

Tansley Primary School EYFS Policy



Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad 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
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Legislation

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

This document also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the Curriculum as outlined in the 2021 Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The EYFS framework outlines the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the 7 areas of Development (CoETL).

The CoETL are organised into three primary strands and are essential components towards children becoming self-regulated learners.

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
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

There are 17 aspect areas (early learning goals) within 7 curriculum areas of development. These are divided into Prime and Specific areas of learning.

The 3 Prime areas of learning

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and language underpins all areas of learning within our early years curriculum and continues to be developed within our provision, teaching, learning and planning methods.

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. Planned learning supports the progress and development of listening and speaking, enabling children to process information into thinking and understanding. Children practise their physical skills alongside developing social skills, which supports greater independence and higher levels of confidence.

The 4 Specific Areas of learning

4. Literacy

5. Maths

6. Understanding the World

7. Expressive Arts and Design

The 4 specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas. Our continuous provision demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting children's understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn 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 4 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.

Planning

The 3 prime areas are at the core of early years planning. Staff carefully plan activities which enable children to link personal experiences with new learning, providing a wide range of contexts to revisit, practise, apply, and develop transferable skills and understanding. Emphasis is placed upon the importance of using sensory play in the development of language skills, alongside enhancing provision for identified groups of children.

Staff take into account the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences. 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.

Staff are reflective in their practice and systematically observe and evaluate the effectiveness and value of planned provision within the inside and outside learning spaces. They respond to children's levels of interest and engagement, ensuring accurate pitch and pace for developing cognition and learning. Planning and interactions are supported by progressive sequences of questioning to develop thinking, understanding and language for reasoning.

Teaching

Early Years practice demonstrates a balance between play and formal teaching.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

Staff interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play, provides rich opportunities for communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges.

Staff understand that play is about much more than content, but helps to build flexible minds and an enquiring spirit. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. They take into account the equipment provided and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations.

Staff understand that teaching is in every activity provided within all of the learning environments. There are no activities that occur in the setting which adults do not consider to be opportunities for teaching. While staff do not always know where these opportunities will present themselves, it is the skill of the adults that enable them to readily recognise the 'teachable moments' when they arise and respond to them appropriately.

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.

Assessment

Assessment Throughout Early Years, the children's knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'. 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 and everyone in class is encouraged to contribute. Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children and, to this end, we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children's strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children's next steps in learning.

Every child has a 'Learning Journal' held on Evidence Me in which we record our observations and keep samples of the children's work. Parents/carers receive a notification when an observation has been added to their child's Learning Journal and they can then view this observation and any related photographs/videos and assessments. Parents/carers are encouraged to add their own comments and also to upload their own observations to show us what their children are able to do at home. Children's 'Next Steps in Learning' are added to some observations so that parents/carers know how to help their children with their learning at home. These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile/Development Matters bands. The children's progress is reviewed continually.

Throughout their time in Reception, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally through our 'open door' policy and more formally during parent/teacher consultations.

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.

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between Nursery practitioners, Class teachers, Teaching assistants and parents and/or carers.

Reception 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.

Reception staff conduct parent/carer meetings twice a year and invite the children to share and celebrate their learning as often as possible.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Monitoring of the EYFS

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. The EYFS Leader is responsible for monitoring provision, teaching and learning and children's progress. Information is shared with the Headteacher, SLT and Reception team as appropriate, and any necessary actions are taken. All adults in the Reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets