



**Thorndown Pre-School**

# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

Our aspiration is that Thorndown Primary will be an outstanding school.

We value and respect everyone in our community and work as a team to:

- Provide learning experiences which support and inspire high achievement for all ;
- Ensure a caring, safe and welcoming environment;
- Promote co-operative and responsible attitudes to make a positive contribution;
- Actively encourage independence and confidence to thrive in a changing world.

*“Happy, Healthy, High Achievers”*

**Approved at Learning & Development committee meeting on: 16 March 2017**

**Review Period: Every 2 years**

**Date for next review: Spring 2019**

# Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

*“Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments”* (Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Thorndown Primary School children are able to join Pre-School at the age of 3 and start Reception in the year they turn 5.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

**A Unique child + Positive Relationships + Enabling Environments = Learning and Development.**

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

## **A Unique Child**

At Thorndown Primary School we recognise that every child is unique, constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

## **Inclusion**

All children and their families are valued at Thorndown Primary School. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best. Staff understand and observe each child’s development and learning, assess progress and plan next steps. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools SENCO is called upon for further information and advice.

## **Positive Relationships**

At Thorndown Primary School we believe children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. Staff at Thorndown Primary School are sensitive to the needs, feelings and interests of each unique child and are consistent in setting clear boundaries (as outlined in our school behaviour policy).

We recognise parents are the child’s first and foremost educators and we work strongly to develop strong links with them. We do this by;

- Offering Home Visits or meetings at school, with their child’s key adults.
- Encouraging an ‘Open Door’ policy each morning to allow parents to settle their children, speak to their child’s adult or look through their own child’s Learning Journey.
- Parent/carers contribution page in each child’s Learning Journey to allow parents to contribute to their child’s assessment.
- A board for children to celebrate the things they do at home.
- Talking Bags to encourage communication. These have feedback sheets to share learning at home and school.

- Inviting parents/carers to come into school for Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day celebrations when they are able to share their child's favourite activities.
- Holding 2 parent evenings a year (In Reception).
- Holding parent workshops to support their work at home
- Providing a baseline report when they begin Thorndown Pre-School
- Sending home Next Steps
- Providing a yearly report

## **Enabling Environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Effective learning builds and extends upon prior learning and follows children's interest. Effective planning is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual Record of Achievement, which we encourage parents to look through. Play based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning. At the end of the year children will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals

## **Learning and Developing**

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. 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.

Prime Areas:

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

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

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Knowledge of the world
- Expressive arts and design

## **Play Based Curriculum**

We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is one of the key ways in which children learn. It is the process through which children can explore, investigate, recreate and come to understand their world. It is not just imaginative play and role play but includes spontaneous, self- initiated lines of inquiry and exploration. Play is a vital component of children's lives. It is an important way skills are developed and practised. Play is essential for physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional, and behavioural and social development.

## **Characteristics of Learning**

At Thorndown Primary School we believe *“What children learn is important, but how children learn is even more important if they are to become learners for life in today’s society”* (Helen Moylett, *How Children Learn. The Characteristics of Effective Learning, 2011*). We ensure we plan for the 3 areas of Effective Learning as these underpin learning development across all the areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The three Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and Thinking Critically