



Talavera Infant School

Early Years Policy

Purpose

At Talavera Infant School, we intend to:

- Make learning fun and purposeful.
- Ensure children are ready for the next stage in their educational journey.
- Value the individuality and diversity of our children through a creative and engaging curriculum.
- Ensure children's interests lead their learning.
- Support children to follow our school values of Ambition, Honesty, Pride and Kindness through a nurturing environment, developing positive, strong and trusting relationships.
- Develop children's language and vocabulary through a child-centred curriculum with quality texts, an engaging environment and purposeful provision.
- Encourage and support parents and carers to become valued members of our school community to ensure the best outcomes for our children.
- Have robust procedures for transition of children from year group to year group and school to school.

Early Years Foundation Stage

At Talavera Infant School, we truly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development. **The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (COET&L)** prepare children for lifelong learning as well as the next stage of their education. They are central to all of our teaching and learning in the EYFS; **Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically** underpin our Early Years provision and assessment.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. The Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

The Unique Child

At Talavera Infant School we know that every child develops in their own way. We recognise that our children come from varied experiences and opportunities and strive to ensure they become competent, resilient learners who want to do their best and have fun whilst they are doing it. We use positive praise and encouragement to ensure every child reaches their full potential and develops positive attitudes to all parts of school life.

Positive Relationships

At Talavera Infant School we know that strong trusting relationships between staff, children and parents/carers ensure the very best outcomes for our children. We give each family a key worker who spends quality time with the child and helps to build confidence and a love of learning. We truly believe that a child's and parent's experiences in Year R set up a child's attitude to education for life. If we get it right from the beginning, the child is richer for it.

Enabling Environments

Additionally, we believe that our indoor and outdoor environments play a key role in supporting and extending children's learning. We aim to provide high quality provision that allows children to lead their learning, gives children time to practise and reflect prior learning and challenges children to begin a journey of new learning. Through observation and assessment we plan careful next steps for the children, with the support of their parents. Tapestry (our online learning journey) ensures there are strong home-school links for every child. All of our staff are committed to giving every child positive learning experiences by engaging in their play in a supportive and fun way.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning as set out in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' document (DFE 2021). These are split into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas of learning. At Talavera Infant School, we ensure our children are secure in the Prime Areas of learning so that they are well prepared to access the Specific Areas of Learning. However, we also ensure that there is an equal balance of all seven areas of learning in both our indoor and outdoor provision as we aim to develop the whole child. We plan for a balance of child-initiated and adult led learning opportunities and these are organic over the year as children's needs change and their development grows.

Prime Areas of learning

- Communication and Language (CL)
Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
Self-regulation, Managing self, Building Relationships
- Physical Development (PD)
Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills

Specific Areas of Learning

- Literacy (L)
Comprehension, Word Reading, Writing
- Mathematics (M)
Number, Numerical Patterns
- Understanding the World (UW)
Past and Present, People, Culture and communities, The Natural world
- Expressive Arts and Design
Creating with Materials, Being Imaginative and Expressive

Observation, Assessment and Planning

At Talavera Infant School we recognise the unique school community we serve. We are privileged that many of our children come from military families. This means that our school community can be very transient and we know that it is vitally important that we make the time the children have at our school, however long, really count. This is why we plan half termly topics based around a quality text that is accessible and purposeful for all children. Also, many of our children are learning English as an additional language. We plan a curriculum rich in talk and vocabulary as we know and

understand that speaking and vocabulary development underpin a child's ability to read and write and therefore access all other curriculum areas. We work closely with EMTAS and use The Bell Foundation assessment document to carefully track our children's acquisition of English and plan for their next steps.

In addition to the use of key quality texts, we use our observations of the children's play to find out about their interests and development needs. These observations form our enhanced provision planning to ensure the children are given the maximum opportunities to continue on their learning journey. Our observations of the children are assessed against our personal Talavera Curriculum Goals for EYFS and the COET&L.

Our EYFS curriculum goals at Talavera are:

- 1. I listen carefully and I am confident to say my ideas.**
- 2. I can retell and share my favourite stories.**
- 3. I am kind to myself and kind to others.**
- 4. I understand the importance of having a healthy body/ mind.**
- 5. I am proud to be part of Talavera infant school.**
- 6. I can co-ordinate my body effectively.**
- 7. I can read a simple sentence.**
- 8. I can write a simple sentence.**
- 9. I can make and use my numbers to 10.**
- 10. I am curious about the world around me.**
- 11. I celebrate my own and others cultures.**
- 12. I can use my imagination and my creativity.**

We have developed Milestone documents to track the children's progress and attainment towards our curriculum goals at three key points:

1. October – baseline assessment
2. February – first mid year assessment
3. April – second mid year assessment

The assessments are used to decide next steps for the children and begin any interventions that a child may need to catch up and keep up. We track carefully which children are and are not on track. Changes to the environment, provision, resources and staffing may occur from pupil progress discussions. Vulnerable groups of children are tracked carefully and small steps of progress are noted for individual children.

