



Thameside Primary School: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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Policy reviewed by:	Christina Calvert & Sebastian Sussmann
Key Changes:	4.1 planning 4.2 Teaching 6. working with parents



1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the wide range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to the learning and development of all children from birth to the end of the Reception Year.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. It is not just a preparation for the next stage but is vitally important in itself.

Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, create, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the Foundation Stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.



The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

4.1 Planning

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

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.

We create weekly plans based on a series of topics outlined in our EYFS curriculum progression map, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively.

Staff also consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.



4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-initiated and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

During the first few weeks of their school journey, there are minimal adult-led sessions and inputs to allow for maximum time for staff to get to know the children and settle them into school. Following the school's baseline assessment of children's Communication & Language skills, activities that excite and engage the children are planned to support C&L development. We would then introduce some adult-led tasks such as Drawing Club and Together Time. Once children are assessed as being developmentally ready, tutor table activities are introduced and the number of adult-led tasks increases. In the final term, to prepare children for the move to Year 1, there is an expectation that children will plan their child-led activities in more detail (such as drawing their woodwork project before starting it or writing a recipe from the mud kitchen).

Throughout Foundation Stage the curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must 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 which are planned by adults. Careful consideration is given to both the indoor and outdoor learning provision to ensure that the environment is the child's third teacher (Alister Bryce-Clegg 2021 www.abcdoes.co.uk). During children's play, the adults in class interact, when appropriate, to extend and challenge them further.

As a priority, adults continually enhance the provision in response to children's needs and interests and topics being taught. They do this by adding new resources, prompts, or challenges to deepen learning, sustain engagement and practice taught skills. This ensures that the environment remains dynamic, relevant, and reflective of the children's current fascinations.

We also provide the children with the opportunity to take part in Nature School sessions several times a term, where they are taken offsite to explore and learn through nature.

5. Assessment

At Thameside Primary School 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 observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also consider observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).



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 (met)
- Not yet reaching expected levels (not met)

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators and we believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/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.

- Holding a New Parents information evening before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our visits to Thameside and then stay and play sessions in July and then again at our transition/meet the teacher visits in Transition Week;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent/teacher meeting in the Autumn and Spring Terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Inviting parents to participate in short training sessions to help support their child's learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys on Tapestry;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing newsletters each term with overviews of upcoming topics;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.



Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

The key person assigned to each child in the Foundation Stage is their class teacher, ensuring that learning and care is tailored to meet each individual child's needs. The teacher supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home through termly parent/teacher meetings and by being available on the gate at the end of the day to speak to parents/carers if needed. The teacher, the FS team leader and the emotional, behaviour, wellbeing and welfare officer (located in the Thameside Family Hub) are also available to help families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Thameside Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety. In the Foundation Stage we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the Foundation Stage early years by teaching the children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- The importance of regular physical activity
- The importance of sensible amounts of screen time
- The importance of getting enough sleep

We also promote the good health of the children in our care through the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Photographing children (taken from p.31 of our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy)

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the school play, or at sports day, or school presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes. However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this - i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, we will ask that flash photography is disabled.

We will not allow images of pupils to be used on school websites, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name. All parents will be asked for written permission to use photos as required by GDPR.



The school cannot however be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at school functions although we will ask parents not to put photos of other children on social networking sites

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Transition

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Children attend visits to school with their parents/carers and also with their nurseries into our Foundation Stage to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners. Our Foundation Stage staff also visit all feeder settings in return, to familiarise themselves with the children.

Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the offer of a home visit (by the Foundation Stage class teacher and TA) or have the option to instead meet with FS staff in school. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns/queries they may have.

To ensure a smooth transition into Year 1, during the summer term Year 1 staff, where possible both teachers and TAs, are released to come into Foundation Stage and play with the children. This allows the children to become familiar with new staff in a secure environment. Children transition to their new class in the last full week of the Summer term, including Thamesfest which parents are invited to. Foundation Stage staff and Year 1 staff have time together to discuss each child to ensure that the Year 1 staff have good knowledge of their class before they start. Progression documents have been produced by foundation subject leads so that staff are aware of the children's prior learning in these areas. In September, the Foundation Stage staff spend time in Year 1 to help settle and support the children into their new classes as the new cohort start on a staggered, part-time timetable. The Foundation Stage staff and Year 1 staff also use this time to further discuss the children.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the head teacher and governing body of Thameside Primary School every year.

Reviewed and updated by: Mr Sussman, EYFS Lead



Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy Click here to view policy on the school website
Transition into EYFS	See Transition into Reception Policy Click here to view policy on the school website
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy Click here to view policy on the school website
Administering medicines policy	See medical conditions policy Click here to view policy on the school website
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy Click here to view policy on the school website
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy Click here to view policy on the school website
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy Click here to view policy on the school website
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy Click here to view policy on the school website



This policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework updates for group and school-based providers (effective January 2024) and the revised safeguarding and welfare requirements coming into force from September 2025.