



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Twickenham Preparatory School seeks to create a safe, caring and happy Christian environment in which all pupils are valued and can thrive personally, socially and academically.”

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Rationale

We believe the Foundation Stage is a distinctive phase when the curriculum for young children should be influenced by, and cater for individual needs and learning styles. We believe this is achieved through the careful planning and provision of a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum where links are made between the seven areas of learning.

‘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)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) extends from birth to the end of Reception and the beginning of Key Stage 1. Entry into our school, into Reception, is at the beginning of the school year in which a child turns five, although compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.
- 1.2 The EYFS is most crucial in every child’s development, and during these years most basic skills and attitudes to learning and socialising are established. As the name suggests, it lays many of the foundations which the later key stages in our school build upon. The EYFS is a comprehensive statutory framework that

sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five. The curriculum should be seen as part of a continuum of learning which begins at birth, extends throughout the years of compulsory schooling and establishes the young person as a lifelong learner.

- 1.3 Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Most have been learning in one of the various pre-school settings in our local community. The continuing early years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
- it builds progressively on what our children already know and can do, and seeks to relate starting points for learning to the child's own experiences;
 - it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
 - it offers a structure for learning that has a wide range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
 - it provides a rich and stimulating environment.
- 1.4 We endeavor to provide the highest quality care and education to ensure that the children "learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe." (Statutory Framework for the EYFS)

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Our curriculum for the last year of the EYFS aims to:

- underpin all future learning;
- promote and develop personal, social and emotional well-being; ensure that our children have positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning;
- develop good social skills;
- enable children to learn skills of attention, concentration and persistence;
- place language and communication at the heart of learning;
- lay the foundation for fully proficient reading and writing;
- develop early mathematical skills and concepts;
- enable age-appropriate knowledge and understanding of the world in which children live;
- promote healthy physical development;
- enable children to be creative in their responses to their world and in their development of skills.

3 The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

- 3.1 **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based upon four principles:**
- 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 guardians; 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.
- (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

- 3.2 There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

Communication and Language

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. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of literacy.

Physical development

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.

Personal, social and emotional development

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.

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

Literacy

This area of learning has two subsections 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.

Mathematics

This is broken down into two subsections. These are Number and Shape, Space and Measure. 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.

Understanding the World

This covers the subjects Geography, Science, DT, History, RE and ICT. This is a major area of learning and enquiry focussing 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.

Expressive Arts and Design

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.

- 3.3** We support children in using the following three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Active learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and thinking critically

Children should be given an opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

- 3.4** For each area of learning there are statutory Early Learning Goals. These establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. They provide the basis for planning in Reception. By the end of the year, some children will have exceeded the goals. Other children, depending on their individual needs, will be working towards some or all of the goals – particularly some younger children, some children with learning difficulties and disabilities and some learning English as an additional language.

4 Teaching and learning

- 4.1** The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are described in our policy on Teaching and Learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.
- 4.2** The more specific features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:
- the very close partnership between teachers and parents/carers that helps our children to feel secure and confident at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and a self-image of themselves as learners;

- the understanding that teachers have of early child development, how this relates to their learning and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- a generally 'play-based' curriculum, which provides rich and varied opportunities for 'small world' play, using toys and models which replicate real life activities, and for role play, involving areas inside and outside the classroom which simulate real life situations and provide opportunities for dressing up and pretending;
- a very strong emphasis on speaking and listening, and seeking every opportunity to talk with children about their learning, and listen and respond to them;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS;
- ensuring that children take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, developing their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents and carers;
- the good relationships between our school and the other settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working with our Reception children.

5 Play in the EYFS

- 5.1 Through play, children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up their ideas, model real life, learn how to exercise self-control, and begin to understand the need for social rules, such as turn-taking. They have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own. Crucially, they communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears, or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.
- 5.2 Play-based learning will include 'small world' activities, role play and pretending, and activities involving fine and gross motor skills, including 'making' activities, using large apparatus and vehicles, and participating in physical games.
- 5.3 We encourage the children to make their own choices of the play-based learning activities provided, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. Teachers ensure however, that, over time, each child experiences a sufficient range of activities to enable them to progress towards all the Early Learning Goals.
- 5.4 'As the children grow older, and their development allows, the balance will shift to more activities led by adults to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.' Statutory Framework for EYFS