Then in June, we assess the children against the Early Learning Goals for their end of year assessment. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written report about the Early Learning Goals to parents/carers. There are also three opportunities over the academic year for parents to meet their child's class teacher at Parent's Evening.

Staffing and Organisation

At Talavera Infant School, we have three reception classes of up to 30 children per class. Each classroom has a class teacher and a Teaching Assistant providing the statutory 1:15 ratio. We often have a third member of staff to support children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) but this varies and depends on the needs of the children. The children have a classroom base that allows access to our outdoor area. We operate free flow play so that children can access their indoor or outdoor classrooms during 'explore time'.

Learning through play

'Explore time' is when children are able to free flow inside and outside, accessing learning through planned play opportunities. Children will engage in child-initiated learning as well as adult directed learning during their free flow time. Staff will play alongside the children, modelling and narrating their play to ensure children are learning and developing. Staff may question and instruct children in their play in order to assess or challenge them too.

Induction to Reception

Finding out as much information as we possibly can about a child before them starting with us is of upmost importance. We work closely with our two main feeder preschools, Toye Box and Queen Mary's across the year, inviting them to our nativity and visiting them at different points during the academic year. During the Summer term before a child begins at Talavera Infant School, the Early Years Leader visits as many of the children at their preschools and nurseries that she possible can. For any children who can't be visited (often because they are moving into the area and attend a preschool far away), the Early Years Leader will have a telephone conversation with the child's key worker. If a child has not attended a nursery, preschool or childminder, then the Early Years Leader will make contact with the parents to gain valuable information about the child. Furthermore, if a child has Special Educational Needs (SEN), our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) will also visit the child at preschool and make initial contact with the child's parents. We offer a further transition meeting for these children involving all outside agencies, the parents, preschool staff, SENCO and EYFS leader to ensure we are able to cater for a specific child's needs. Children who are classed as vulnerable will also be offered a similar meeting.

Our transition into school begins in June with a meeting for parents led by the Headteacher and EYFS leader. During this visit, the parents are informed which class their child will be in and who their class teacher will be. The parents spend some time with the class teacher in the classroom to find out about key dates and important information. They are given our 'Starting School booklet' and directed to the school website. During this meeting, parents are also introduced to our HC3S caterers, our Family Support workers and our school uniform supplier. Then in late June into early July, the children are invited into school in small key worker groups to play in their classroom and meet their keyworkers. In September, we offer home visits and then begin a part time transition timetable for children in their key worker groups. After a week or so, children are invited to stay for lunch before beginning full time. The majority of our children begin full time school by mid September but we do recognise that some children may not be ready for this and part time school may continue. Parents and the class teacher will discuss and agree this depending on what is best for each individual child.

Reception to Year One transition

Reception and Year One staff work closely together to ensure a smooth transition from Year R to Year One. They meet to discuss each individual child and share the child's end of year report so that next steps in learning are understood.

The Year One teachers will spend some time with the Year R children, visiting them in their classrooms and reading them a story. They upload short videos to Tapestry to introduce themselves to the child and parents/carers.

The beginning of Year one incorporates much of the EYFS curriculum as classrooms provide children with good quality play experiences through role play, small world, construction and mark making areas as well as access to an outside classroom.

Home - School Links

We recognise, value and actively encourage all of our parents and carers to be fully involved in their child's education. We understand that they are a child's first educators and know the child better than anyone. This is why we are keen to promote positive relationships between staff, children and parents/carers as the stronger the relationship the more successful a child will be.

We achieve good home - school links by:

- Monthly newsletter from the Headteacher
- Half termly newsletter from the Early Years Leader
- Reading workshop
- Tapestry
- Operating an open door policy and ensuring all parents have access to the class teacher's email address
- Encouraging parents/carers to read regularly with their child by providing reading books, word cards and phonics home learning.
- Discussing children's learning and attainment at parents' evenings and giving parents valuable resources to support learning at home.

Responsibility:	Children and Learning
Review cycle:	2 years
Date Agreed:	26 th November 2024
Next Review Date:	November 2026