



## CURRICULUM INTENT STATEMENT:

*At TWS the curriculum is designed so that it builds on children's prior learning, provides hands on and enriching experiences, allows the children to develop aspirations, resilience and independence and become articulate, creative individuals.*

*Every child is recognised as a unique individual. We celebrate and welcome differences within our school and the local and wider community. We are respectful of everyone. We provide a creative and linked curriculum that enables children to make connections, embed learning and build on their knowledge. Children are given opportunities outside of the National Curriculum that enhances and enriches their learning, giving them real life experiences and allowing them to think in enterprising ways.*

*We believe that childhood should be a happy, investigative and enquiring time where there are no limits to curiosity and there is a thirst for new experiences and knowledge.*

*Children will leave Thomas Willingale School and Nursery with high aspirations and a strong sense of belonging, they will have the confidence and skills to articulate themselves, make decisions, make connections and self-reflect enabling them to be lifelong learners.*

Whole School Curriculum Drivers			
<b><u>Oracy</u></b>  To ensure all children have the skill set to be able to express and articulate themselves accurately, confidently and fluently so that they are able to take on any challenge.	<b><u>Environment/Community</u></b>  Our children will play an active part in the local and wider community, utilising our rich surroundings within their learning and supporting how our community develops.	<b><u>Independence</u></b>  Through engaging and inspiring learning that we provide, we want our children to become more independent learners, be proactive and strategic and transfer their skills to different areas of learning.	<b><u>Positive Growth</u></b>  To instil a positive mind-set which allows children to build aspirations, empathy towards others and opportunities for their future lives; it supports their resilience so that they take chances, learn from failures and deepen their skillset and understanding.



EYFS Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL):			
<u><b>Speaking</b></u>  <b>ELG – Children participate in discussions, offering their own ideas, using new vocabulary and explaining why things might happen. They express their own ideas, feelings and experiences using full sentences and using tenses appropriately.</b>	<u><b>Playing and Exploring</b></u>  <b>Our children investigate and experience things and aren't afraid to 'have a go.'</b>	<u><b>Creating and Thinking Critically</b></u>  <b>Our children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.</b>	<u><b>Active Learning</b></u>  <b>Our children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.</b>

## Basic principles

- Learning is a change to long term memory.
- Our aims are to ensure that our pupil experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each Key stage, long- term memory of an ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge.

## Introduction

This policy outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning at Thomas Willingale School and Nursery. It should be read in conjunction with the Induction Policy, Admission Policy and The Early Years Statutory Framework effective from September 2021. ***See Appendix 1.***

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, children may join us from the age of three and will be admitted to our Nursery or when they are due to start in the Reception year.

“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 Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021 (Effective September 2021)*



## Our Vision

A child in the EYFS at TWS will be happy, sociable, confident and an independent learner. They will feel safe and valued. They will build positive relationships with their peers and familiar adults and will become articulate, independent and creative individuals. We believe in providing all children with a safe and stimulating environment that builds on each individual's wants, needs and interests. They will explore their learning environment and choose activities that interest them.

Children should have the opportunity to learn through play. Learning should be fun, engaging and suitably challenging. We value the importance of our outdoor environment and believe that it offers children the opportunity to develop their thinking and problem solving skills. Adults provide high quality interactions; they are role models for learning.

We are committed to providing the best possible start to their school life, with a stimulating and engaging curriculum, teaching them skills and giving them experiences which will support and nurture a love for lifelong learning.

## **Early Years and Childcare Charter 2023**

From January 2023 to December 2023, Thomas Willingale School and Nursery is a member of the Early years and Childcare Charter. This means we commit to follow a set of shared principles to support all children to get the best start in life. Our policies and practice support these shared principles:

- 'We commit to having high expectations for each unique child.'
- 'We commit to respecting parents, carers and families as our partners.'
- 'We commit to contributing towards the early years system. '
- 'We commit to work collaboratively with our partners and providers.'

**Early years and Childcare Charter 2023.** (See Appendix 1)

## **Aims and Objectives**

The objective of this policy is to achieve consistency of practice to ensure the highest quality of education for children in the foundation stage.

Our aims are closely linked to our school aims and those in our Teaching and Learning Policy, which are:

- to enable every child to achieve his/her full potential in all areas of school life
- to develop in every child a desire to learn, and the confidence to move forward into new areas
- to nurture in every child feelings of high self-esteem and experience of success
- to develop skills and attitudes that lead to a life-long desire and ability to learn effectively
- for every child to become a thinking and reflective human being
- to develop, in every child, attitudes of self-reliance and self-motivation
- to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness
- to develop, in every child, lively and enquiring minds
- to develop responsible and independent attitudes towards learning
- to develop, in every child, the ability to communicate effectively with others
- to involve all in the community in ongoing learning and to value their contribution to the school



## **Admission**

All children due to start at Thomas Willingale School and Nursery are visited at home by the school's Family Support Worker. This is an opportunity for the parents to share information about their child and to become familiar with the school's routines and procedures.

