

Early Years Foundation Stage



At Newton International Academy EYFS, we aim to provide a broad, balanced, purposeful curriculum, which is in line with our school Mission and Vision, in order for all children to flourish and succeed. We strongly believe a child centred approach is key to enabling each individual child to realise his/her full potential. It is the child's individual needs, preferred learning styles and interests that enable us to plan a relevant, stimulating and exciting curriculum.

To meet the needs of all our children we aim to:

- Plan opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contributions of children are valued.
- Use resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping.
- Plan challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills.
- Monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary.

We incorporate the following principles into our good practice

- High expectations sit at the core of all we believe. Through precision assessment, planning and teaching every child will excel.
- We believe that learning is a partnership between children, families and school. Therefore, at NIA, we actively encourage parental involvement to promote shared understanding and experience between home and school.
- Every child is unique and special. Therefore, observation, assessment and evaluation of children's individual needs, ability and preferences are key - this enables teachers to plan precisely, enabling each child to make progress in all aspects of their learning and

development.

- Children grow and develop at different rates. We assess and observe children regularly in order to identify and promote children's individual abilities and strengths, offering them opportunities and challenges to experiment and succeed.
- Children learn most effectively through active participation within a familiar context; in a safe, secure and stimulating environment, where they are motivated and interested and where they feel confident in themselves and their own abilities. The environment and learning tools we provide, both indoors and out, will enable children to learn, flourish, grow and so fulfil their potential.
- Exploration gives children the opportunity to learn about themselves and the world they live in. Children learn by doing, rather than being told. Active learning is a fundamental principle that underpins the curriculum throughout primary school.
- Children need time and space to produce learning of quality and depth. Appropriate planning, evaluation, resourcing, organisation and management enables them to have this time and space.
- Children need to be encouraged to be independent and autonomous in their learning, to think in a positive way about themselves so that they feel respected as individuals, whose cultures and language are valued.
- All adults are positive role models; giving confidence and offering choices, aware of when to support learning and when to teach, in ensuring quality learning experiences for all children.

Incorporated in our daily practice is also the promotion of Qatari culture and Islamic values.

At NIA, we promote Arabic language, Islamic studies and Qatari culture in all aspects of Teaching and Learning, whenever possible and relevant. This is reflected in:

- Our Display Boards
- ECAs
- Our Library and classroom reading corners
- Celebrating Eid, Qatar National Day, Arabic week etc.
- Organising field trips within Doha
- Traditional Qatari artefacts to decorate our classroom (Majlis, coffee sets etc.)
- Traditional Qatari costumes for role play in the classrooms etc.

Arabic language and Islamic knowledge are taught separately.



Four guiding principles of the EYFS as well as the seven areas of learning shape our curriculum.

Guiding Principles:

1. A Unique Child

At NIA, we recognise that each child is an individual learner and that children develop in their own ways and at varying rates. We encourage children to become capable, resilient, confident and self-assured by ensuring each individual is valued for their unique character, abilities, interests and cultural heritage. We use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

2. Positive Relationships

Teachers and Teaching Assistants respectfully acknowledge and support children's learning, needs and feelings, and those of their family. Through the formation of secure, warm and trusting relationships with each child and their family, children learn to be strong and independent. All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

3. Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We believe that stimulating and safe indoor and outdoor learning environments which encourage children's independence, are central to their learning. We observe children in order to tune into their interests, needs and abilities and use these to underpin our planning. A rich and varied environment is carefully planned to ensure all children learn and develop well, are engaged and make progress at their own pace. Children develop the confidence to explore in the safe, yet challenging environment that we offer.

4. Development and Learning

The EYFS curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning and development. At NIA, we plan for each of the seven areas and are committed to supporting each individual child, including children with special educational needs and disabilities, when possible, to learn through play and exploration as well as by setting appropriate tasks within all of the seven areas. We encourage creative and critical thinking by making sure a wide range of resources is available to the children and that links are made between the areas of learning so children are able to transfer and generalise their knowledge and skills.



The Seven Areas of Learning:

The Three Prime Areas:

- **Communication and Language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development** provides opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement in both gross and fine motor skills. We help children to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** consists of helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

The Four Specific Areas:

- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** provide children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** enables 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.



Parents as Partners

At NIA we recognise that children learn to be independent by building secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents play in educating their children.

We do this through:

- Inviting all parents to an open day before their child starts school.
- Inviting parents to attend presentations about the curriculum and spend time in class to the curriculum in action
- An effective transition programme for both children and parents.
- Sharing the children's learning and interests with parents and valuing the parent's 'voice'.
- Displaying and valuing the children's work and interests on our display boards.
- Communicating with parents regularly with Class Dojo.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents.

Teaching and Learning in the EYFS centres

Our EYFS offers two stand-alone purpose-built centres, both offering outstanding facilities.

