



Nether Stowey CE VC Primary School

Early Years Policy

2023 - 2025

Approved on behalf on the Governing Body:

(Chair of Governors)

Approved on behalf on the School:

(Head Teacher)

“Our EYFS Curriculum has been designed to reflect the nature of our beautiful environment, the seasons of the year and the nature around our school. It aims to teach the children how their environment compares to other places, cultures and nature in other parts of the world. It is therefore unique to Nether Stowey Primary School.

Our EYFS curriculum has been written in accordance with the latest version of the [‘Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)’](#) (September 2021). The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are important and interconnected:

- **Communication and language.**
- **Personal, social and emotional development.**
- **Physical development.**
- Literacy.
- Mathematics.
- Understanding the world.
- Expressive arts and design.

However, the first three areas in the list above, 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.

We have developed the curriculum giving **communication and language** skills a high priority. This is in line with Development Matters 2020: ***“The development of children’s spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children’s back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added; practitioners will build children’s language effectively.”***

A high priority is also given to the teaching of **reading**. We aim to teach children to read and develop a love of books as soon as they arrive at Nether Stowey Primary School and books are used to teach topics and to enhance our whole curriculum.

We use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised to teach early reading and phonics from the beginning of Reception. (See Appendix A)

We underpin our curriculum with the Personal Social and Emotional Development of all our children. We strive to enable children to be safe, happy, confident individuals. We also encourage self-regulation as much as possible and introduce rules and boundaries through modelling good behaviour and reflection time.

Our Curriculum is based around cross-curricular topics. Topics are introduced with a good quality storybook or age-appropriate non-fiction text. Using books in this way teaches children that books and reading form the basis of all learning. Our chosen topics are linked to KS1 and build the foundations of learning needed in readiness for Year 1.

Teaching and Learning

We believe in the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning that are set out in Development Matters 2021. These 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 achieving.

Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

We aim to teach all children the skills and knowledge in order that they reach the seventeen Early Learning Goals described in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We teach through a range of teaching methods including child-initiated learning, whole class teaching, group teaching, investigations and problem solving together, and independently. As many activities as possible are play-based; however, there is also a need for direct teacher-led activities to ensure children gain essential knowledge and skills from their teacher. All activities are expertly modelled and children are given sufficient time, support and resources to repeat and practise them. Children are taught Maths and English daily as a whole class, followed by small group activities, both child and adult led. Children have two PE lessons each week, one of which becomes a Swimming session in the Summer Term. Children in Reception also take part in regular RE, Music and PSHE lessons.

Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a mixture of the statutory government baseline and also through teacher observations. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. We record each child's level of development throughout the year and record whether each child is on track or not on track to meet a Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the year in July.

Children will be judged at either an emerging level or an expected level in each early learning goal. The exceeding level no longer applies. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher, teaching assistants, parents and children, as appropriate.

We record each child's level of development throughout the year. At the end of the final term in Reception we assess whether each child is emerging or expected in each strand within each area of learning and submit this data to the local authority. This information is also shared with the child's next teacher who uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information with parent, in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers detailed comments on each child's holistic progress across all areas of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress. We complete these in June, and send them to parents in early July each year.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

We have a tried and tested induction programme which includes:

- An induction evening for parents so that teachers can get to know parents and carers and ask about the individual children. The teacher gives

parents practical information such as the ethos of the school, vision and values, information about equipment and uniform needed.

- Forest School sessions in which the children are left by parents or brought over by our feeder preschool. These sessions involve building relationships and general observations.
- Pre-school and/or child minder setting visits, to allow staff to meet and observe children in their familiar settings.
- A gradual introduction to the school day. Children do a staggered start. This introduces the children to their new routines gradually and this enables children to be less overwhelmed.

When children transition into year 1 the teacher has time with the year 1 teacher to give them all the relevant welfare, academic and general information about all the children leaving the EYFS.

Parental Involvement

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first educators and we value having a positive relationship with them in their child's education through:

- ✓ Making contact with parents/carers before their child starts school at our parent walkabouts, induction sessions, welcome packs and nursery visits.
- ✓ Inviting parents/carers and children to attend an induction evening.
- ✓ Inviting the parents and children to a stay and play session prior to starting school.
- ✓ Inviting parents to phonic and reading workshops/ to see how their children will begin learning and how they can support them.
- ✓ Operating an open-door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns.
- ✓ Written contact through reading records and half termly newsletters.
- ✓ Class news updates via Weduc.
- ✓ Parents sharing WOW slips which are displayed on the WOW board.
- ✓ Inviting each child to have an "All About Me Week" in which the children can bring in photos/awards/certificates. Parents work with children on this.
- ✓ Offering two, parent-teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress and wellbeing is discussed.
- ✓ Sending a written report on their child's attainment, progress and attitude at the end of their time in reception.
- ✓ Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as special events, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.

SEND/Inclusion

All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly. In addition to this, where children have been identified as having a specific need, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan programmes together and where needed with liaison with the Special Needs Co-ordinator. The class teacher is also the SENDCO and this ensures children with special educational needs are identified as early as possible.