## **Admission to our Nursery**

Children are able to join our Nursery from the age of three. Children are offered a start date either a full time morning session (8:45 – 11:45am) or an afternoon session (12:30 – 3:30pm). Since September 2018, the school has offered a full-time Nursery placement to eligible children of 30 hours per week.

### ***Eligibility for a 30 hour per week, full time Nursery place.***

Your child will be eligible for a full-time Nursery place if:

- You earn more than the equivalent of 16 hours at the national living wage or minimum wage per week. For example; £120 per week if you are 25 or older.  
AND
- You earn less than £100,000 per year.

The opportunity to visit prior to starting our Nursery is open to all children and their families. The Nursery staff hold an\* open morning in May (Polling Day) for families to visit the Nursery setting and talk to the Nursery staff. The children can engage in a range of early year's activities during the session alongside their parents and meet the Nursery teachers, Nursery nurses and teaching assistants. \*(Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the school sent videos to prospective families)

Children in the Nursery are allocated a key worker who will work closely with the child and parent to ensure consistency and to assess progress and development. The Nursery teacher will have overall responsibility for all the children in his/her class.

Parents' are welcome and actively encouraged to bring their children in to the Nursery and if necessary to stay with their child for a while as their child begins to explore the Nursery environment. All children are individual and some may need their parent's to stay for longer whereas others may be happy for their parents to leave almost immediately. The Nursery staff can advise on the best way forward in helping a child to settle. Most children who attend our Nursery move on to one of our Reception classes. A small number of children transfer to other schools in the area.

## **Admission to our Reception**

All children that accept a place in our Reception year are provided with a place in the September when their fifth birthday falls in the current academic year. Children do not have to attend school until the term that they reach the age of five.

Children due to start in the Reception classes are invited to attend a transition day in \*June/July prior to starting in September. During this day the children will meet their class teacher and the class teaching assistant. Parent's are invited to join their child for a teddy bear's picnic lunch on this transition day.\*(Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic prospective parents and children were sent a welcome pack and welcome video link. Parents and children were invited to a one-to-one socially distanced meeting with the class teacher in September prior to their child's transition day.)

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The school operates a staggered entry to Reception over one week:

- each new child to the school will receive a home visit from the school's Family Support Worker\* (COVID-19 Pandemic – a telephone introductory telephone call)
- the first week of term the children attend a transition full day (based on their date of birth - autumn born / spring born / summer born)
- all children begin school full-time following the transition days

The school family support worker offers a welcome session during the transition days, offering parents a chance to meet other Reception parents and to chat and discuss any concerns or worries they may have. \*(not available during COVID-19 Pandemic)

## EYFS Principles

Effective practise in the EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Children developing and learning in different ways and at different rates
- *A Unique Child*
- At our school we recognise that every child is a learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We promote high expectations for independence with all children, taking into account their individual needs, levels of confidence and ability. We use praise, encouragement, celebration, sharing and reward to support children to develop a self-confident attitude to learning.

### *Positive Relationships*

- We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop an understanding, caring, respectful, professional 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. We see the indoor and outdoor learning environment as one. Through discussion and observation we assess the children's interests and level of development, this informs planning to create a challenging environment with achievable activities. We provide a range of practical activities for the children to experience which will extend their learning. We set up the indoor and outdoor classrooms so that the children can access a range of self-chosen resources to encourage problem solving, independence and logical thinking.

### *Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates*

- We provide a framework that covers the education and care of all children in the Early Years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development and understand they are interconnected. We offer a differentiated curriculum with specific interventions that support different areas of learning. We aim to stretch the more able children but allow them to consolidate their learning at a level that is suitable within an Early Years setting.



## Curriculum

The early learning goals and the educational programmes are set out in the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, document. (Published 31 March 2021, Effective 1 September 2021)

The seven areas of learning and development are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Foundation stage teachers plan an inter-connected curriculum creating a learning environment with activities and experiences which carefully deliver these areas of learning. They provide experiences which may provide the child with opportunities to develop a number of competencies, skills and concepts across all areas of learning, with a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. They understand that there are three ‘prime’ areas of learning (Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development) which influence the ‘specific’ areas of learning (Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design).

All children in our early years follow the EYFS curriculum and are offered a wide variety of learning opportunities.

