

**Twiss Green**

**Community Primary School**

**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy**

**September 2021**

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| Date of Approval: | 9th September 2021 |
| Signed: Chair of Governing Body |  |
| Signed: Acting Head Teacher | **Katy Fuller** |
| To be reviewed by: | September 2022 |

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

**Intent**

At Twiss Green Primary School, we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school education, in which they can establish solid foundations to build into independent and successful lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills, such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start the National Curriculum in Year One.

**The Curriculum**

In Reception we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This statutory document clearly defines what we teach.

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf>

Development Matters & Birth to 5 Matters are non-statutory guidance that are also at the heart of our practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>

<https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/>

The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

**The EYFS is based upon four principles:**

* A Unique Child
* Positive Relationships
* Enabling Environments
* Learning and Development

**A Unique Child**

We recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children’s attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by positive experiences; we aim to provide opportunities for children to explore their own interests and next steps to allow them to achieve and become self-motivated learners.

**Positive relationships**

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring and respectful relationships with the children and their families.

**Enabling environments**

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations, we identify the children’s next steps in learning and development and are then able to plan and adapt our environment accordingly to ensure all children are engaged, make progress and reach their full potential.

**Learning and Development**

Our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. We ensure that the seven areas of learning and development are planned for through our continuous provision, so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

**Areas of Learning**

The EYFS is made up of **three prime** area of learning and development:

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

There are **four specific areas** of learning and development:

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

At Twiss Green Primary School, all areas are delivered through a well-planned play-based approach, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We plan activities and experiences for the children with the seven educational programmes in mind. Throughout the foundation stage, our long, medium and weekly plans ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in each area at the appropriate developmental level. Our curriculum map ensures coverage so that all children have opportunities to work towards and achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. We follow a half termly topic-based approach, which allows flexibility to ensure that both children’s needs, interests and next steps are at the heart of our practice.

**Play**

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so, we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and consolidate their learning. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children, as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, scaffolding, modelling, facilitating, questioning and sensitively extending play, skills and language development.

**Characteristics of Effective Learning**

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the provision is planned by the reception teaching staff with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child’s attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics 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.

**Inclusion**

Our whole school ethos, as well as that of the foundation stage, embraces inclusion. We recognise and respect the abilities and strengths of our children at all levels of development and the wealth of knowledge and experience that they bring from their differing backgrounds and cultures.

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 planning for their learning and we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of individual children, so that children are able to reach their full potential. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We aim to build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs.

We will provide: a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;  a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;  resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping; challenging activities for all children and for those whose ability and understanding are advanced. We will monitor children’s progress and take action to provide support as necessary. Where a specific need is suspected we will liaise with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and seek advice from outside agencies, such as the speech and language service, the educational psychologist and the bi-lingual support services amongst others.  We adhere to the Equal Opportunity and Inclusion policies of the school.

**Early Years Pupil Premium –** We will endeavour to identify our least advantaged pupils and inform parents or carers of their opportunity to apply for their child’s entitlement to extra funding in school. All extra funding we receive will be used to support areas in which we identify that the child will best benefit. We will track children’s progress to ensure that they are making good progress and to ensure that support is adjusted to target specific areas as the child develops.

**Assessment**

Within the first 6 weeks of the academic year, the Reception teaching staff carry out an electronic baseline assessment. Alongside this, they carry out their own observations and interactions to gauge each child’s stage of learning and development. Each child will then be observed at various points through each half term to plan next steps in learning to maximise progress. Alongside this, at several points throughout the academic year, children’s knowledge, understanding, skills and development are assessed and tracked using a snapshot EYFS assessment document.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult-led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of children’s strengths and achievements and to help us to plan for children’s next steps in learning. We use the electronic platform Seesaw to record and document our observations and planned next steps for the children.

In the final term of the year, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. Each child’s level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. The children will be assessed as meeting expected levels of development or emerging if they are not yet meeting expected levels.

**Transitions**

At Twiss Green Primary School we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group.

At the end of Reception, children have the opportunity to meet with their new teachers in their classrooms on three occasions prior to starting Year One. At the end of each school year, teachers have the opportunity to share their knowledge of each child, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year.

**Partnership with Parents**

We believe that parents and carers are a child’s first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school.  We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting. We hold weekly ‘stay and play’ sessions, where parents can see what their child’s learning environment is like, as well as share information about learning and experiences that their child is having outside of school. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child’s learning with the teachers.

In the first half term, we hold a reading and phonics meeting for parents to attend to give them information about how we teach early reading and writing skills at Twiss Green. There is then an opportunity to take part in some reading and writing activities with the children in the classroom.

Parents are encouraged to join in with their child’s education from the very start of their school journey. In Reception, parents are encouraged to support children’s learning through completing reading records, simple homework activities and by sharing assemblies and whole class activities.

At Twiss Green, we value the importance of the three-way relationship between children, parents and staff, as it enables children to make good progress and to maximise their potential. Parents receive information about their child’s assessment at baseline and their end of the year assessment. Formal parents meetings are offered at the start of the second half term and during the spring term, where parents have the opportunity to speak with the teachers to discuss their child’s progress and development, their next steps in learning and to view their child’s learning books. Parents are always welcomed to discuss their children informally at the end of the school day.

**Health & Safety and Safeguarding**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework Guidance (2021) and we adhere to the school’s safeguarding policy.

We are a healthy school and all children have access to fresh water and free fruit from a Government scheme. Children are welcome to bring in their own drink bottle filled with water. Reception children who stay for lunch are eligible for free school meals or can choose to bring in a healthy packed lunch.

Our classroom has its own toileting facilities and we teach the children the importance of hygiene by teaching hand washing techniques and, throughout the year, we plan food tasting and cooking activities to give children experiences of a range of healthy food.

**2021**