



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved by: Head – D Rogers

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Aim

At Norbreck Primary Academy we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within the Early Years.

- 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
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents
- Plan challenging learning experiences informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, problem solve, form positive relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences where they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EYFS based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. Please see our plans for more details. These plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Children have whole class and small group times which increase as they progress through the year teaching aspects of Mathematics and English, including shared reading and writing. Children also receive daily phonics lessons and reading practise sessions following a whole school program 'Little Wandle'.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, practitioners interact and join in with play to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

Observation and Assessment

In accordance with statutory guidelines all children in Foundation Stage are formally assessed within the first six weeks of starting school. The children are assessed using the Reception Baseline Assessment, it is a new assessment that was introduced in Autumn 2021. The assessment is a series of short interactive and practical activities that cover early mathematics, language, communication and literacy.

'Children will not 'pass' or 'fail' the assessment; it will provide a snapshot of where they are when they start school in the reception year.'

More information about the Reception Baseline Assessment can be found at www.gov.uk

As part of our daily practice we observe children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We use Tapestry software to record observations and share learning. All professionals are encouraged to contribute and discussions take place daily/weekly. Observations and progress made is shared with parents in the Autumn and Spring terms at Parents' Evenings and reports are written twice a year.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parents with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks.

We promote the good health of the children in our care including the provision of nutritious food. We learn about online safety and include weekly PSHE sessions for the children using Coram SCARF resources to promote being healthy, staying safe, growing, being resilient, developing mindfulness and forming positive relationships with the people around us.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at Norbreck, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace so that our children achieve. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to be partners in their child's education through our Home-School Diary, sharing learning on Tapestry and through invitations into school to our 'Together Tuesday' sessions (which normally take place once a term) and through informational workshops.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and child-minders. Children attend an introductory session to their new reception class to develop familiarity with the school and practitioners. They complete an 'All about me' booklet.

At Norbreck we organise termly Nursery visits, where local nurseries are invited to attend story and play sessions. Once places have been allocated Reception class teachers make visits to children's nurseries to meet children and discuss the child with nursery staff. Staff will make visits to children in their homes if necessary.

In the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the reception class and take story time, and meet with the reception teacher to discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1.