



Town Field Primary School



EARLY YEARS POLICY

Date of Ratification:	October 2018	Signed: Helena Honeybone (HEAD TEACHER) Jeremy Johnson (CHAIR OF GOVERNORS)
Review date:	October 2019	Signed: Helena Honeybone (HEAD TEACHER) Jeremy Johnson (CHAIR OF GOVERNORS)

Safeguarding Statement

At Town Field Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Town Field Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- Aims
- Curriculum
- Staffing and Organisation
- Assessment, Recording and Monitoring
- Child led learning
- The Learning Environment
- School readiness
- Home/School Links
- Inclusion

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage at Town Field Primary School. The document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

Early Years Foundation Stage

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

**“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”,
Department for Education, 2012**

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Town Field Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development, however we also believe early childhood is valid in itself, as part of life

The EYFS is for children from birth to five years of age. The final two years of the EYFS are referred to as Foundation 1 (F1) and Foundation 2 (F2).

All children begin school with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of the practitioners working in the Foundation Stage to take on the task of building upon that prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that parents/guardians, support staff and the Foundation Stage teachers work effectively together to support children's learning and development.

Aims

We endeavor to provide a stimulating, challenging and exciting learning experiences for all our children in a safe and nurturing environment. Each child will be supported to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to achieve their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on individual children and their needs. We ensure we establish solid foundations on which children will grow into independent and resilient lifelong learners.

At Town Field Primary School we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child, including children with additional needs
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for future learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond
- Provide opportunities for children to learn through planned, purposeful play in all areas of learning and development
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress
- Enable choice and decision-making, fostering independence and self-confidence
- Work in partnership with parents/guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties,

disabilities, gender or ability have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development

- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and exciting learning experiences.
- Provide inclusive experiences to meet the needs of all our children

The Curriculum:

Four guiding principles shape practice in The Early Years Foundation Stage. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and reception 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.

Learning and Development

The early learning goals and the educational programmes are set out in the "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage" document (Department for Education, 2012).

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape the Early Years Unit. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

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

There are four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy;**
- **Mathematics;**
- **Understanding the world; and**
- **Expressive arts and design.**

At Town Field Primary School we believe these seven areas are equally important in order to promote the development of the 'whole child'. We aim to deliver all the areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities in both the indoor and outdoor environments.

Planning

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 detailed and accurate observations we have made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. All practitioners who work in the Foundation Stage at Town Field Primary School process and contribute ideas towards enhanced activities based on the children's interests and developmental needs. Children are also involved in the planning process through planning their own daily activities and also planning which resources/activities/experiences they would like in their future learning.

We have created a framework, which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. This consists of 6 half termly topics which provide the vehicle for delivering the Early Learning Goals and Educational programme. These topics are flexible and relevant to the needs and interests of our children and also enable us to deliver a creative and balanced curriculum.

We address particular aspects of the curriculum in more detail for each term. We include links between areas of learning and development and opportunities for ICT. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities, and activities and experiences for each area of learning and development are identified.

Learning through play

"Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development."
(“Early Years Foundation Stage”, Department for Children, Schools and Families,2007)

At Town Field Primary School children learn thorough a combination of child led, adult initiated and adult directed learning. We support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through the role of a playful practitioner.

The Learning Environment

"A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces."

(“Early Years Foundation Stage”, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007)

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence.

Children are able to access both the indoor and outdoor activities freely as their interests led them. Our Foundation Stage Unit is divided into 3 main class bases and a shared area. Within these learning environments a range of different areas are catered for which supports all areas of learning.

These areas are carefully arranged to encourage quiet areas and more active areas within the learning environment. Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation. This is supported by the whole school initiative 'Town Field 10 Skills for Life and Learning'

Staffing and Organisation

At Town Field Primary School there is a 52 place F1 setting which offers part-time places. There are 2 F2 classes with a maximum intake of 30 children in each. We maintain an adult/pupil ratio of 1:13 within the F1 setting and there is a teaching assistant in each F2 class. The staff work as a team and meet in order to plan effective provision, prepare resources and review assessments for the F1 and F2 Classes.

The children have daily opportunities for structured and free-flow play both in the classroom and in the outdoor area. This time is supported by an adult, who acts as a facilitator to the child's learning. The teacher liaises with the teaching assistant, regularly involving them in planning, preparation and assessment. At Town Field Primary School we are always aiming to improve our teaching skills, knowledge and understanding and so all practitioners are

encouraged to participate in local authority courses, in-service and local Early Years team training. Practitioners also conduct and attend in-house training and disseminate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods to colleagues.

Assessment, recording and monitoring

At Town Field Primary School we adhere to the principles of assessment for learning. We analyse and review what we know about each child's development and learning, and then make informed decisions about the child's progress. This enables us to plan the next steps to meet their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

Formative assessment

In forms daily planning and is based on on-going observational assessment of each child's achievements, interests and learning styles. Formative assessment may take the form of anecdotal observations, focused observations, baseline assessment, other focused assessments e.g. sound/number, annotated examples of work, photographs, video and information from parents. Each child has an individual Early Years Foundation Stage 'Learning Journey' which is a record of evidence and achievements of each individual child's learning. This is available for parents to view and also contribute to. Observational assessments are planned for but also happen incidentally.

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner. They are vital elements of support for the transition process from EYFS to year 1. The characteristics of effective learning run through and underpin all seven areas of learning and development, representing processes rather than outcomes. Information describing the child's characteristics of effective learning will provide adults with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

The three key characteristics of effective learning involve:

- Playing and exploring;
- Active learning;
- Creating and thinking critically.

