

Tithe Farm Primary School



EYFS Policy

Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year and is intended to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. At Tithe Farm Primary School, we have a Nursery and Reception provision. We believe that early childhood is the foundation in which children build the rest of their lives and at Tithe Farm Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. To ensure best practice and continuity our Foundation Stage classes work closely together and share planning, activities and an outdoor learning environment.

We are committed to underpinning our provision with the four principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage:

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

Aims

At Tithe Farm Primary we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and fearless lifelong learners. We will encourage children to develop independence within a safe and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school.

At Tithe Farm Primary School, we will:

- ❖ Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- ❖ Provide a broad, balanced, relevant, fun and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundation for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- ❖ Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and next steps and helping each child to progress. We will use a variety of assessment methods including formative and summative assessments.
- ❖ Develop positive relationships and parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.

- ❖ Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

A Unique Child

We recognise that each child learns and develops in various ways and at different rates and this is reflected in our provision. The characteristics of effective learning support the child to become a motivated and effective learner. Children will play and explore and 'have a go' at using available resources, developing their language and experiences. Children will develop resilience and enjoy achievements through active learning and will make links, explore their ideas and strategies for problem solving through creating and thinking critically. Practitioners support children in developing all these characteristics through playing alongside children and where necessary, scaffolding and supporting their thoughts.

Children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. We welcome all children and families into our setting so that they feel included, safe and valued.

The Learning Environment

At Tithe Farm Primary School our areas are thoroughly thought out to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, be creative etc.

In EYFS we recognise the importance of a rich environment both inside and outside. The environment is set up to support all learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Children have access to both the inside and the outside environment at various points in the day which is known to have a positive effect on the children's development. Spending time outdoors offers opportunities for exploring and learning things differently to when pupils are indoors and gives things a different perspective. The children can explore, use their sense and be physically active.

Learning and Development

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the learning aims and objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in all early years' settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected, and none can be delivered in isolation from the others.

At Tithe Farm Primary School, all areas are delivered through a well-planned play based approach with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. Throughout the Foundation Stage our long, medium and short-term plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area at the appropriate developmental level. Our long term planning ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow a half termly topic based approach which allows flexibility to ensure that both children's needs and interests are taken into account.

The three Prime Areas are:

- ❖ Personal, Social and Emotional Development – children develop confidence and self-esteem, learn how to manage feelings and respect others
- ❖ Communication and Language – children have opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and experience a rich language environment
- ❖ Physical Development - children have opportunities to be active and develop coordination (both gross motor and fine motor) and they learn about healthy choices.

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The Specific Areas are:

- ❖ Literacy – involves children learning how letters link to the sounds and begin to read and write
- ❖ Mathematics – children have opportunities to develop counting and calculating skills, to use numbers in everyday activities and recognise and describe shapes and measures
- ❖ Understanding of the World – children have opportunities to find out about people and communities, the environment and technology
- ❖ Expressive Arts and Design – involves exploring feelings and ideas through music, dance, role play and design

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. We embrace the fact that a young child learns best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning and to help them make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them.

The three characteristics 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 achievements

- ❖ **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

These characteristics weave through all seven areas of learning and develop as children learn new things, acquire new skills, develop socially and emotionally and become better communicators.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Teaching and Learning

The curriculum is delivered through a balance of child-initiated (play-based) and adult-led learning. Every day, children are given plenty of opportunity for prolonged periods of uninterrupted play so that they can learn through exploration, discovery, rehearsal and experimentation. Great care is given to setting up our indoor and outdoor learning environments to ensure that they facilitate what we would like the children to learn and also reflect the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Resources are chosen and enhancements planned that encourage children to collaborate, persevere and problem solve whilst at the same time developing their personal and social skills. Alongside play-based learning, adult-led sessions take place throughout the week to introduce new learning, develop vocabulary, share stories, and celebrate our achievements. These may take the form of whole class or small group sessions and are planned to be short, focused and interactive, providing further opportunity for sustained shared-thinking and collaborative working.

Role of the Practitioner

Staff carefully plan enhancements to the continuous provision available during child-initiated learning, both indoors and outdoors, to provide a positive context for teaching and learning. Their role during this time is to interact with the children to support and extend learning and to be alert to possibilities that will naturally enhance outcomes for children through play. This includes helping children to make connections in their learning and to reflect on what they have previously learnt to move them forward, through appropriate questioning and discussion.

In addition, practitioners make skilled and meaningful observations of children which are used to identify children's Next Steps. This continual assessment provides a picture of every child's development and progress which is fed into planning, ensuring further quality play and activities are provided which encourage an appropriate level of challenge for each child.

Assessment/Expectations

Continual assessments are made of the children's learning and this information is used to inform future planning to reflect identified needs. The assessment processes in the EYFS:

- Offers all of our children an opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do
- Recognises all the areas of learning in the EYFS
- Considers the characteristics of effective teaching and learning of individual pupils.

- Relates to clear learning intentions
- Enables staff to plan more effectively.
- Helps parents to be fully involved in their child's progress.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, photographs, video and teacher judgements and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. Observations, photographs and videos are uploaded to Tapestry, a secure web-based programme that can be accessed at home by parents. This is used to inform the end of Reception Early Years Foundation Stage Profile for each child which is reported to the Local Authority at the end of the academic year. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the Early Learning Goals. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher. We adhere to the statutory guidance for assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA) for the EYFS profile for the latest academic year.

At the start of Early Years, children are assessed to determine a baseline, or starting point, for their future learning. This is completed using the government baseline test; however, staff will also make their own judgements based on the adults' observations of children during activities and play and this data will be used to plan next steps for each child.

Each term, staff assess the pupils against termly 'On-track' statements generated in school. These statements are based on practitioner knowledge and experience of progress in Early Years, progression documents and the necessary skills to work towards the Early Learning Goals. Any pupil who is not currently working at the expected level is offered additional interventions to support their progress and development.

At the end of the year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

The children are assessed as achieving a 1 or 2 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:

- ❖ 2 = Expected ELG – meeting the expected level
- ❖ 1 = Emerging ELG – not yet meeting the expected level

This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements. Parents/carers will be given information of their child's achievements in a written report at the end of the Summer term.

Inclusion

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the Foundation Stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively; a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued; resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service, the educational psychologist and the bi-lingual support services amongst others. We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

Early Years Pupil Premium – we will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child's entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children's progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

Next Review: September 2026