6 Assessment

- 6.1 The EYFS Profile is the national, statutory assessment tool against which teachers record their observations of all children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals, throughout the year, collating them each term and enabling a final assessment to be made at the end of the summer term of Reception. The Profile covers 17 Early Learning Goals from the 7 areas of Learning in the EYFS. These regular assessments of children's learning, are used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate.
- 6.2 During the first half-term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child, using Development Matters document. We use the baseline assessment to track the progress of each child, and use the Stages of Development to identify pupils needs. We share the information contained in the EYFS Profile at our parental consultation meetings and set future goals.
- 6.3 Towards the end of the Summer Term, we send the EYFS profile data to the Local Authority (LA). The child's next teacher, in Year 1, uses this information to make plans for the year ahead, and to decide, in consultation with the Reception teacher, whether to begin to assess the child's progress using the National Curriculum levels, or whether to continue to use the EYFS Profile if a significant number of the Early Learning Goals have yet to be achieved.
- 6.4 In the final term of Reception, the school shares the results of the EYFS profile with Parents and or carers, and explains to them when and how they can discuss the profile with the teacher who completed it. The parents also receive an end of year report. This provides a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities and their progress against expected levels.
- 6.5 Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. Assessments show whether the child is emerging, or has reached the expected levels or is exceeding the levels of development.

7 Every Child Matters

- 7.1 We aim to be a fully inclusive school. (See our Inclusion Policy.) 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 we are planning for their learning.
- 7.2 In Reception, we set realistic and challenging expectations related to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of all, boys and girls, those with special educational needs, those who are more able or gifted and talented, those with disabilities, those from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, those from different ethnic groups, and those whose first language is other than English.
- 7.3 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 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 challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and accessing support (such as speech and language therapy), as necessary.

8 The role of parents and carers

8.1 We believe that all parents and carers have a vital role to play in the education of their child. This role is particularly crucial in the EYFS. We work in partnership with parents and carers by:

- talking to parents or carers about their child before he/she starts in our school;
- the information gained from nurseries
- creating opportunities for children, together with their parents or carers, to spend time with their teacher before starting school;
- providing families with some photographs of the classroom, playground, school and staff in the department to familiarise them with the school environment over the summer;
- inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- inviting parents to record information about their child's interests and abilities beyond the transfer information from nurseries on the 'We can't wait to meet you...' booklet
- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk/ inform us about their child's progress in Reception;
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- providing opportunities for parents to contribute their thoughts on their child's progress in the seven areas of learning and any significant 'Wow' moments in their child's development outside the formally arranged parent consultation meetings;
- allowing time to discuss each child's particular circumstances;
- encouraging parents and carers to liaise with staff if there are problems settling in;
- offering a range of activities, throughout the year, that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers;
- providing various activities that involve parents and carers, for example, regular communication with home through the child's home/school reading diary, and inviting parents and carers to Parents' Evenings, in order to discuss the kind of learning in which children are engaged, inviting parents to assist on school trips.

8.2 There is a formal meeting for parents and carers each term, during which they can discuss their child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents and carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

8.3 Parents receive their child's Learning Journey at the end of the year. This is a book which contains photographs, observations and a record of significant moments for each child. It is discussed at Open Evenings. Wow sheets completed by parents are included in the Learning Journey.

9 Resources

We plan a richly resourced learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world.

10 Review of observations

We review and modify observation practice on a weekly basis to ensure that the system benefits the assessment and provision for all children. All EYFS practitioners are involved in this process.

Rationales for Curriculum Areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We believe that the children mirror the skills and attitudes modelled by teachers and staff who work with them. When we show excitement about learning new things and show a careful awareness of the impact of our words and actions, then children are more likely to be courteous and attentive participants in life at school. We aim to ensure “that every child is included and not disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties or disabilities, gender or ability.” *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

Communication and Language

We believe that the use of communication and language is at the heart of young children’s learning. These skills develop as children express their needs and feelings, interact with others and establish their own identities and personalities. We aim to provide the children with opportunities and encouragement to use their skills in a range of exciting situations ignited by their interests, and guided by skilled practitioners.