Summative assessment

Throughout the Foundation stage children are assessed against the Early Years Outcomes. It summarises children's progress towards the early learning goals. It is completed on entry, at the end of Autumn Term, Spring Term and Summer Term by the teachers in consultation with the Foundation Staff.

At the end of F2 each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals (EYFS Profile). The EYFS Profile summarises all of the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the each child's achievements against seventeen Early Learning Goals and the three characteristics of effective learning.

Teachers participate in regular in-house and authority moderation meetings. This provides an external quality assurance and validation of our teacher assessments.

Moderation

The quality of the taught curriculum is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team in school through regular lesson observations, pupil interviews, planning and LA moderation. The Foundation 1 baseline is moderated by an external SLE. The foundation stage leader monitors teaching and learning across the foundation stage and analyses EYFS Profile data.

School Readiness

Liaison with pre-school settings and induction

At Town Field Primary School we have close links between the PVIs and our Foundation Stage setting. The F1 and F2 teachers meet regularly to discuss assessment and induction issues, and attend training together.

Parent's meetings are held in the Summer Term to introduce parents/guardians to the F1 and F2 procedures. Through these meetings the school's expectations and routines are communicated. The induction process and EYFS curriculum are also introduced. Parents/guardians have the opportunity to meet the F1 and F2 staff and to visit the classrooms/settings. Parents/guardians are given a brochure for F1 or F2 which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with other necessary documentation.

During the summer term, F1 children from the school who will be starting school in September make visits to the reception classes as part of the induction process. The F2 teachers also undertake visits to children starting F2 in September who are attending other settings for F1.

F1 staff offer home visits to all children, to enable them to meet the new pupils on 'home ground'. This gives parents a confidential and informal visit in which to voice any concerns they may have about their child. All children have the opportunity to visit their F1 setting in the summer term.

F2 staff offer home visits to children who have not attending the school F1 setting, to enable them to meet the new pupils on 'home ground'. This gives parents a confidential and informal visit in which to voice any concerns they may have about their child. All children have the opportunity to visit their F2 setting in the summer term.

Transfer records from pre-school settings inform F2 practitioners about the new children.

F2 to Year 1 Transition

F2 and Year 1 teachers have worked together to make the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 as smooth as possible.

- F2 children meet Year 1 teachers during assembly time; playtime and other whole school activities during the F2 year
- The EYFS Profiles are passed on to year 1 teachers and discussed
- F2 and year 1 teachers meet to discuss individual needs of children in July
- F2 children visit their new Year 1 class in July year 1
- The 'Letters and Sounds' national approach to phonics and spelling is continued throughout year 1 and 2
- Classrooms include learning areas similar to the reception classrooms: e.g. role play, writing table,
- There is an overlap in approach and routines, e.g. Fruit time, behaviour systems, timetables, etc
- Year 1 follow a similar timetable to F2, including sessions for Guided Reading, Plan, Learn, Review. Where possible, the Year 1 children continue to enjoy practical learning experiences which gradually becomes more formalised towards the end of the academic year

Parents as Partners - Home/School Links

We recognise that parents/guardians are the child's first and most enduring educators. When parents/guardians and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

We aim to develop this by:

- outlining the EYFS curriculum to Parents/carers during the new parents meeting in July, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home
- sending home a termly topic letter, informing parents/guardians of the learning that will be taking place at school, with suggestions of the types of activities that could be carried out at home to support that learning
- holding meetings to outline the Phonics programme and the F2 curriculum and to provide an opportunity for asking questions
- operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/guardians can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner
- inviting parents/guardians to help in the F1 and F2 classes and to accompany children on school visits
- encouraging parents/guardians to listen to their child read each night and to comment on reading progress in a home/school reading diary
- encouraging relevant learning activities to be continued at home e.g. maths games and library books, and ensuring that experiences at home are used to develop learning in school
- discussing children's individual targets with parents/guardians at termly parents' evenings
- encouraging parents to share their child's 'treat the turtles or wow the owls' which can contribute to the child's Learning Journey.

- discussing progress, attainment and individual targets with Parents/carers at parents' evening in November and March (informed by the EYFS Profile)
- providing an annual written report to Parents/carers in July summarising the child's progress against the early learning goals and EYFS assessment scales
- Sharing Characteristics of Effective Learning with parents.
- Encouraging parents to inform class teachers about children's interests, personal achievements at home which can then support planning and assessments.
- Weekly reading sessions in which parents are invited into school to develop children's reading.
- Encouraging parental volunteers

Inclusion

At Town Field Primary School we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Children with Special Educational Needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. SEN support plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Foundation Stage teachers discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/guardians. Progress is monitored and reviewed formally every term. The school's Inclusion Leader is responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.

Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of all staff working within the EYFS to safeguard our children

- All staff have read and have a copy of 'Keeping children safe in Education'.
- Daily checks are made by staff to ensure the indoor and outdoor learning environment is safe and hazard free.
- Two members of staff are pediatric first aid trained. Any accidents are recorded and parents informed
- Children that require support with toileting have an intimate care plan and changing is supported by two staff members.
- Ratios are adhered to at all times never exceeding 1:13 in F1 or 1:30 in F2.
- Specific safety procedures are in place for the beginning and end of the session, a password system is in place and doors are staffed appropriately.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher and EYFS leader, and will be reviewed on an annual basis.