



Tittensor First School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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1. Introduction

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their education. It is intended that the Early Years Foundation Stage provides an holistic education that encompasses all learning and development.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Tittensor First School.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults.

In the policy the term 'setting' refers to the Early Years educational provision at Tittensor First School. In our setting our Nursery offers 15 or 30 hours provision for a maximum 15 children. The majority of these children will have already reached their third birthday by the September in which they join the Nursery class others, known as 'Rising 3s,' will be three within the term that they start the Nursery. Our Reception classes offer full time places for up to 15 children for those children who will turn five years old in the academic year in which they start school. These children are in the final year of the EYFS.

In the policy the term 'practitioner' refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting.

2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS setting at Tittensor First School we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop to their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates, whether this be physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially or emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the adults looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence, decision-making and resilience by supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, both inside and outside.

3. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework

Teaching in the EYFS setting at Tittensor First School is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document **Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework 2021**.

This document outlines the principles of Early Years education which are to bring together children's welfare, learning and development requirements.

The curriculum itself is centred on 3 core, or **prime areas of learning**:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

It is essential that children are given adequate opportunity to develop skills in these areas as a foundation for all future learning. Practitioners must also develop provision through four **specific areas** which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

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

Programmes of learning which practitioners deliver in the setting must involve activities and experiences from one or more, of the following seven areas. Due to the holistic nature of Early Years education, learning experiences which are provided often encompass several areas of learning. These are:

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

These Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centered curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning 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.

At Tittensor First School, we believe that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. We believe that the EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1.

4. Assessment and Record Keeping

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting at Tittensor First School. Upon entry children complete the Statutory Baseline Assessment. Thereafter, regular assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs through interaction with the teaching staff. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept via DC PRO, an online assessment tool and feeds into an individual's Early Years Profile.

5. Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long-term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year. Medium term planning is created by early years practitioners considering the individual children's learning and developmental needs. Practitioners make strong links to the Early Years Statutory Framework.

All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child-initiated activities indoors and outdoors.

Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning.

6. Parents as Partners

At Tittensor First School we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. Therefore, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents and have a friendly 'open door' policy for sharing of information, queries, concerns or celebration of achievements and success either in or outside of school at the beginning or end of the school day.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. We encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in planning learning experiences, which respond and take into account children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through reading records, Dojo and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a regular basis.

Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the Autumn term to allow practitioners and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting and initial assessments of developmental progress. Another parent's evening takes place during the Spring term where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress. Throughout the year we may invite parents in to help them support their child's learning in different areas, for example an Early Reading Evening or Parent Activity Morning. Parents will also receive an end of year report and opportunity to look at their child's workbooks and profile, plus an opportunity to discuss these with practitioners.

7. Admissions and Induction

In our setting our Nursery offers 15 or 30 hours provision for a maximum 15 children. The majority of these children will have already reached their third birthday by the September in which they join the Nursery class. Others, known as 'Rising 3s,' will be three within the term that they start the Nursery.

Tittensor First School provides full-time Early Years education for children in their Reception Year. This is for children who enter school from September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old.

Before they start in the setting, all children are offered a visit to the setting during the Summer term. The majority of children entering the Reception classes will be taken from the school's own Nursery classes. A small number of children will be admitted from other Early Years settings. The purpose of initial visits is for the children who are new to the school to meet their new practitioners and start to become familiar with the setting environment, and for existing Nursery pupils to become increasingly familiar with their new practitioners and learning environment. Practitioners from Reception classes will also make informal visits to the Nursery setting during the year to enable children to become familiar with these adults. With parental permission, practitioners will also go to visit children in their home or current pre-school settings if they are new to the school. The aim of these visits is to support practitioners in developing their knowledge and understanding of each child in order to make the transition period as smooth as possible.

In the Summer term parents are invited into school to meet the setting practitioners. At this meeting information regarding the induction process and what goes on in the setting is shared. There is also time for informal chat and parents' questions. School information packs will be distributed to parents at this meeting, detailing school routines and expectations. Every effort is made to make children feel safe, secure and happy. Practitioners endeavour to establish consistent routines, a calm atmosphere and encouraging talk to maintain children's positive feelings about school.

8. Equal Opportunities

All practitioners at Tittensor First School have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting. All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting at Tittensor First School.

Please see the Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

10. Special Educational Needs

All children will receive appropriate assessment and support from relevant practitioners and support programmes in school, and any outside agencies, in accordance with our school Special Educational Needs Policy. Please see the Special Educational Needs Policy for further information.

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