Mathematics

We believe that mathematical development arises out of daily experiences in a rich and interesting environment which ignites natural interest in numbers, measuring and shapes, aroused by an interaction with their environment and with other people. We want the children to initiate activities within a carefully planned environment that promotes learning and can be extended.

Understanding the World

We believe in empowering children to be independent learners, guiding them through the learning process by careful observation and engaging in their play. By fostering an inclusive and positive culture in our learning environment, we encourage a respect for all people, animals and things. We aim to inspire the children to find out about and identify aspects of their environment and wider world, ignited by the children’s current interests. The use of computers, programmable devices like ‘Talking Books,’ and familiar equipment is encouraged to support their learning.

Expressive Arts and Design

We aim to provide support for the children’s curiosity, exploration and play, and give them opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings in a variety of ways.

Physical Development

We believe that physical development is not only to improve skills in co-ordination, control, movement, and manipulation, but also to help children develop a positive sense of well-being, to help them gain in confidence in what they can do and to enable them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active.

We aim to support the children “in using all of their senses, to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know.” Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Teaching and Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Rationale

We believe that young children are active learners who thrive on child-initiated discovery and exploration. We believe that children learn confidently and effectively with guidance and with the understanding that children learn in different ways and at different rates. Children should feel safe to take risks in their learning. ‘Early experience should be built on what the children already know and can do’ (Curriculum Guidance)

We believe that an integral part of teaching is providing purposeful activities and that effective practitioners know when to interact with a child to help them move on to the next stage in their learning.

We believe in a rich and varied education for all young children where learning is celebrated in a happy and positive environment.

We agree with Jerome Bruner (1983) who said that ‘learning is figuring out how to use what you already know in order to get beyond what you currently think.’

Purposes

What does the school aim to provide?

A) In the learning environment:

1. A place where children are physically safe and happy and emotionally secure, both indoors and outdoors.
2. A setting that presents a range of experiences and activities to engage children as independent active learners.
3. Reception classes that reflect and have provision for all six areas of learning.
4. An attractive and visually stimulating Reception setting.

B) For the children:

1. A developing sense of well being and belonging to the community of the school.
2. The opportunity to learn to value theirs and others’ contributions.
3. The encouragement to become motivated thinkers and learners and operate independently in the environment.

C) From Practitioners:

1. Acknowledgement of the different needs of individual children and the pace at which they learn.
2. Observation and assessment of children’s progress in order to reflect on our teaching and inform planning. Provision of activities in a range of learning styles to ensure all children access the curriculum and are stimulated to learn.
3. The offer of equal opportunities so that all children experience success.

Broad Guidelines:

How do we achieve this?

- A**
- 1 Qualified practitioners help the children to learn the routines and expectations of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use positive language to build self-esteem and model excitement for learning. The staff realise their impact as role models and encourage a delight in learning.
 - 2 The planned experiences display a balance of child-led and adult-directed activity. There is also flexibility in allowing children to initiate activity and select resources for their tasks independently.
 - 3 The 7 areas of learning are planned each week and displayed for ease of use. Staff set up for provision daily according to the planned activities for the week.
 - 4 The whole Early Years Foundation Stage team is involved in display and presentation. The equipment is checked to make sure it is clean and in good order prior to each use. The display reflects current learning and some is interactive. There is a themed focus in the role-play area each half term.
- B**
- 1 To reinforce a sense of community and belonging to a group, the children participate in - Collective worship in school and at Church, Pre-Prep Productions, House Teams, Assemblies, Class Groups. They are given responsibilities in class. They mix with other year groups at lunch and break times and familiarise themselves with other members of their House Team.
 - 2 There are weekly 'Show and Tell' sessions and Circle Time Sessions where children are encouraged to take turns to listen to each other, and to ask questions about what they have seen or heard. Staff model appropriate responses and plenaries are used which value other's experience and encourage us to learn from each other.
 - 3 Practitioners use open-ended questioning and provide problem-solving activities. At choosing time, the children are independent in their choice of activity. That system allows the teacher to provide the choice of activities. Some areas are enhanced to reflect/ encourage pupil interest, which have appropriate learning intentions for that week.
- C**
- 1 Twickenham Preparatory School adopts an inclusive ethos of education for all. Please see the Special Needs Policy, Left-Handed Policy, Equal Opportunities Statement and Behaviour Policy.
 - 2 Children are taught reading on a 1:1 individual level at school so that each child's needs are met and are communicated to parents on a daily basis. This 1:1 reading time also gives children an opportunity to talk about personal things and feel a sense of security, nurturing and encouragement on a very personal and individual level.
All staff make focused and informal observations to inform assessments.
Weekly planning meetings take account of these observations to inform forward planning.

