



Tickhill Estfeld Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in our Reception Class.

Our Philosophy

At Tickhill Estfeld Primary School we acknowledge the role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying the secure foundations for future learning and development of life skills. We feel it is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education. As outlined in the EYFS,

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential'

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. All children will come to school with their own life experiences and it is our privilege to acknowledge and build upon that prior learning. We create a safe and happy environment in which everyone is included, respected and valued, so that they may grow in self-esteem and develop to their full potential. We provide motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident, independent, self-disciplined, self-motivated and resilient. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to ensure their needs are met and help every child to reach their full potential.

We hope that by taking children on their first steps through education that they will be confident and happy to become lifelong learners, with the enthusiasm to accept challenge and embrace new opportunities. We seek to develop and promote lively and inquisitive minds with the desire and skill to explore new ideas. Foster a sense of awe and wonder and develop natural curiosity, so children enjoy learning in and out of school. We encourage our children to believe in themselves, while equipping them with the fundamental skills to enjoy and achieve in life.

Aims

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Relational Policy and the Safeguarding Policy.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- 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

- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning.
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Deliver quality first teaching to all of our pupils and provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Build positive relationships with children and their families, relationships built upon care and trust, whilst provide a secure and safe learning environment.
- Work in partnership with parents and other outside agencies to ensure our children and their families access the support they need.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult.

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals at the end of Reception.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

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 are the **prime** areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active participants in their learning. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Planning and Teaching

***'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults.'* (EYFS 2025)**

At Tickhill Estfeld we provide a happy, safe, caring, stimulating and well-organised environment in which children learn by building upon what they already know and can do. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Staff look carefully at the children in their care, consider their needs, their interests and their stages of development and use all of this information to help plan a challenging and enjoyable experience across all areas of learning.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. 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.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans and plan the next steps for each child. All staff members working within Reception are encouraged to contribute the observation and assessment process. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child. The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

In the Autumn and Spring term, parents are invited to attend a parents evening and an annual report is written in the Summer term. The annual report is based on the child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher in preparation for Year 1.

Safety

Updated October 2025

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. School has policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

Please see our separate policies and procedures for further information.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that the vast majority of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate policies on Equality Opportunities and Special Educational Needs.

Parents as Partners and the Wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways. We use Class Dojo as a way of sharing children's learning with parents and encourage parents to share home experiences with us via this platform also.

We encourage parent partnership through:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in the child's education
- Listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have
- Making parents feel welcome by being friendly, approachable and having an open door policy
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in
- Meeting with parents of Reception children regularly to discuss progress
- Encouraging parents to make use of the reading record which is looked at regularly by a staff member
- Inviting parents in the school to share their specialised skills
- Inviting parents to accompany staff on trips.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on local visits and inviting members of the community into our setting.

We also take the pupils on visits to places of interest that are linked to curriculum topics and invite visitors to school to enhance and enrich the children's learning experiences.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a booklet containing photos and information prior to starting school that allows the child and parents to familiarise themselves with school routines and policies.

In September we offer a staggered start to enable children to familiarise themselves with school and the staff and begin to build positive relationships.

Throughout the Reception Year there are many opportunities for the pupils to take part in activities with the other classes in school. In the summer term the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Reception staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.