and well-resourced and organised continuous provision that will enable children to hone, rehearse and become experts in their interests and fascinations. We recognise the need to introduce progression between nursery and reception. When selecting resources for the areas of provision, the age, maturity and experience

of the children are taken into account. For example, limiting the range of resources in an area for younger children helps them focus for longer periods and work in more depth.

A wider range of resources for developing early reading, writing and mathematical skills are introduced across the provision so that older children can apply and consolidate skills learnt during daily RWI and mathematics sessions in a meaningful way.

### **Role of the adult**

The role of the adult is essential in ensuring we are providing an outstanding learning environment. It is through our sensitive interactions with the children that we shape the learning and allow children to flourish. Our role is to provide more than just supervision, care and direct learning.

Adults are skilled to engage in children's activities they have initiated themselves. They observe carefully and intervene where necessary helping to scaffold children's learning, it is recognising that 'teachable moment' where the skilful adult can make the most difference. This scaffolding involves many strategies; asking open ended questions, introducing new materials and resources, challenging current knowledge and understanding, providing children with choices that empower them to lead their own learning, modelling new skills and then supporting children as they coach their peers.

### **Key Person**

Each child is assigned a key person. Their role is to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to help the child become familiar with the setting and build relationships with parents. All adults in the Early Years actively seek to form positive, respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being now and their future successes. There are rare occasions when significant adults cannot be in class and we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

### **Assessment, Observations and Learning Journals**

#### Assessments

When children enter our setting they are baselined against the Early years outcomes, this provides staff with a clear starting point. Baseline assessments are through observations and some one to one tasks. From September 2021 children in reception will also be baselined using the NFER baseline test. At the end of each term the class teacher makes a summative assessment i.e. a 'summing up' of an individual child's achievement in which a decision is made about which age and stage best fits the child. The class teacher uses mainly evidence from observations and work completed in books will also contribute to this.

#### Observations

Observations are key to assessing what children can achieve independently. It is vital that we carry out observations because it ensures that we are placing the child at the centre of our practice. Our observations are a mixture of formal (planned) but mostly informal (spontaneous).

Our observations are a process of watching the children, listening to them and taking note of what we see and hear. This helps us to identify the specific needs of each child. We discover what new

skills and abilities are developing over time and allows us to assess progress so we can plan for next steps in children's development and learning.

Outstanding observational skills involve;

Looking – what are they doing, how and where they spend their time. Do they play alone or as group? Through looking we develop a good understanding of child development.

Listening – paying attention to the interaction of the individual child with different adults and between different children.

Recording – initially this is just noting important features of children's responses, behaviour and learning. These notes are then written up afterwards so that interactions with the children remain paramount.

Being Objective – once notes are looked up all adults then objectively reflect on what has been observed. This involves thinking through what's been seen and maybe talking it through with other staff to clarify thoughts. Adults then questions what was seen and heard to clarify, confirm and sometimes reject ideas of what they've observed. Children are often involved in this process and may engage in dialogue as the child and adult reflect on the learning together.

Not all observations will be written down. Only those that record significant experiences and milestones in children's development.

Learning journals

Observations are stored in children's individual learning journals. Where possible they are presented in chronological order so that it demonstrates the journey children are on with their learning. Learning journals consist of informal and formal observations by all staff and work that children have initiated themselves. Work that is completed or directed by an adult is kept in their topic/writing books or maths books. Learning journals are sent home to parents twice a half term.

### **Partnership with parents**

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting.

We invite parents to attend a session at school alongside all the other children who will be starting. We give each family a "All about me" booklet to complete with their child and this document is the first piece of their learning journey.

Parents have access to their children's learning journeys throughout the term. We also provide information sessions where we explain our methods for teaching children to read. Throughout the year parents can attend a parents evening where learning is reviewed.

### **Impact**

We envision that by the end of EYFS children have the personal, physical and social skills they need to succeed as they move into year 1.

Children will display high levels of engagement through their positive attitudes to learning. They are developing the resilience to set backs and are proud of their achievements. They work

collaboratively together because they've developed the early skills in managing their own feelings and behaviour, they are also now aware of how their actions can impact on others.

We make every effort to ensure that all our children make good or better progress during their time in EYFS. Aiming for a good level of development (GLD). They will have achieved at least the expected level in the ELGs across the **Prime Areas** and in the **Specific Areas** of *Literacy* and *Mathematics*. All children will have made significant personal progress across all areas of learning. All pupils including disadvantaged and SEND have full access to the EYFS curriculum and close the gap between their peers by making good or better progress.

The EYFS leader, alongside other school leaders, will monitor the impact of the EYFS curriculum and provision of learning every half- term. This monitoring will include:

- Learning environment walks,
- Lesson observations and feedback,
- Learning journey scrutinies,
- Assessment analysis and next steps,
- Moderation with other schools.