- *Literacy* – in the early year’s class rooms children are offered a variety of opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills. The school has introduced the ‘Phonics Bug’ scheme (Autumn 2021) with training in September 2022. Children in the Nursery are taught to listen and distinguish and identify different sounds. As children progress, they begin to learn the letter sounds. Children visit the school library weekly and share books, stories and rhymes with adults to support their enjoyment of books.
- In Reception the children have a phonic session twice a day covering the reading and writing of letter sounds, high frequency words and tricky words. Formal differentiated sessions are provided daily to enable skills to be developed within the classroom through topical activities. The children in Reception are encouraged to read every day at home. Children take home a reading book, a library book and termly letter sounds and tricky words to support and consolidate teaching and learning that has taken place in class.
- *Communication and Language* - Throughout the curriculum we insist on high standards of ‘Speaking and Listening’. We expect the children to speak in full sentences, where appropriate, building on articulation and extending the breadth of vocabulary that they use. Children are taught in the first few weeks the importance of ‘listening’ not only to the adults in class but to one another. Many activities are designed to build on the children’s skill to listen to others, to know what a question is and to ask appropriate questions in response to what they have heard.
- *Mathematics* – Children work towards achieving the Early Learning Goal by using a mixture of practical activities that are adult-led and child-led. These cover a wide range of mathematical activities and concepts based around the mastery of number and numerical patterns and include other mathematical concepts including; shape, space and measures.
- *In Reception* – weekly homework is set via the online Tapestry tool to consolidate the literacy or mathematical teaching and learning that has taken place in school that week.



## Equal Opportunities

At this school no child will be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability.

## Continuity and Progression

Well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners engages children in the learning process and enables them to make progress in their learning. All Early Years' experiences are planned to build on what children already know.

## Implementation

Practitioners enable the curriculum in the early years by ensuring:

- learning is highly active
- involves investigating, creating, practising, repeating, revising and consolidating
- the children are encouraged to ask questions and take part with enthusiasm in well led, adult directed activities
- children are able to initiate their own activities
- have the confidence to take risks and make mistakes
- have enough time to get deeply involved with a task
- are able to make links in their learning
- have opportunities to try out new ideas in a variety of ways
- access to planned opportunities for both the inside and outside classroom
- time for children to reflect and improve on their learning

## Learning through Play

At our school we support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves and modelling by example.

Children are encouraged to become independent learners and to take some responsibility for initiating their own lines of enquiry and investigation.

We use the ***characteristics of effective learning*** when planning and guiding children to activities:

- **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; and
- **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 Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021*

## Staffing and Organisation

There are currently two class groups within the Nursery. There is a high ratio of adults to children. Statutory guidance requires a ratio of one adult to 13 children. Each Nursery class is led by a class teacher with two additional experienced adults, nursery nurses and teaching assistants. There are two Reception classes, each class is led by a class teacher with support from a full time teaching assistant.

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The staff work as a team, liaising daily and are led by the early year's phase leader who is one of the early year's class teachers. The early year's teachers meet fortnightly to discuss school issues, to plan and monitor effective provision and to discuss arrangements and review assessments. The class teacher's work together closely sharing ideas and planning together weekly.

The classrooms are of a good size so that practitioners are able to organise spaces to cover each area of the early year's curriculum. Each class room is organised to support children's learning and development and has; a reading area, creative area, role play area, carpet area, small world and construction area, literacy and mathematical areas, computing and understanding the world areas.

All classrooms have the provision of our safe, secure outdoor learning environment that is directly accessible to the children which they use throughout the day to support their learning and provides opportunities for physical development including; throwing and catching skills, access to wheeled toys, balancing and climbing equipment and exploration of the outdoor environment and understanding the world.

All children in the early years have a weekly P.E. session in the school hall, playground or on the school field (weather permitting) led by a P.E. coach. In Reception, the children have a second weekly P.E. lesson led by the class teacher. Classrooms have easy access to cloakrooms and toilets.

## **Playtimes and Lunchtimes**

There is no set playtime in the early years as children can access the outdoor learning environment throughout the day through free-flow activities. Children in the Nursery can have a paid school lunch in the school dining hall and will be supervised by the school mid-day assistants from 11:45am – 12:30pm. The children are taken back to the Nursery and have access to the outdoor learning environment following their lunch.

Children in Reception are offered a free school dinner and are supervised by the school mid-day assistants. During the autumn and spring terms' the children have access to the Reception outdoor garden following their lunch. In wet weather children have access to the undercover outdoor space or one of the Reception classrooms during the lunch break.

