



# **Thomas Fairchild Primary School**

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

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#### **Introduction**

*“Children are like tiny flowers; they are varied and need care, but each is beautiful alone and glorious when seen in the community of peers.” (Friedrich Froebel)*

*At Thomas Fairchild Primary School we aim to nourish and support these flowers to blossom during their time in early years and be well equipped to continue their life journey .*

This policy outlines the provision Thomas Fairchild Primary School offers to all its pupils aged three to five years. Children within this age range are taught in The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The Foundation Stage has its own framework and is therefore treated as a separate Key Stage. Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) refers to three to four year olds and is formally known as the Nursery. Foundation Stage 2 (FS2) refers to four to five year olds and is formally known as Reception.

#### **Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework**

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. A large emphasis is placed on securing and strengthening the Key Person relationship, so that children feel safe and secure to learn.

- *Enabling environments.* We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending 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 Foundation stage is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classrooms and outdoor are set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently supporting child initiated learning. The outdoor area provides a space for children to be active and use their gross and fine motor skills during play and is an extensions of the learning indoors.

At Thomas Fairchild Primary School we value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. Early Years experience should build on what the children already know and can do. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. We believe that Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives and we aim to give children the best start possible.

### **Our School Aims**

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. We work to ensure that no child is disadvantaged, and that all children feel included, secure and valued. Parents and practitioners are encouraged to work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

At Thomas Fairchild School Primary School we believe in nothing but the best and strive to provide an outstanding education.

### **The Early Years Framework**

The Early Years Framework in its current form became statutory in September 2012. At Thomas Fairchild Primary School we adhere to this new framework. All children in the EYFS have access to a broad, rich topic based curriculum both indoors and outdoors. We have adopted these areas of learning and experience from the national ages and stages in the Early Years framework. At our school we recognise that children have different starting points so we endeavor to provide learning relevant to the levels of need. We provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they initiate themselves. Practitioners observe and respond appropriately to children, informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn. Practitioners engage children in the learning process through well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention.

The Foundation Stage has an enclosed outdoor area, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

### **The Seven Areas of Learning**

The seven areas of learning covered by the framework are:

#### **PRIME AREA: Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**

This area has three sub sections. These are Making Relationships, Self-confidence and Self-awareness and Managing Feelings and Behaviour. The outcomes focus on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. They cover important aspects of personal, social, moral and spiritual development including the development of personal values and an understanding of self and others.

#### **PRIME AREA: Communication and Language (C and L)**

This is broken down into three sub sections. These cover Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking. These outcomes cover important aspects of language development and provide the foundations for literacy. The Early Years Policy places a strong emphasis on children's developing competence in Speaking and Listening and Understanding. At Thomas Fairchild we benefit from having onsite speech and language therapists who give teachers support and advice when needed, as well as developing children's communication skills.

#### **PRIME AREA: Physical Development (PD)**

This covers both fine and gross motor development and keeping healthy. Physical development is implicit in all areas of the EYFS framework. Teaching concentrates on children's developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Positive attitudes are encouraged towards a healthy and active way of life. Children have access to milk and fruit throughout the day.

#### **SPECIFIC AREA: Mathematics (M)**

This is broken down into two sub sections. These are Number and Shape, Space and Measures. These outcomes cover important aspects of mathematical understanding and provide the foundation for Mathematics. They focus on achievement through practical activities and are using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas.

### **SPECIFIC AREA: Literacy (L)**

This area of learning has two sub sections of Reading and Writing. The objectives ensure success in early reading and writing skills. Phonics plays a big part in this area and the ability to blend for reading and segment for spelling are skills that are promoted daily in the Foundation Stage at Thomas Fairchild School Primary School. In EYFS we use talk for writing strategies termly to excite children and teach key literacy skills like story maps, retelling stories verbally and writing for a purpose.

### **SPECIFIC AREA: Understanding the World (U the W)**

This covers the subjects Geography, Science, DT, History, RE and ICT. This is a major area of learning and enquiry focusing on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. It provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.

### **SPECIFIC AREA: Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)**

This covers art, music, and drama. This area of the EYFS framework focuses on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways such as role play. We change our role play areas regularly and base this on children's current interests or topics.

### **Characteristics of effective learning and transition to Keystage 1**

There are three characteristics of effective learning in the EYFS describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are:

**Playing and exploring – engagement**

**Active learning – motivation**

**Creating and thinking critically – thinking**

The characteristics of learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to Year 1. 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. Furthermore to prepare children for Key stage 1 Children will have a more structured timetable in the summer term and have learning time in their new classrooms in year 1 with their new teachers.

This is also the case for transition in the Early Years. Children joining the Nursery from the Children's Centre will have shared use of the nursery playground and play in the Nursery classroom. Nursery and Reception children already share a shared playground and learn how to play with other children not their age.

