



THOMSON HOUSE SCHOOL

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# Thomson House School

## EYFS policy

Agreed by: Governor's Education Committee

Date: October 2020

Review Cycle: Annual

Review Date: October 2021

All the Thomson House School policies should be read in conjunction with the Equality Policy.

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## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is important in its own right and also for preparing children for later schooling. At Thomson House School we believe that this stage lays the foundations for each child's future learning and is therefore a very significant time. The Early Years Foundation Stage profile handbook sets out what is typically expected of most children by the end of the Reception year at school.

EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. It is based upon four principles:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

EYFS at Thomson House takes place in the Reception year (age 4- 5 on entry). Entry into Reception is in September at the beginning of the academic school year. All Reception children are encouraged to begin school at the start of the academic year.

### Aims and objectives

Within Early Years education we offer our children learning that is based on the following principles. We:

- Build on what each child already knows and can do;
- Are inclusive to all groups of learners and individuals, taking into account children's backgrounds, ethnicity, gender, EAL and SEND.
- Provide a rich and stimulating environment, including challenging, exciting and imaginative indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Provide a wide range of opportunities for independent learning, adult directed learning, adult led learning and child-initiated learning.
- Encourage parents and carers to become involved in their children's learning
- Provide a positive, supportive environment where children feel safe and secure to learn.
- Develop positive attitudes towards learning from an early age.
- Give children a wealth of knowledge based on the Early Years Foundation Stage seven areas of learning.
- Provide an extensive range of opportunities for assessment in well thought out and detailed planning.

## **Curriculum in Early Years Foundation Stage**

The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins future learning by promoting and developing seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Art and Design

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 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 Year 1 teachers with vital background and context when considering the child's next stage of development and future learning needs.

### **Playing and exploring – engagement**

Finding out and exploring  
Playing with what they know  
Being willing to 'have a go'

### **Active learning – motivation**

Being involved and concentrating  
Keeping trying  
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

### **Creating and thinking critically – thinking**

Having their own ideas  
Making links  
Choosing ways to do things

The objectives within the EYFS handbook provide the basis for planning throughout the foundation stage. Medium-term plans are topic based and identify the intended learning outcomes for children during this period. In addition, indoor/outdoor independent learning and adult directed planning are completed on a weekly and daily basis which highlight the objectives for the week and activities children will take part in to achieve these objectives.

The school makes use of learning activities outside the classroom, where a planned programme of appropriate activities takes place at all times of year.

## **Teaching and Learning within EYFS**

At THS we are continually developing teaching and learning within EYFS and aim to provide each and every child with a well-balanced, stimulating and meaningful learning experience.

We do this by:

- Providing children with a safe and nurturing environment in which they feel safe and secure to learn.
- The regular identification of training needs for all adults working in the EYFS; a range of INSETS within school and through the borough's CPD programme to develop the understanding that Teachers and Assistant Teachers have of how children in early years develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching; a carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the objectives by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage; well-planned medium term plans and weekly planning based around the seven early learning goals.
- Regular monitoring of our work to evaluate its impact on pupils' progress and their wider social, personal and emotional development.
- Continuous monitoring of records and books to provide feedback for teachers so that they can identify next stages of learning and improve their practice.
- Peer observations across EYFS and Key Stage 1 to develop a better understanding of the curriculum in different year groups, share teaching skills and good practice and enable EYFS practitioners to ensure pupils are ready for Year 1.
- Regular lesson observations and learning walks by leadership and those with subject responsibilities to ensure consistency, share good practice and to provide feedback to promote school improvement.
- Encouraging the partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to progress in all areas of the curriculum and helps them to feel secure at school and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Providing home learning opportunities which are appropriate for the age group and engaging for both parent and child.
- Providing supporting and interactive learning environments which provide extensive learning opportunities for children.
- Establishing good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school.

## **Inclusion at the Foundation Stage**

We believe that all our children matter. We give them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of their wide-ranging life experiences when we plan for their learning.

Within Early Years Foundation Stage, we have realistic but high expectations that challenge the children so that every child achieves to their best of their ability. We help them do this by planning to meet the individual needs of every child as well as the needs of different groups of learners. These include boys and girls, children with SEND, children from all social

and cultural backgrounds including those entitled to free school meals, children from different ethnic groups and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support all children, and to help them to learn effectively.
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Employing resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping.
- Planning differentiated activities that challenge all children, their educational needs and cater for their ability.
- Monitoring children's progress and providing support where necessary (such as speech therapy, 1:1 support, working with the Educational Psychologist).
- Identifying and informing the SENDCo of any concerns, seeking advice where necessary.
- Identifying groups of learners within our setting and ensuring that all groups and individuals are planned for effectively and make good progress.
- Regular data analysis carried out by the leadership of the school, which enables us to identify individual needs and groups of learners' needs.

## **Assessment**

Assessment within Early Years Foundation Stage is an important and valuable tool which helps teachers to identify the needs of individual children and groups of learners in order to plan the next steps of their learning.

We use the Early Years Foundation Stage handbook. This is a nationally employed assessment tool which outlines the objectives within each of the seven areas of learning. This document is a vital tool when planning for and assessing children's progress and attainment. This is done by reference to the appropriate statements in Development Matters, which lists all the age appropriate objectives within each of the seven areas of learning. Tracking pupil progress informs planning and next steps for individual children, identifying those who are performing at the expected level, those who are below and those who are above the expected level each term. Assessment in Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of observations of child-initiated activities at school, evidence from home and evidence gathered from teacher directed tasks.

