

Tickhill Estfeld Primary School
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
Effective from 1st September 2012

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our Reception Class.

Philosophy

At Tickhill Estfeld Primary School we acknowledge the role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying the secure foundations for future learning and development of life skills. We feel it is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. As outlined in the EYFS,

'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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. All children will come to school with their own life experiences and it is our privilege to acknowledge and build upon that prior learning. We create a safe and happy environment in which everyone is included, respected and valued, so that they may grow in self-esteem and develop to their full potential. We provide motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident, independent, self-disciplined, self-motivated and resilient. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to ensure their needs are met and help every child to reach their full potential.

We hope that by taking children on their first steps through education that they will be confident and happy to become lifelong learners, with the enthusiasm to accept challenge and embrace new opportunities. We seek to develop and promote lively and inquisitive minds with the desire

and skill to explore new ideas. Foster a sense of awe and wonder and develop natural curiosity, so children enjoy learning in and out of school. We encourage our children to believe in themselves, while equipping them with the fundamental skills to enjoy and achieve in life.

Aims

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Behaviour Policy.

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

- 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,
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment

- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- 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 and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form 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 in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We

aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

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. 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 group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared and individual reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'Each area of learning and development is 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, early years practitioners interact 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

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated along with evidence of their work and kept as a record of their learning in the EYFS. We also engage in the LA moderation process to ensure that assessments are accurate.

In the Autumn and Spring term, parents are invited to attend a parents evening and an annual report is written in the Summer term. The annual report is based on the child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher in preparation for Year 1.

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. School has policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Child Protection, First Aid, Managing Medicines.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals 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 support them at their own pace so that the vast majority of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. 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. See our separate policies on Equality Opportunities and Special Educational Needs.

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 participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. 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.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on local visits and inviting members of the community into our setting.

We also take the pupils on visits to places of interest that are linked to curriculum topics and invite visitors to school to enhance and enrich the children's learning experiences.

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 childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a booklet containing photos and information prior to starting school that allows the child and parents to familiarise themselves with school routines and policies . All pupils start school full time in September.

Throughout the Reception Year there are many opportunities for the pupils to take part in activities with the other classes in school. In the summer term the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Reception staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.