



Welcome to Broomhaugh C of E First School

This information booklet will give you a better idea of what Broomhaugh C of E First School can offer you and your child in their important first year of schooling. We feel that in their first year at school it is crucial that children receive first class education - after all, it is on this foundation that the children will build the rest of their future learning.

It can be a very daunting experience for children to begin their school career in what amounts to a sea of unknown faces and a maze of buildings. We are able to offer you and your child the opportunity to begin their learning in a small, family orientated class where the children feel safe, confident and cared for.

Of course this booklet can only give you a taste of what we can provide but do hope that you will take the time to visit the school and to meet us to see for yourselves what we are able to offer you and your family.

This booklet sets out areas specific to Reception children's learning but there are many more activities on offer throughout the school for children of all ages. We have several after school activities which all children are able to participate in as well as being able to offer many events that enhance the curriculum provided.



The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a comprehensive Statutory framework published by the Department for Education on 27th March 2012 . The framework sets standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five years.

There are four Principles to follow:-

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

These four principles then have principles to put those themes into practice. All registered Early Years providers are required to use this framework. During this stage children work towards 'Early Learning Goals'. Most children will achieve or be well on their way to achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage (the end of Reception class in school).

The aim of the Foundation Stage is to build on the early learning that begins at home and to help to develop young children's skills and knowledge further. It also prepares them for more formal learning in Key Stage One of the National Curriculum (in the next two years of the child's schooling).

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**. Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

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

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

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

These 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The adults teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but it is suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside





Play

Play is recognised as an important way in which young children make sense of the world about them. To children play is work and work is play. Children in our Reception class will be given opportunities to learn in many different ways including through structured play and by experiencing things first hand. The children will be active participants in their own learning. Children will be helped through the learning process by careful planning of activities, direct teaching and well thought out questioning. If your child comes home and says they have been playing all day they are probably right but the play has been carefully organised.

Children in Reception Class, as in the other classes in school, have great ownership of the curriculum. The curriculum is worked on in a cross curricular style. The children are asked for their own ideas, questions and thoughts in regular planning and reviewing meetings and discuss as a group which way forward a topic or project will go.



The Outdoor Environment



We regard the outdoor environment to be just as important as inside the classroom. The outdoors is not just used for play times but for carrying out activities involving literacy and numeracy skills, exploring the natural world and developing their creative skills. Young children are very active and need the space to develop in. We are very fortunate here at Broomhaugh C of E First School to have the opportunity to provide a safe and stimulating environment in which the children's natural enthusiasm for learning can be encouraged. The children will be out in all weathers and so it is helpful if they have the appropriate clothing with them every day - we always go out to play!



Self Esteem

At Broomhaugh C of E First School the Reception class children are able to begin their school career in a caring family atmosphere. The children can quickly settle into the school routines with the support of other pupils and develop confidence from being in a small group situation. Even the youngest children have the opportunity to mix with older children who will be able to inspire their needs.

Reception children, through discussion, learn the skills of respecting other people's views and opinions and to listen and respond to others. They also learn that they do not always have to agree with someone else.

All children are able to learn in an atmosphere of positive praise and interest in their achievements. Achievements - academic or other, are celebrated both in the class and by the whole school.

We are proud of how well older children take care of younger ones and how the younger children take care of the environment and each other.



Parents as Partners

When teachers and parents work together the results have a positive effect on the child's development and learning. Parents are kept informed about their child's progress and are encouraged to take an active part in their child's education. We send home each Friday a 'photo book' - in it you will find photos of what your child has been joining in with - there is also a general explanation of things we have done as a class during the week. We would like you to share these with your child at the weekend and add your comments of what they have been telling you about school or things you have noticed them doing at home. This is a **very** valuable way of us sharing information.



As a small school we are able to have regular contact with parents both informally and formally by just being here!

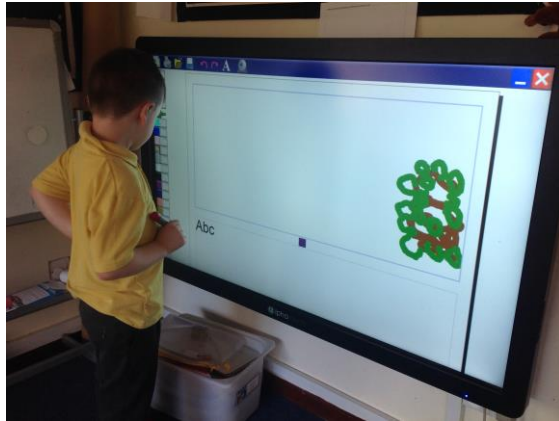
Literacy & Mathematics

We feel that a good start to learning literacy and mathematical skills is essential in order to be able to access all other aspects of the curriculum. Reception children are able to enjoy learning the true phonetic sounds and the high frequency vocabulary through a mixture of games, individual teaching and creative situations.



Many number activities relate to the children's experiences to make them relevant and so bring them to life. Number activities are carried out in practical ways and use real things eg when learning about money we use real coins not plastic, we measure objects outside on a large scale-round a tree trunk or small the longest dandelion stalk. Rhymes and songs are used to help learn the order of numbers and the children can self service the cupboard full of number activities available





In a small group situation it is easy for the children to develop the confidence to try out new activities in learning situations. Above all else we feel that children should have fun and enjoy their activities.