## **Baseline Assessments:**

In order to measure children's progress between YR and Y6, during the first few weeks in Reception the teacher assesses the ability of each child on entry. A brief initial assessment of their knowledge of number and sounds is followed by a baseline assessment of the seven learning areas through well thought out learning opportunities and observations. Baseline observations are informed by the document 'Individual Child Profile: Development Matters

in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'. These baseline assessments are completed as soon as possible and no later than the first half term for each child.

Baseline assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort and to plan for individual children and groups of children. We use this information to inform planning and set targets for the children.

In September/October 2019 Thomson House School participated in the Reception baseline assessment national pilot. The introduction of the national baseline has been delayed due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) is the Department for Education's contracted provider of the new reception baseline assessment. The assessment will be used as a baseline for measuring the progress primary schools make with their pupils. It is a practitioner-led, activity-based, assessment of children's attainment in early literacy, communication and language and early mathematics skills.

### **Observations and Continuous Assessment in EYFS:**

Throughout the year we plan for a range of learning and assessment opportunities. Through observations and by collecting evidence we are able to establish which objectives and Early Learning Goals each individual child has achieved. We are then able to monitor both progress and attainment.

Pupil Profiles: We use Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and update tracker grids. We keep records of children's learning journeys through Target Tracker and from our evidence and observations we are able to plan for next steps in each child's learning journey. The teacher keeps records for each child and examples of each child's work, showing developmental stages and progression. We share Target Tracker reports with parents every half term and discuss observations about children during parents and carers meetings.

### **Ensuring Quality Data - Moderation:**

In order to ensure quality baseline assessment, Reception teachers work together for agreement trialling and moderation to ensure data is agreed and that teachers' judgements are robust and accurate. Training by the borough, internal moderation with Senior Leaders and external moderation are important parts of this process.

The borough holds two moderation meetings to which practitioners are asked to bring along work samples to be moderated before end of year data is finally submitted to the borough. In addition to this, an external moderation may be undertaken by the borough on a sampling basis.

After all data is collected and moderated these assessments are analysed by the borough. All information and assessments are passed on to the child's next teacher who uses this information to plan for the year ahead. We share this information at the end of the year with parents when they receive their child's report.

## **The role of parents and carers**

We believe that all parents and carers have an important role to play in the education of their children. We therefore recognise their role by:

- Visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting prior to them starting school.
- Some visits by the teacher to children's nurseries prior to them starting school.
- Offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress through an open-door policy and through Parent/Teacher meetings.
- Encouraging them to support their child in home learning activities.
- Encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns.
- Offering a range of activities supported by FOTH, throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and home.
- Providing various activities that involve parents and carers such as inviting parents and carers to curriculum meetings, SEND meetings in order to discuss the kind of work that the children are undertaking in class and how they can continue to work with their child at home.
- Parents receive an annual written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.

## **Welfare of Pupils**

- The class teacher is responsible for the pastoral care of each child as well as the academic side of school life. Assistant Teachers support the class teacher in this important role.
- The school's named First Aider and two members of the EYFS teaching team are qualified in Paediatric First Aid. All members of EYFS staff have first aid training.
- Medication will be kept in the school office, well out of reach of pupils and administered in accordance with the Medicines in School Policy.
- Thomson House School complies with its Behaviour Policy. We do not use capital punishment under any circumstances. Physical intervention is only permitted to avert immediate danger of injury to self or others. Such occasions will be recorded and reported to the Governors. Parents will be informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.
- All safeguarding and child protection concerns will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and procedures followed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Parents/ Carers working with young children:**

- All parents/Carers that work with children on a 1:1 basis are required to have a DBS check.
- If a DBS check is not obtained Parents/Carers must always stay with a member of staff whilst in the school. This includes time spent on school trips.
- Parents/ Carers must not take photographs of any child.

## **Transition to Year 1**

Towards the end of the Reception year, the teachers will begin to prepare the children for the more formal education which they will receive in Year 1.

We do this by:

- Gradually moving the timetable in the summer term to one more akin to that of Y1.
- Preparing the children with daily guided reading sessions, similar to those in Year 1.
- Allowing the children to spend time in the Year 1 classrooms with Year 1 staff – more frequently for those children with special needs.
- Scheduling a 'Meet the Teacher' day towards the end of the summer term, when all classes will spend part of the day with their new teacher in their new classroom.
- Presenting to parents the expectations for a child in Year 1, the differences in timetable, homework and learning.
- Allowing time for the teachers of the existing classes to 'handover' to the Year 1 teachers, giving information on family background, learning styles, friendship groups, academic ability, progress achieved through the year etc.
- Ensuring we have an open-door policy for any concerns the parents and/or children may have.

## **Mobile phones**

Mobile phones must not be used during class time by any adult (Teachers and/or parents/carers). This includes using mobile phones to take pictures of children apart from the authorised use of the school's iPhone camera/ school's ipads.

## **Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored by the Education Committee and will be reviewed at least annually.

**Date of Policy: October 2020**

**Date to be reviewed: October 2021**