## **Planning**

At Thomas Fairchild School Primary School EYFS planning is divided into long term, medium term and short term. Long term plan and topics to be taught are decided in collaboration with our partner School Colvestone Primary School. Medium term plans illustrate the objectives being taught each term and elaborate on the weekly focus based on the topic. Short term or weekly plans, show specific activities planned to achieve the objectives. Staff ensure that all children are encouraged to experience all areas of activity during the week, although they may not experience them each day.

A mixture of directed and free choice activities are planned and children's choices are carefully monitored to ensure a balanced programme. Children have access to free choice of activities for most of the session. This free programme is gradually directed by staff as children get older and more mature, so that as they approach transfer to Key Stage One, they are prepared for the Key Stage One curriculum.

## **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

The planning within the EYFS is based on the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. We recognise that good planning is the key to making children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is always informed by observations of the children.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations and using parental feedback. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways, and contribute to the child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile book. At the end of the reception year in school, the child's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

## **Admission Arrangements**

Our School is part of the universal offer scheme which is free early years provision available to all three and four year olds the term after their third birthday. Parents are entitled to 15 hours per week. Children can get a place from the term after their third birthday, subject to the availability.

Children enter Reception (Foundation Stage 2) classes in September of the school year in which they are five. Places in Nursery are offered in accordance with the school's admissions policy and Reception classes are offered in accordance with Local Authority admissions.

## **Organisation of classes**

In Nursery we offer 30 part time places where children can attend for 15 hours per week. Children can attend each morning or each afternoon for 3 hours per session. Ten fulltime places are available All children must be accompanied to and from school by a known adult. Reception is divided into two classes. Each class has a maximum of thirty children. The school day begins at 8.50am and ends at 3.30pm. All children must be accompanied to and from school by a known adult.

## **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Thomas Fairchild School Primary School are treated fairly whatever their race, gender, 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 Foundation Stage 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, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Providing a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs.
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Enabling choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.

- 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;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.
- Providing a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond.
- Working in partnership with parents and guardians ensuring that contributions from all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability are valued.
- Providing stimulating opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Continual informal and formal assessments undertaken by staff provide opportunities to identify any special educational needs a child may have. Children identified with special educational needs are monitored and initial concerns are discussed with parents, SENCO, and advice may be sought from other agencies e.g. Speech and Language Therapy Service based at school. In the Foundation Stage we give all children the opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their range of life experiences, and abilities when planning for their learning. For further information please refer to the school policy.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All areas of provision will be made accessible to all children regardless of age, sex, gender, creed, race, ethnicity, or ability. Please refer to the School Policy.

### **Safeguarding**

The school takes its child protection responsibilities very seriously. Any concerns, which the school has, will be noted and, if deemed necessary, will be reported to the relevant agency. In our setting; leaders implement the required policies with regard to the safe use of mobile phones and cameras. Staff are not allowed to have their mobile phones with them during contact time with children. The safety of the child is always of paramount importance. The full Safeguarding Policy is available in school.

### **Parents as Partners**

We greatly value the involvement of parents in our school and view it as one of our strengths in Early Years. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start



Nursery with an option of attending a range of classes and activities offered at the Thomas Fairchild Children's Centre. Parents are warmly welcomed to visit the school to see how the children and setting work on a daily basis. Home Visits are undertaken for New Nursery and Reception children to build effective relationships with the Key person and Teacher. Both Nursery and Reception parents are invited to School to provide them with essential information for the next academic year. Parents are welcomed to stay at school to help settle their child when they first start Nursery and then if needed for Reception class. Children have a staggered start to Nursery and Reception so that staff can give the utmost support to each child whilst settling into their new classes.

Reception parents are invited to weekly House Reading sessions where Reception children have an opportunity to read with their older siblings and the parents or families are able to join them. Families are further encouraged to stay for an extra half an hour (Family Tuesday) following House Reading to spend time in the Reception classroom doing different activities in their child's class. Family Fridays take place every Friday for Nursery children giving parents and carers opportunities to stay and play with their child and learn more about their child's time in school. Furthermore, workshops are offered to parents termly to give them more information on how to support their child's learning at home and show them how they are being taught in school. Parent consultation meetings are held throughout the year at which parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. A report is sent out at the end of the summer term and parents are invited into school to discuss this report. Parents are kept informed of all happenings in the school by regular newsletters and curriculum leaflets at the beginning of every half term so they are informed of the learning. Parents are informed via notices on the parents noticeboard. They are invited to various assemblies, trips and functions throughout the year. We operate an "open door" policy that allows parents and carers to discuss their child's progress and development in an informal manner. In addition, if staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS staff to follow this policy. The Senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.