3 We provide flexible activities that incorporate the learning styles of boys and girls and extension activities are set for those who are more able.

4 Resources reflect the cultural diversity of our intake, and festivals are included in our plans.

Outdoor Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Rationale

“Children need to be interested in what they are doing, and need a reason for doing it, stimulation increases motivation, motivation increases perseverance and perseverance increases the likelihood of understanding.” *Helen Bilton; Playing Outside*

We believe that outdoor play should mirror and complement the indoor provision. We believe that outdoor play exercises children’s growing intellectual and emotional muscles as well as their physical well being. We strive to provide outdoor activities, which pupils can choose that develop their powers to think, to do, to see and understand, to represent and express.

We want a well-planned, effective outdoor environment divided into different areas of learning which promotes safe, challenging and collaborative learning. It is so important to ‘make good use of outdoor space so that children are enabled to learn by working on a larger, more active scale than is possible indoors’ and to ‘provide resources that inspire children and encourage them to initiate their own learning’ *Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage*’

Purposes

What does the school aim to provide?

1. An outdoor area which allows children to access all areas of learning.
2. Staff can adapt the environment to suit children’s learning styles and model learning and the enjoyment of activities.
3. Children demonstrate confidence by acting independently and using initiative.
4. Children can work on a large scale and are physically active.
5. Opportunities to develop a respect and understanding of the natural world.
6. Outdoor areas which reflect the general practice of promoting children’s ability to organise their own resources.

Broad Guidelines

How do we achieve this?

1. The outdoor area is set out to complement the indoor area so that between the two, children have access to all seven areas of learning.
2. Staff get involved in children’s games and through their interaction with the children, make judgements on how to suggest they can take their play forward to the next level and help them play more meaningfully.
Staff model how to play new games or equipment; and model use of vocabulary related to current topics and objectives.

3. Apparatus and games are easily accessible. Practitioners set up the outdoor area and pupils help to make the rules and know how many children can choose at each area and how to clear away when finished.
4. We provide resources which stimulate physical activity such as climbing frames, a variety of pedalled vehicles, bikes and scooters and a selection of PE equipment. We have access to an adventure playground which is used at play times and scheduled into the curriculum for focused activity each week.
5. The Nature Trail is designed for children to learn through their senses. The children develop characteristics of learning and are encouraged to observe the plants and creatures and respect the natural environment.
6. Children are provided with activities that they can choose and organise on their own. With teacher supervision climbing frames can be re-organised by the children. The children are taught many organisational skills which enable them to become more independent in their choice of activity.

Left-handed Policy for Early Years Foundation Stage

Rationale

It is extremely important that children who are left-handed are given equal access to all activities through the provision of left-handed tools. We believe that children who are left-handed should never feel inhibited or inferior due to their left-handedness. It is our intention that children's dexterity be determined by themselves and will be encouraged according to their natural tendency to use their left or right hand.

Purposes

What does the school want to provide?

1. An environment for learning, which does not discriminate, negatively or positively, towards left or right handed pupils, which is entirely neutral in its influence.
2. Practitioners who actively encourage the practicalities set out in the hand writing policy in terms of positioning.
3. Resources which take into consideration the subtle impact of many parts of the school day on left handed children especially when seated at a table.
4. Equal opportunities for left-handed children to be able to participate in all tasks.

Broad Guidelines

How do we achieve this?

1. Pencils, if arranged for children, ready to start an activity, would be placed in a central forward facing position, not pointing to the right or left of a page.
2. Chair, body and page angled at a 45-degree angle to complement the arm in use when writing or drawing. (See hand-writing policy)
3. Tables are purchased to allow enough elbowroom for a right-handed child to sit next to a left-handed child without hindering in their ability to complete a task.
4. Using left-handed scissors and teaching left-handed mouse skills in ICT, notifying all relevant staff of any left handed pupils so that resources can be prepared appropriately.

11 Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, which receives regular reports on the EYFS from the Headmaster. The policy will be reviewed annually.