

# Thorpe Acre Infant School

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy (EYFS) Policy



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At Thorpe Acre Infant School we are committed to providing a high quality early years' education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

Children join our Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

We endeavour to ensure that children "learn and develop well and kept healthy and safe." We aim to support children in their learning through "teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2012)

## **Organisation**

At Thorpe Acre, we have between 1 and 2 Foundation Stage classes, depending on our intake which varies year to year. We share a large double bay and outdoor area. Each class has a carpet area and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones that all of the children can access. There are one/two full time teachers, who are supported by Nursery Nurses/Learning Support Assistants depending on the size of the cohort. Other teaching assistants may be deployed in Reception based on the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day. Most sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A unique child – developing resilient, capable, confident and self-assured individuals.
- Positive relationships – supporting the children in becoming strong and independent.
- Enabling environments – where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents/carers and the child.

Learning and developing – An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014)

## **A Unique Child**

At Thorpe Acre Infant School 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, 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 children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

## **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Thorpe Acre Infant School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. 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.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, disadvantaged children, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from Diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Please refer to the school's 'Equality Policy', 'SEN' and 'G and T' policies.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- \*planning opportunities that 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;
- \*providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- \*providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- \*using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- \*planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- \*monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

## **Welfare**

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

"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."

## **Keeping Safe**

At Thorpe Acre Infant School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

## ***Behaviour Management***

Please refer to the school's 'Behaviour Management' policy.

### ***Safeguarding***

Please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding Children' policy.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Thorpe Acre Infant School we recognise that secure relationships are paramount for children's development to take place. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families

### **Parents as Partners**

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 have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during transfer sessions;
- Support children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time during the first two weeks. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children. During this period parents are invited to attend play and stay sessions and questionnaires are filled out about their child and their current interests to inform planning.
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school and again during the first half term of the child's Reception year in order to detail how we aim to work with their child particularly in relation to reading and phonics;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents twice a year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: stay and play sessions, open mornings, Forest school activities, cultural days/celebrations, sharing and adding to learning journeys and fund raising events;
- providing parents an opportunity to celebrate their child's learning and development by completing I am proud of my child certificates and the achievement tree which inform planning and provision and Allstars assemblies;
- Home link books which have activities for the children to practice the skills they have learnt in school, holiday diaries and written contact between parents and staff, as well as the acknowledgement that parents can ring school to contact key workers.

- Children taking reading and library books home which is monitored by the Nursery Nurse
- ensuring all parents know that their child's teacher and teaching assistant are their key workers and
- By providing a quiet and confidential area where parents are able to discuss any concerns.

## **Key Person Approach**

The class teacher is responsible for the wellbeing of all of the children in their class. In addition, each child is assigned a 'key person' who may be the teacher, Nursery Nurse or a teaching assistant. Throughout the year the children will meet regularly in their key people groups and take part in certain activities together.

The key person's responsibilities include:

- to ensure every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs
- To help the child become familiar with the setting and offer a settled relationship for the child
- To build a relationship with their parents

## **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision.

Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual learning folders. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

## **Forest Schools**

The Foundation Stage Co-ordinator is a qualified level 3 Forest School Practitioner. Each week children take part in a Forest School session. We use the school grounds and natural materials to give children different experiences and to gain new skills in the natural environment. Children have access to waterproof clothing, wellies, den building materials, different tools and a fire circle. Each week children make their own snack outside on the bonfire. We have a policy for using the outdoor environment. Risk assessments are in place for the outdoor site, bonfire, tools and other materials that the children may be using. A Forest School site risk assessment is carried out before each session.

## **Learning and Development**

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.” The prime areas are

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

The specific areas are

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

## **Observation and Assessment**

At Thorpe Acre, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children’s learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child initiated activities, practitioners make ‘snapshot’ observations on Tapestry, post it notes and take photographic evidence. Each child has a ‘Learning Journey’ and a webpage on Tapestry where all observations are gathered along with examples of work, photos and parental contributions.

During the first half of the Autumn term, the Foundation Stage teachers use their knowledge of each child alongside the profile information from Pre-school and the child’s learning journey to decide which band of ‘Early Outcomes’ they are working on and if they are at the typical level of development in each area of the curriculum. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and also provides an on entry of the children’s attainment. This data is entered into the ‘EYFS Data Collection’, which allows the children’s progress to be tracked and the cohort’s data to be analysed.

In the Summer term, we finalise the EYFS Profile scores for each child decided if they are ‘emerging’, ‘expected’ or ‘exceeding’ in each area of learning. Judgements against these scales are made from observations of consistent and independent behaviour, predominantly in children’s self-initiated activities. The EYFS profile scores are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

All data is moderated between all members of the Foundation stage Team termly. In the summer term we moderate with other schools and the local authority.

## **Planning**

We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

## Long Term and Medium Term Planning

### Long Term Planning

Our long term plan includes what SEAL topics and PE focuses are to be covered each term and which festivals and celebrations will take place throughout the year.

### Medium Term Planning

Our Medium Term planning reflects what objectives need to be covered for all groups of children throughout the term. Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children and their interests.

### Short Term Planning

Short term planning is continuous. It shows the learning opportunities that will be available daily. It includes differentiated whole class and adult led experiences for a range of curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to children's interests, previous observations and assessment of the children.

At Thorpe Acre Infant School:

“Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is used as an essential part children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.” (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014)

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. At Thorpe Acre we support children in using the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning. These 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; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2014)

## Community Links

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. For example during our activities on 'People Who Help Us' we were visited by our lolly

pop man and the fire brigade. We also like to get out and about in our local area such as visits to the local supermarket.

## **Equal Opportunities**

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

## **Health and Safety**

At Thorpe Acre Infants, there are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school risk assessment policy) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, an annual risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) .The EYFS risk assessment must be read in conjunction with other relevant whole school policies (see EYFS risk assessment)

## ***Medicines***

Please refer to the school's 'policy.

## **Transition**

### **Transition from Pre-school to Reception**

We work closely with our on-site pre-school and other feeder settings to ensure that the children make a smooth transition to school. We regularly make visits to pre-school and plan joint activity mornings together. In the summer term, we hold a welcome meeting for parents to come and meet us, we also organise opportunities for the new children to come and visit with their parents. In addition school staff make visits to meet the children, talk to preschool staff and look at learning journeys.

During the first week of term we invite parents to our 'stay and play' mornings, where they can meet the staff, get to know our setting and enjoy the activities with their children. We also talk to each parent individually in this session about their children's needs and interests and answer any questions that they may have.

We hold a transition meeting for new parents in the summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations.

The children start school on a part-time timetable. After two weeks, if the children are settled and ready they begin full-time. Routines such as assemblies and playtimes are built up gradually, with support from the children's key people.

### **Transition from Reception to Year One**



During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Getting the children ready:

During the summer term we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, their new teacher visiting Foundation Stage where the children can share their learning journeys, discussion with current Year One children, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. The school holds a 'Move Up' afternoon/morning, giving the children a taste of their new class.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the Foundation teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.