



EYFS Years Policy and Procedures

Thameside Primary School

'Learning to be me'

Last reviewed: May 2022

Next review date: May 2024

Thameside Primary School is a member of the Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust, a multi-academy trust (MAT) incorporated around the principles and values of the international co-operative movement. These are Equality, Equity, Democracy, Self-help, Self-Responsibility and Solidarity, along with the ethical values of openness, honesty, social responsibility and caring for others. These values and principles underpin all our actions

Introduction

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. Together, good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2021 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Principles

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A unique child.

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement as well as celebration and rewards to encourage and develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships.

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

Enabling environments.

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observations, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Learning and development.

The Early Years environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas where children can find and locate equipment and resources independently

Early childhood is the building blocks upon which children build the rest of their lives. At Thameside Primary School, we value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning and it is the privilege of the adults working in Thameside Early Years to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians, support staff and the Early Years team work effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their care.

Learning and development is categorised into three prime areas of learning:

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

Additionally, there are four specific areas of learning:

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

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning underpin achievement of these prime and specific areas of learning. They describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. These are vital elements to support the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. The characteristics represent processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

EYFS Rational

In the Early Years at Thameside Primary School, we believe that every pupil is unique. We ensure all children have the opportunity to develop and learn in a safe and nurturing environment where play and learning is combined. Through practical learning experiences, we strive to equip children with a love of learning and a natural curiosity. We are committed to giving our pupils the best possible start to their school life, teaching them skills that ensure their wellbeing now and success in the future.

Aims

Our intent is to:

- Establish an environment that is nurturing, bright and exciting and one that is full of interesting and challenging activities in which learning can take place
- Respond to children's interests and use these to inform planning
- Deliver a curriculum based on entitlement for all, which considers each child's existing knowledge and experiences, and where the children can engage in first-hand experiences
- Capitalise on children's interests in order to achieve learning outcomes
- Be flexible and responsive so that plans can be changed or adapted to follow the interests of the children and respond to external events
- Give children opportunities to practise, revise and extend knowledge and skills in a consistent and stable environment and that children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Enable children to develop characteristics of effective learning, which will enable them to become independent, resourceful and resilient learners now and throughout their education.
- Provide quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress from their starting point
- Develop close partnerships, working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers

Concepts:

Our curriculum is designed to develop the characteristics of effective learning:

- Creating and thinking critically – pupils have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things
- Active learning – pupils keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements
- Playing and exploring – pupils investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Implementation

In order to implement our intent, we have:

- The Thameside curriculum which is broad and balanced, and which builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills of all pupils, from individual starting points

- An Early Years curriculum that uses a combination of topic themes and enrichment opportunities
- Meaningful learning experiences, developing each pupil's characteristics of learning
- High quality interactions and observations with adults that demonstrate and impact on the progress of all pupils and learning outcomes
- Careful assessment opportunities through observations, which are recorded on Tapestry and shared with parents. These are used to inform the next steps of learning and meet individual needs.
- Developed an effective, engaging and challenging environment that is set up so that pupils can access all areas of learning both inside and outside at any one time
- An environment set up so that basic, continuous and enhanced provision is planned in accordance to assessment and key skills
- Daily phonics lessons, including continuous provision where phonics activities are available for children to consolidate and extend phonic skills and knowledge
- Ensured that staff are equipped with the necessary professional development to deliver our curriculum
- An Early Years lead who monitors teaching and learning to improve standards and outcomes
- A curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils (including SEND, EAL and PPG)

Impact

Through implementing the above:

- Children's progress is at least good from their varied starting points
- Children reach or exceed the Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception
- Children demonstrate curiosity, independence, resilience and other characteristics of effective learning.
- Children display a willingness to make the transition from Early Years in to KS1

The Induction Process

A parent welcome meeting will be held to outline key information for the next academic year.

A staff member from Reception or Nursery will visit the 'new child' to Thameside and their family for a home visit. During this visit, essential information for the next academic year is shared.

Each child will be invited to a transition session so they can spend some time at Thameside Primary School in order to familiarise themselves with both the staff and the Early Years environment.

Staff from the Early Years will meet with Nursery practitioners to understand the current abilities and needs of the pupils.

Children will have a phased timetable during the first few weeks of term to ease the transition period.

All children are individuals and the transition they need to start school will be tailored to their needs. This may mean a longer settling process is required for some pupils to ensure their wellbeing. The staff in Early Years are happy to offer advice and support during this period.

Working with Parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. Twice yearly parent evenings and the EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Parents are able to access observations on Tapestry and record achievements made at home.

Assessment

At Thameside Primary, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These formative assessments inform future planning and ensure that all pupils build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace. Evidence of children's achievements are recorded online using Tapestry and in writing books. Assessments and judgments are moderated both in school and externally with local and/or Trust schools.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development, or
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers.

Organisation and Play

Learning through play is integral to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Through daily play based activities, our children explore and develop learning experiences that will help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas on how to control themselves, leading them to understand the need for rules. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems, as well as having opportunities to express fears or review anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

The Reception classes have their own timetables. Each day, children will take part in a range of adult-led focussed activities and are offered a range of child-led activities. There are opportunities for learning to take place both indoors and outdoors.

Assessments

During the first few weeks in the Early Years the teacher also completes a brief initial assessment of each child's knowledge of number and sounds, followed by a baseline assessment of the seven learning areas through well thought out learning opportunities and observations. These baseline assessments are completed as soon as possible and no later than the first half term for each child. Baseline assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort and to plan for individual children and groups of children. We use this information to inform planning and set targets for the children.

Within the first 6 weeks of Reception, all pupils must complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is completed electronically with a familiar adult and tests pupils understanding in Communication & Language and Mathematics. Results and reports are kept confidential on each pupil's school record.

Parents and Carers receive a report at the end of the Early Years that provides an outline of their child's progress in each of the seven learning areas in line with the EYFS Profile. The report highlights the child's strengths and developmental needs and comments on the child's general progress.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the staff to follow this policy. CLT and SLT will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.