

Tornedale Infant School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Signed by Chair of Governors:	<i>M Evans</i>	<i>A Dougherty</i>	
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Introduction

The quality of Early Years Education is vital as it is the foundation upon which all subsequent learning is built. Early years' provision makes a positive contribution to the healthy development of children, their capacity for developing lifelong skills for learning and to make the most their educational experiences.

From September 2008 we have followed the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) introduced by the DCSF (with a revised version being put into place in September 2012). This framework sets the standards for the learning, development and care of children within our Nursery and Reception classes.

Aims

- We aim to help young children achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes of
 - Staying safe
 - Being healthy
 - Enjoying and achieving
 - Making a positive contribution
 - Achieving economic well-being
- We aim to provide a caring, safe and secure environment in which young children are able to experience a broad and well balanced curriculum.
- We aim to encourage language development and promote learning which helps the children to develop emotionally, intellectually, socially, physically, morally and spiritually
- We aim to help the children, through support and success, to become more independent and self confident.

Objectives

There are four distinct but complementary themes which provide a context for the requirements of successful early years teaching and learning. They are:

- **A Unique Child** – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – children can learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships from parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** – the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected. (*Statutory Framework for EYFS pages 8 and 9*).

Early Years Curriculum (EYFS)

Activities are carefully planned to ensure that children progress at their own rate and activities are challenging to their state of development. Younger children often benefit from

playing alongside older and more experienced children and this is supported through the free flow play in the Foundation Stage outdoor area.

Teaching in the EYFS is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2021). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Learning and Development.'

The curriculum is centred on three prime areas of learning:

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

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding 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-centred 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.

Active Learning through Play

We organise the day to provide a balance between the following:-

- Child initiated Activities - children make choices from within the learning environment to meet his/her outcome for learning.
- Adult Initiated Activities- practitioners provide the resources to stimulate and consolidate learning.
- Adult Directed Activities – Children engage in planned activities to meet specific learning outcomes.

These areas are delivered through meaningful play experiences. Practical activities are a key way that young children learn with enjoyment and challenge

As the Foundation Stage covers learning in both the Nursery and Reception years it is important that continuity is maintained but that a child's experiences and learning are developed. Nursery and Reception staff aim to provide a curriculum which recognises the wide range of abilities within each year and select experiences to develop all children's abilities. During their time in Reception the children will be introduced to elements of the National Curriculum for English and Mathematics as appropriate. However, it is recognised that some children may not be ready for the more formal experiences and suitable differentiated activities appropriate for their development are planned.

The Importance of Play in the Foundation Stage

Play is a very important feature of children's learning. Through play children explore and develop learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, develop social skills and begin to understand the need for rules. They

have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. Play allows children to explore feelings and fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

It is through these play activities that children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world.
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Be alone, alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.

Admission Procedures

Admissions to Tortedale Infant School Reception class are administered by Doncaster Local Education Authority according to the school admissions policy which is available through the LA or the school. Admissions to Tortedale Infant School Nursery class should be made directly to the school.

Parents as Partners

We believe that a child's education is a partnership and is the most effective if it is a team effort between home and school.

Close working between Early Years practitioners and parents is vital for the identification of children's learning needs and to ensure a quick response to any areas of concern. Parents and families are central to a child's well-being and practitioners support this by sharing information through a variety of methods. Through regular communication via class dojos, families can keep in touch with how their child is developing.

With the help of other agencies such as health visitors, we work closely with parents to support them in preparing their child to be 'school ready'.

What is school readiness?

At Tortedale Infant School we believe that school readiness means that each child enters our school ready to engage and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success. Families, early child care providers and school staff must work together to provide environments and developmental experiences that promote growth and learning to ensure that all children enter school eager and excited to learn.

As a school we have agreed upon twelve key areas in which parents and carers can support their child to be school ready:

Self care

Speaking and literacy

Getting dressed and undressed on my own

Interest in the world and new activities

Eating

Writing skills

Going to the toilet

Independence

Listening and understanding

Sharing and turn taking

Counting skills

Routines

We provide tips for parents under these twelve areas when they attend the initial parents meeting and offer advice should they need it.

The role of the Key person in the Foundation Stage at Tornedale

- A key person helps the child to become familiar with the setting and to feel confident and safe within it.
- A key person develops a genuine bond with children and offers a settled, close relationship.
- When children feel happy and secure in this way they are confident to explore and to try out new things.
- A key person meets the needs of each child in their care and responds sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- Careful records of the child's development and progress are created and shared by parents, the child, the key person and other professionals as necessary.
- Children become independent by being able to depend upon adults for reassurance and comfort.

- Children's independence is most obvious when they feel confident and self-assured, such as when they are in their own home with family, or with friends and familiar carers such as a key person.
- Children are likely to be much less independent when they are in new situations, such as a new group or when they feel unwell or anxious.

Induction

The process of induction must primarily meet the needs of the child. From experience, we believe that if induction procedures are followed appropriately, with care and professionalism, children will have a successful and enjoyable start to school life.

Transition to Foundation Stage 1 – Nursery (Part Time)

- The needs are met by initially meeting the children in their existing pre-school environment where possible.
- The children and providers are next invited to come into the Nursery to familiarise themselves with the environment, future peers and staff. This is a valuable opportunity to share information between settings
- The children and their carers are then invited to attend a transition morning/afternoon. This provides an opportunity for the children to socialise with their peers. Carers meet informally with the staff to discuss the nursery provision and are given an opportunity to ask questions and inform staff of any relevant information.

- Staff also carry out home visits and this provides parents/carers with the opportunity to share any sensitive information and also ensures that the children are becoming more familiar with the staff before they begin Nursery.

The children's intake is phased, the numbers each day being dependant on the number in the cohort.

The parents are given the following information:

- Children's Welcome Booklet
- Holiday Dates/Year Planner
- Admission Form
- Background Information Sheet

Transition from FS1 (Nursery) to FS2 (Reception)

Staff work closely together sharing information and using environments and resources and planning many shared activities using the indoor and outdoor spaces so that all the children have opportunities to access all of the areas. Therefore, the transition from Nursery (part time) to Reception (full time) is made as smooth as possible.

Parents are invited to a meeting with the Reception teacher, the FS Leader and the Headteacher. At this meeting they share information about the start to full time school and receive a welcome pack to take home and peruse. The parents are also introduced to the Friends of Tortedale.

The children have a gradual introduction to full time school, which settles them into their new environment and introduces new friends. Such an introduction also gives staff an opportunity to get to know the children quickly and will give time to assess their abilities and needs. Home visits only occur on entry to F2 if the children have not attended our F1 setting or not had a home visit in F1 for any reason.

Teaching and Learning

Foundation staff aim to provide children with the social and emotional support they need during their first years at school. They help children to adjust to the new social context in which they find themselves and to a range of new challenges fostering confidence in learning. Staff aim to create successful and stimulating learning situations for individuals and groups. Children will often work collaboratively with their peers and with adults who are able to extend their natural curiosity through questioning and suggestion. Every opportunity is taken to support children's learning through meaningful contexts including play.

The Learning Context

At Tortedale Infant School, we aim to create a welcoming, well-organised learning environment which provides children with opportunities for discovery across the curriculum. Resources are located in designated areas and are easily accessed by the children. Pupils are encouraged to handle equipment carefully and to help with tidying up. We aim to encourage independence and to develop a sense of responsibility in the children.

We try to ensure that the physical layout of the classroom remains constant to encourage familiarity and independence, although we acknowledge the need for flexibility in order to challenge and stimulate.

Areas are designed within the classroom including:

- A writing corner containing various writing implements and papers as well as envelopes and writing mats.
- A book corner containing a range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and class made books
- A numeracy resource area allows children to select appropriate items to help solve practical problems
- An art area contains resources for a range of art, design and technology activities
- A construction area contains resources for developing fine motor skills, social interaction and problem solving
- A small world area which allows children to extend fine motor skills, engage in imaginative play and develop language
- An area for sand and water play is where children can engage in practical investigation
- A role-play area which can be developed along themed lines to cover several aspects of learning in “real life” scenarios
- An outdoor play area which can be used to develop and consolidate learning experiences.
- An investigation area which supports developing the senses.

Observation and Assessment

Assessment and record keeping, informed by careful observations, enable staff to plan a curriculum that will meet the needs of individuals and ensure continuity and progression. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process.

Throughout the Foundation Stage we assess the child’s development in the relation to the Early Learning Goals that form part of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. These assessments are made on the basis of accumulating observations and knowledge of the whole child. Observations and assessment of children’s learning help to:

- Inform planning
- Ensure obstacles to learning are identified and responded to
- Provide an all round picture of the child’s development
- Provide information which can be used to evaluate the quality of the curriculum provision

Evidence of children’s progress and achievement is collated through:

- Observations, both formal and informal and of targeted pupils, to ensure evidence is fair and comprehensive
- Questioning and interaction
- Samples of work
- Talking to parents and colleagues
- The home/school record books

By the end of Foundation Stage, the Foundation Stage Profile sums up that knowledge of the children's attainment and achievements and forms the basis for the reports to parents. The information is also shared with the Y1 teacher.

SEN

The early identification of children with special educational needs is important and the procedures listed in the SEN Code of Practice are followed throughout school. Early Years practitioners have a key role to play in identifying learning needs and responding quickly to any area of particular difficulty. When appropriate, Early Years staff will work together with the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and other agencies such as speech therapy and sensory impairment services, curriculum support and educational psychologists.

Equal Opportunities

At Tortedale Infant School we are aware of the importance of ensuring that all children receive equal equality of opportunity. All staff have an awareness and understanding of the requirements of equal opportunities legislation which means that practitioners will plan to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with SEN, children who are more able, children with disabilities and from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups. Please see the Equal Opportunities Policy for further details.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the policy review schedule.