“Have a go” Writing

Writing develops over a long period of time. Children develop the muscles in their hands and in their eyes over several years. They need to build up their confidence over time through practical activities. Some of the activities that build writing muscles are:

- Squeezing dough
- Building with Lego
- Playing with wet and dry sand
- Threading beads
- Doing jigsaw puzzles
- Stirring, mixing and pouring



With encouragement from home and school, and plenty of practice in these everyday situations, your child's writing will develop more naturally. Confidence and a "have a go" attitude are vital for your child's development and for their future learning.

In the Reception class, children are introduced to the idea of "have a go" writing. The main purpose of this activity is for children to become confident, happy and keen to attempt writing. We want your children to try writing, to feel that it is alright to make a mistake, to have a go at words they are unsure of, to listen for sounds and write the ones they hear. All their attempts are encouraged and praised, and children who "have a go" at home are even more enthusiastic and confident, knowing that home and school are working together.



Have a go writing happens in all kinds of places - exploring outside, role play activities or creative activities such as making cards etc. This approach to writing is sometimes called 'emergent writing' or 'independent writing', and just like any new skill it needs to be learnt and then practised over and over again, and most important - have fun and enjoy yourselves!!



Reading and writing are closely linked. Because writing needs more muscles, it often develops slightly later, and most children can read more words than they will feel like writing. Writing develops in several stages, and different children take different lengths of time to cover the stages. They may stay at one stage for a long time, or miss a stage out entirely. Here are some examples which show the development:

- /\/\/\/\/\/\/\/\/\ *copying the writing they see adults do*
- 6M5 11 ssm m5 *a mixture of random letters and words*
- JJAMJASSE *writing strings of letters. Often in capitals, and they sometimes repeat the letters of the child's own name*

- mmbd *using the first letter sounds of some of the words (my mum's birthday)*
- mmsbdy *first and some last sounds of words*
- m ms bf d *beginning to space words*
- my mms bf day *some familiar words remembered from reading*
- my mums buf day *writing 'buf' as they say it, but spelling of other words is more accurate.*

Understanding the world

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and the community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment

Through these areas we want:

- to encourage and build on children's ideas, interests and natural curiosity
- to develop an awareness of their immediate environment
- to develop awareness of technology in their everyday lives
- to develop an awareness of the world in which they live and a concern for it
- to develop their ability to observe and question
- to begin to question as well as respect evidence



Teachers can encourage learning by:

- building on children's ideas and experiences
- planning a wide range of experiences and activities to stimulate curiosity
- encouraging observation and questioning
- developing skills and processes to find out
- introducing and using appropriate language to help communicate the outcomes of their learning
- acting as a role model
- using assessment and evaluation to inform their future planning

These skills and knowledge can be taught:

1. through specific, isolated or series of learning objectives linked to specific topics
2. throughout the day, often without specific planning, during practical activities and observations such as:
 - Mixing paint
 - Playing with water and sand
 - Building with bricks and blocks
 - Digging holes
 - Baking and other food preparation
 - Watching the bird table
 - Observing changes in the trees and plants in the school grounds
 - Using play equipment



ICT - Information and communication technology

In the Foundation Stage, as in key Stage 1, ICT is about a wide range of appliances and applications, not just computers. During the Foundation Stage, children will investigate domestic appliances and features in the local environment, learning how to control and manipulate all sorts of equipment and becoming independent with a range of everyday uses of information and communication technology. These will include telephones, clocks and timers programmable toys, CD ROMs, ipads, CD recorders, microphones and simple computer programmes



The curriculum for information and communication technology will help to develop:

- naming appliances which use ICT
- understanding that ICT is controlled by people
- knowing some of the different uses of technology
- developing appropriate vocabulary
- understanding how things work

Skills such as:

- operating a programmable toy
- using a simple computer programme
- using ICT to make things happen
- using a mouse, switching a recorder on and off
- developing hand eye co-ordination

Attitudes such as:

- independence in operating simple devices
- care and respect for the equipment
- working together in pairs or groups to operate simple equipment
- the ability to transfer skills and knowledge to other aspects of learning

Examples of when ICT is taught

- in isolation, linked to specific learning intentions
- as part of a topic, linked to specific learning intentions
- linked with activities from other areas of the Foundation curriculum

Expressive Arts and Design



Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.



The children are also encouraged to carry out independent learning - in other words if they wish to paint they learn how to get out paint and mix their own colours, if they want to play a game they get it out and when they have finished tidy it away, if they wish to make a model, they access the junk materials they think are suitable and create as independently as possible. Independent learning is carefully observed and encouraged by the staff and it is that with a mix of adult led teaching that allows children to develop to their full potential and 'stretched' even further.



The Environment

We feel that the school needs to be attractive and stimulating both inside and out and the children are lucky to be in such a beautiful environment. The children are able to have their curriculum enhanced by having access to Riding Mill Village - a safe environment to carry out local work, as well as having the stimulation of activities on offer in Hexham or Newcastle.

The classroom itself is set up in a very flexible way. We want the children to be able to follow their own interests and individual learning and so encourage the children to 'self-service'. You will see that the classroom can have many different areas set up - building, role play, book, small world, writing, creative, and that we do not have many tables - young children usually much prefer to work on the floor. The children are able to use the outdoor space, including the covered patio area any time during the day and whatever the weather.

We would like to invite any prospective parents to come to see Broomhaugh C of E First School and meet us, the staff. Please either telephone or call in to make an appointment to meet us, the other children in the school, and to look round.

Looking forward to meeting you.

Jen

Jen Stephenson (Headteacher and Reception Class Teacher)

