Welcome to Sycamore Class

Parents guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage & Starting School

This guide outlines the different areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum as well as suggesting some ideas for you to help your child at home.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to ask one of the Sycamore Class staff team.

Early Years Curriculum:

The EYFS is a framework for children's development from birth to the end of the Reception year of Primary School.

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape the EYFS, all areas are important and inter-connected. Each of the areas have Early learning goals that we aim to help your child to achieve by the time they move up to year 1.

These areas are:

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

Physical Development



Communication & Language Development

Mathematical Development

Literacy Development

Understanding of the world

Expressive Arts & Design

Our curriculum is centred around children's play. Children have the opportunity to play in isolation or within a group. Play is a vital part of young children's learning. Through play, children explore ideas, feelings and relationships. Play helps to promote risk taking, allows them to make mistakes and try things out without them failing. Quality play promotes confidence and well-being.

In Sycamore class your child will develop and learn through:

1. Exploring, investigating, problem solving.
2. Representing and communicating ideas and feelings.
3. Creating imaginary worlds and stories.
4. Interacting and exchanging ideas with others.
5. Talking and discussing, puzzling and reflecting.
6. Watching and listening, repeating and practising.

Personal, Social & Emotional development

This area of learning relates to how your child:

Interacts with others.

Deals with emotions.

Views their behaviour and its consequences.

Activities at Home

Play games to encourage sharing and turn taking.

Talk about how things make both you and your child feel.

When your child does something they shouldn't have, encourage your child to think about what they did and why it was wrong.

Encourage your child to be confident to try new activities.

Help your child to discuss why they like some activities more than others.







Communication and Language

This area of learning relates to how your child:



Talks and listens to others.

Listens to stories and rhymes.

Understands and follows instructions.

Activities at Home

Read stories and rhymes *to* your child.

Talk about the story – what was your favourite/least favourite part and why?

Act out the story for others in your family to watch.

Learn some rhymes.

Chat, talk, speak to, whisper, sing with your child.

Play Simon Says.

Ask your child questions using 'how' and 'why' to help develop their understanding of events.





Literacy Development

This area of learning relates to how your child:

Learns about letters and the sounds they represent.
Reads and understands simple sentences.
Forms letters.
Write their name and other words.

Activities at Home

Share a story book together – encourage your child to tell you the story by looking at the pictures.

Share an information book together and ask questions and encourage them to ask questions about what they see.

Practise writing their name.

Write shopping lists together.

Make place names for their family to put on the table.

Use yellow sticky pads to label everything.

Use magnetic letters to build words.







Mathematical Development

This area of learning relates to how your child:

Solves problems using their own ideas and by working with others.
Sings number rhymes and counting.
Counts objects carefully up to ten.
Explores patterns and shapes.
Compares size, weight, capacity, and length..

Activities at Home

Count, count, count! As often as you can- in 1's, 2's, 5's & 10's.

Practise counting objects when you see them.
For example, count the plates for dinner.

Make a game out of sock sorting after doing the washing. Talk about the patterns you see.

Ask your child when you have a problem e.g. I only have 2 apples but there are 4 of us, what shall we do?



Sing some number rhymes
e.g. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 once I caught a fish alive.

Cook biscuits, cakes or even a meal together, pointing out the measures of things as you go.

Encourage your child to point out and recognise numbers in the environment.
e.g. - what number is on your door?





Understanding the World

This area relates to how your child:

Explores the world around them.

Uses technology for particular purposes.

Enjoys and participates in festivals relating to their own and other cultures.

Activities at Home

Talk to your child about your family, culture, religion, where you live.

Talk about what you see, hear, smell, taste and touch in a variety of situations.

Ask your child what buttons they think you should press when using electrical equipment.

Look at similarities and differences you see when walking or on the bus or in the car.







Physical Development

This area of learning relates to how your child:

Moves using large scale movements, running, jumping, climbing.

Learns control of objects using small scale movements; cutting, drawing, threading.

Looks after their own health and personal hygiene.

Handles toys and equipment safely and sensibly.





Activities at Home

Play ball games.

Take a trip to the park so your child can run, climb and jump.

Talk about how your body feels after running and jumping (hot and sweaty?).

Encourage your child to have a go at dressing and undressing themselves.

Feeling messy? Make some playdough (we can give you a recipe!).

Take a pot of water and a paintbrush outside so your child can "paint" the pavement, fence or shed.





Expressive Arts and Design

This area of learning relates to how your child:

Enjoys messy activities, exploring what happens.

Pretends and role plays things they have seen and experienced.

Participates in musical and dance activities.





Creates models with a specific purpose.

Uses their imagination in their play.

Activities at Home

Let your child help you when you are tidying up.

Be prepared for your child to become Mr, Miss or Mrs in a game of teachers. Or maybe you'll become a passenger on your child's train, bus or aeroplane.

Make some shakers using pots and some dried pasta or lentils.

Use your boxes to make a model – you'll be surprised what your child will turn it in to!