At NIA, we employ a range of different teaching strategies that enable children to experience all aspects of learning. We believe that there should be a balance between child-initiated and adult-led learning; this ensures there are opportunities for both purposeful learning and opportunities for children to explore, create and play. We acknowledge the central role of child-initiated learning and we ensure that provision for learning through play forms part of their daily experiences. For specific aspects of learning, we believe that adult-led activities, small group work, paired learning and whole class learning, offer children the opportunity to develop and enhance their understanding, knowledge and skills.



• The Learning Environment

We recognise the importance of providing a stimulating, interesting, welcoming, safe and challenging learning environment. All classrooms are organised and resourced to provide learning opportunities in the seven areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum. Children are taught to access the resources available in the classroom environment, independently. This enables them to follow their own ideas and interests. The variety of resources will be based on the needs and interests of the individual children.

• Indoor Provision

Each class is organised to create opportunities where the children can securely be active or be quiet and rest. The classroom provides a wide range of different learning areas:

- Reading corner – books, print, comics, magazines available
- Mark making/graphics area/Writing area
- Creative area
- Sand/water/exploration area key focus on understanding the world
- Role play area/home-corner
- Construction area
- Mathematics area

Outdoor Provision

At NIA, we believe in the importance of outdoor learning opportunities. All classrooms have their own enclosed outdoor learning area, as well as having an outdoor play space and garden. Being outdoors offers the children different opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

The outdoor provision includes opportunities for:

- Cycling-wheeled toys
- Climbing/balancing/jumping equipment
- Sand and water play
- Role play
- Exploration
- Large block play
- Mark-making
- Problem Solving and Numeracy



Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning at NIA follows a Long Term Plan, which is based around the objectives of the EYFS Curriculum. This plan is used by the EYFS teachers as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher and Foundation Stage staff may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children.

The foundation Stage staff observe children continually throughout the day taking notes and recordings. Class teachers and assistants meet weekly to discuss all observations and individual children's next steps. Planning for the following week is devised around these observations. Suitable enhancements, resources are sourced to ensure that the children's learning is scaffolded effectively.

Assessment for Learning (AFL) and Assessment of Learning (AOL) is at the heart of all we do at NIA. This means that assessment through observations takes place all the time.

We record our observations and children's progress in the form of a 'Learning Journey' which is presented to the parents at the completion of the academic year.

Phonics, reading and writing at NIA is taught using a synthetic phonics program. We use the 'Jolly Phonics' program as a basis. Story books are used daily for the children to learn to rehearse oral stories in order to build their own confidence in storytelling, structure and adaptations or extensions. This is supported through the use of the 'Talk for Writing' program. Through engaging children in key texts, they learn key phrases and develop the ability to retell the stories using actions or their own words. Eventually, they will be able to adapt the stories they know to retell or write their own.

Children's mathematical knowledge and skills develop by utilising key strategies from Developmental Matters Mathematics where the children utilise concrete, pictorial and abstract methods to understand and apply mathematical knowledge and skills.

- **Assessment at the end of the Foundation Stage (F2)**

In the final term of the Foundation Stage we assess children against the Early Learning Goals. Teachers must indicate whether children are **Working At, Working Towards** or **Working Below** the Early Learning Goals.

- **Termly reports**

We provide a written summary to parents, at the end of each term, reporting on their children's progress against Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). Parents have the

opportunity to meet with their child's teacher after the issuing of these reports to discuss progress.

- **The important role of all adults**

We recognise the importance of the role that all early years educators play in the care and education of all children. These roles include:

- Building relationships.
- Observing and assessing children to identify their wellbeing and involvement, their needs, strengths, schemas and interests
- Planning for next steps in learning
- Supporting and extending child-led and child-initiated activities
- Engaging children in focused activity
- Maintaining and developing a stimulating, welcoming safe and challenging learning environment
- Working as a team to ensure that all children reach their full potential

Inclusion

At NIA, we value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued and we aim to give each of them the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

- We promote inclusion and celebrate diversity – parents are welcome to share information about their cultural background with the staff (improve 'all about me' document to include multicultural pictures and if possible, disabilities) so they can develop a better understanding of the children in their care.
- We are inclusive – we welcome staff from different backgrounds and nationalities as long as they are fluent in English (Teachers) or have a good command of it (TAs), have the right qualifications and the skills required to work with EYFS children.

Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe emotionally and physically. To achieve that, we aim to provide them with choices to help them develop life skills. We understand they need to take risks, while being taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to educate them on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why these are needed.

At NIA, we are committed to:

- Promote the welfare of all children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

We recognise that all staff have an active part to play in protecting children from harm.

- The school follows the 'Safeguarding and Child Protection' policy and any concerns about the safety of our children are reported to a senior member of staff.
- All staff understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to their line management.
- At NIA we establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to. We provide opportunities for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and neglect.

