



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy 2025-26

Staff Responsible:	Mrs K. Barnes
Governor Committee:	Teaching & Learning
Status & Review:	July 2025
Next Review Date:	Summer 2026

The Early Years Foundation Stage policy is designed to allow us to meet the Town Farm Standard that, at its core, is the relentless pursuit of the highest standards in education.



Every Child, Every Day, Every Moment

“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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children’s ‘school readiness’ and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.” (Statutory Framework for the EYFS, GOV.uk 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, Nursery children attend 15 or 30 hours a week (2.5 day split or Monday-Friday – see Nursery Admissions Policy) and start after we have attended a home visit, or we have made contact with parents. Reception children join us at the beginning of the school year during the first week.

The EYFS is based upon the overarching principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
- The importance of learning and development.

A Unique Child

At Town Farm Primary School and Nursery, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Our Town Farm values of **Ambition, Courage, Determination, Enquiry, Equality, Integrity, Resilience** and **Respect** are ubiquitous.

We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Town Farm are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best and do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- teaching through objective-led planning to ensure all children are engaged and reach their full potential through their interests;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from 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 taking action to provide support as necessary.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children about boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We believe that children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy)

Welfare

At Town Farm we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

The EYFS places clear duties on providers to keep children safe and promote their welfare. Providers must be alert to any issues of concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. (Statutory Framework for EYFS, 2021)

Prevent

At Town Farm we have a focus on Personal, Social and Emotional Development that teaches children to learn 'right from wrong, mix and share with other children and value other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.' (Prevent Duty guidance in England and Wales, 2015)

Positive Relationships

At Town Farm we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent to form secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the

- contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:
- talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school; the teacher offers to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school and Nursery (if this cannot happen, we encourage parent meetings to the school);
- the children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during 'Moving up Morning' and 'Stay and Play' for Nursery;
- inviting all parents to a 'School Readiness' meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' via our online system Tapestry;
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There are formal meetings for parents throughout the year at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;

- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: International Week, Sports Day etc;
- parents contributing towards the 'Learning Journey' leaving comments relating to the children's achievements and adding home learning and special events at home.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teachers, Nursery Nurses and EYFS Teaching Assistants act as 'Keyworkers' to all children in EYFS. The EYFS leader meets with staff to discuss new intake children. Where children continue to attend other preschool/nursery provision, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children's achievements.

Enabling Environments with Teaching and Support from Adults

At Town Farm we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. We encourage children to take a lead in their learning and we plan towards their interests.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

We plan towards the children's interests and therefore we create medium term plans alongside the children. We believe children learn best through child-initiated play and adults are facilitators in this. Through child-led planning, we can identify individual targets and skills that need to be taught through play.

We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded in children's individual online 'Learning Journeys'. They also contain information provided by parents.

At Town Farm, we use the Tapestry (Online Learning Journal) system to observe and assess children. At the end of Reception, we report to Surrey and parents whether their child has made a 'Good Level of Development' against the specific and prime areas of learning.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELGs. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is set up so that children are able to find and equipment and resources independently for their open-ended play. We have an engaging and purposeful outdoor environment that has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children to explore, use their senses and be physically active.

The outdoor environment has been tailored to provide a range of opportunities for the children to develop their skills in. The various zones allow exploration of different areas of learning from physical development to communication and language. Being outdoors is key for the children's mental health and wellbeing by engaging in activities that cannot be achieved to the same level in the classroom.

The Importance of Learning and Development

At Town Farm we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise:

- the seven areas of learning and development and the educational programmes (described below)
- the early learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year
- the assessment requirements (when and how practitioners must assess children's achievements, and when and how they should discuss children's progress with parents and/or carers)
- Development Matters, non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS, is available to support providers in their delivery of the EYFS learning and development requirements.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the prime areas:

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

We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

(Statutory Framework for EYFS, 2021)

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. These features apply to teaching and learning in the EYFS just as much as they do to the teaching in Key Stage 2. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned child-led curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop 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 indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our Nursery and Reception so we know what our children experience between the year groups and to support progression;

Play

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Practitioners need to decide what they want children in their setting to learn, and the most effective ways to teach it. Practitioners must stimulate children’s interests, responding to each child’s emerging needs and guiding their development through warm, positive interactions coupled with secure routines for play and learning. As children grow older and move into the reception year, there should be a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the specific areas of learning. This will help children to prepare for year 1.” (Statutory Framework for EYFS, 2021)

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 express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

The importance of play feeds into necessity of the outdoor area that we provide to allow children to develop their skills with confidence and in ways they may not indoors. The staff are trained to enhance their learning experiences through interacting in their play and developing their ideas and skills further.

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately.

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

(Statutory Framework for the EYFS, 2021)

Monitoring and review

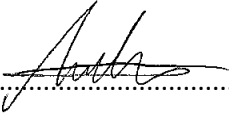
The EYFS Lead ensures the EYFS team follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The leadership team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Other Relevant Policies:

- Intimate Care
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Nursery Admissions Policy

First Date Written: 02/07/2021 By C Warren (EYFS Assistant Head)

Most Recently Updated: 02/07/25 By K Barnes (EYFS Lead)

Policy Signed by Headteacher: 

Policy Signed by Chair of Governors: 

Review Date: July 2027

References:

- "Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, DfE"