Keep your old clothes, shoes, hats, gloves to make an exciting box of dressing up clothes.

Encourage and praise your child for being imaginative.

Starting school

We understand that starting school can be a big step for both you and your child. If children have an idea of what school is going to be like they are less likely to find it worrying. To help with this new venture we have created a pack of photos for you to share with your child. Please look at these photos with your child to help prepare them for school. Talk through how they may be feeling about school, remember to emphasise all the fun things they will enjoy and how many friends they will make at school.

During the first few days

- Try to look confident and happy when you drop off your child. Your child will pick up on your emotions: if you appear upset, your child will respond to this.
- When you arrive at the setting, please help your child to hang up their coat and bag.
- Aim to make a clean 'break' when you leave your child – try not to linger and go back to them if there are tears. Your child may cry, but in most cases this only carries on for a few minutes after you have gone. We promise that we will contact you if we cannot settle your child within a reasonable amount of time.
- Remember that starting in a new environment can be a tiring experience. Your child may seem more tired than usual in the first few days or weeks. Don't worry, this is perfectly normal.

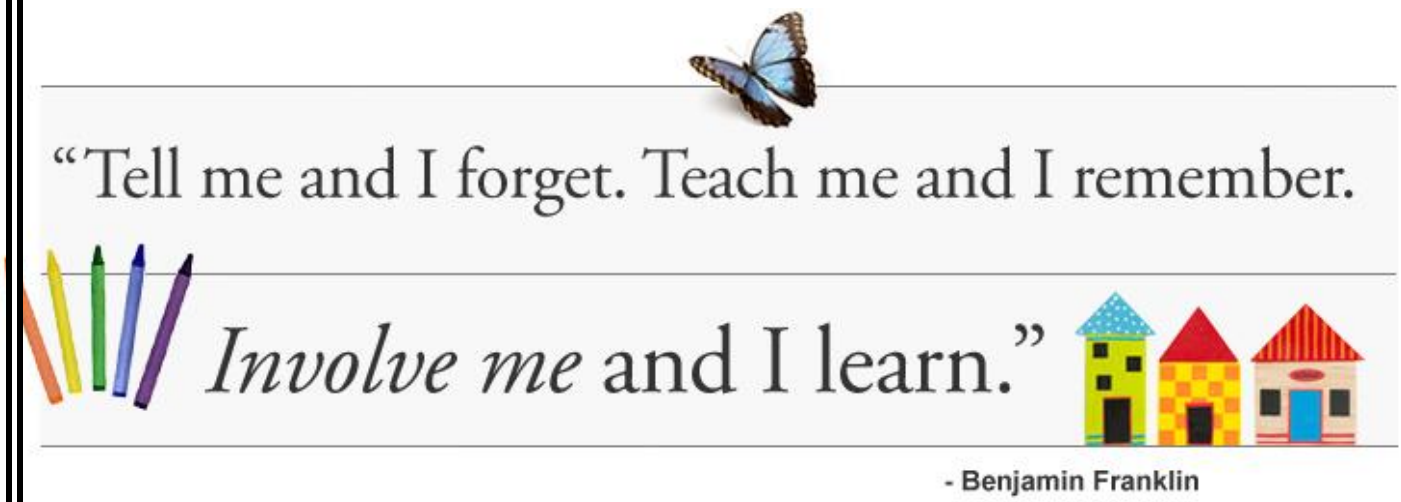
The Daily routine

Each school day starts at 8:30am. We use a 'soft start' at Newtown, this means as soon as the gate is open children come straight onto the playground and straight into the classroom. On their first day we will welcome you into school with your child to let you help them put their things away and get settled. For health and safety reasons we ask for all pushchairs to be left outside. Please note, the gate closes at 8:45am and registration starts at 8:50am.

The end of the school day is 3:15pm. At this time, we will bring the children out to you at the same gate you came in through in the morning. ***Please be patient*** as there are lots of new faces for us to get used to. Please wave at us when your child is at **the front of the line** this will help us reunite you with your child safely and more quickly.

It is important for us to know exactly who is normally going to collect each child. If there is anyone different to usual who will be collecting your child, please make sure you let the class teacher or the office know. Please rest assured we will not let children go with a different adult unless we have been informed. It is also important for the child to know who is collecting them so please get into the habit of telling them. Children are only allowed to go home in a taxi if we have previously been informed by you of the identity of the taxi company and if the taxi driver can produce identification together with the name of the child to be collected.

Each day we have snack time and all children will get a fruit snack provided. Milk is free for all children under 5 and when your child turns 5 you do have the option to pay for milk if you would like them to keep having it. Each child is provided with a school water bottle and this is available for them at snack time instead of milk but also throughout the day as needed. There is no need for you to send in any extra snacks.



Early Years Lead - Mrs Katie Potter
Class teacher- Miss Nash Pountney

We look forward to welcoming you into Sycamore Class at Newtown. Please do come and see us if you have
any questions or concerns.

Useful Information:

School telephone number: 01225 752678

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