From the Summer term, the children in Reception join the key stage one children on the main school playground for a 15 minute morning playtime (10:30-10:45am) and following their lunch. \*(COVID-19 Pandemic – Reception children will remain within their own Reception bubble for break times)

## **Snack Provision**

Children are offered a healthy snack, milk and water to drink each day and are involved in giving out the snack to their peers. Children in the Nursery sit in a class group to eat their snack and have the opportunity to talk about current interests, discuss foods or recent events. The children in Reception are encouraged to be more independent and have access to a \*rolling snack where they help themselves to the daily fresh fruit or vegetables on offer and a drink throughout the morning session. \*(Guided snack time due to COVID restrictions) Water is available throughout the day. Children are asked to bring their own bottles of water to sip throughout the day. These are kept in the classrooms.

## **Planning**

Good planning will make children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends what children know and can already do. Our planning shows how the principles of the EYFS are put into practice and is informed by observations made of the children, in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning needs. We use



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objective led planning to plan a variety of cross-curricular activities to support the children to achieve the learning objectives for the week.

There are three stages of planning the curriculum:

## *Long Term Planning*

This ensures that the coverage of all areas of children's learning is broad and balanced and provides a variety of activities and experiences which enable the children to proceed towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

## *Medium Term Planning*

As a staff team different topics will be decided and are usually changed every half-term. The topics support the delivery of the curriculum learning objectives. These are carefully thought about and will be chosen taking into account the children's current interests and special events that happen throughout the year.

## *Short Term Planning*

We identify specific learning objectives, differentiated activities which are adult-led and child-led. The objectives are carefully selected to progress the children towards achieving the Early Learning Goals, taking into account the assessments that teachers have made for the groups of children in their care. It allows for flexibility in response to children's needs and interests and for revision and modification informed by ongoing observational teacher assessment. It allows for individual needs to be met. Some children will have additional support from a familiar adult as part of an intervention group to target and support the learning and development of their specific needs.

## **Assessment, Recording and Monitoring**

Assessing children's attainment and progress is integral to the planning cycle. Children are assessed on their entry into the Nursery and again on admission to the Reception classes. This helps teachers to determine where the children are in their learning. The 'baseline assessment' is usually completed within the first three weeks after the children enter school. It informs the staff how best to move forward with the planning and highlight any areas of strength/weakness that needs to be addressed. Parents are involved at this stage and make a useful contribution throughout. The home visit (phone call) by the school family support worker supports these initial assessments.

At our school we use an electronic system for recording, monitoring and assessing the children's achievements and progress; 'Tapestry'; an online learning journal. All staff working in the early years have access to electronic tablets to take photographs or videos of the children while playing, learning and working throughout the school day. Parents have access to their own child's learning profile via this electronic system and can respond electronically or add their own observations of their children's learning at home. Throughout their time in the Nursery and Reception children are assessed both informally and in structured summative assessments at the end of each term.

## **Formative Assessment**

This type of assessment informs everyday planning.

Daily ongoing assessments are informed by:

- observing their day-to-day progress

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- sharing their experiences
- discovering their interests
- understanding their different learning styles
- finding out about their likes and dislikes
- celebrating their successes
- helping them to overcome their difficulties
- recording their speech
- 'next step' marking to allow children to evaluate and develop their own work

All practitioners who interact with the children contribute to the assessment process.

The children keep a record of their success using the electronic learning profile system – Tapestry. Parents are sent weekly observations of their own child via the Tapestry app. In the Reception classes as well as using Tapestry to create a learning profile of the children's progress and development, the children also have a writing book, literacy folder, a handwriting and phonics book, a mathematics folder, a profile book and a writing assessment book.

## **Summative Assessment**

The children are assessed on entry to Reception through the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first six weeks, and throughout the school year, using the statutory framework for Early Years Foundation Stage educational programme (September 2021) and the non-statutory Development Matters (Revised July 2021)– the steps toward achieving the 'Early Learning Goals'. Each child is given a 'Best Fit' judgement to show how they are progressing within each area of learning at half termly intervals. This information is completed by the class teachers in consultation with the class teaching assistants and nursery nurses and is recorded on the school's assessment tool – Target Tracker. This summarises all the formative assessment undertaken and shows how the children are progressing towards the 'Early Learning Goals'. Teachers participate in regular in-house and local moderation meetings.

At the end of the summer term parents receive a comprehensive report. This includes:

### **Nursery**

- Information about the coverage of the early years foundation stage curriculum through the termly themes and topics in the Nursery.
- Information about the child's progress from the keyworker and class teacher including areas for development.

### **Reception**

- Information about their child's progress across all seven areas of the curriculum with targets for future development.
- The level each child has achieved in conjunction to the 'Early Learning Goal', in each area of learning ('exceeded', 'expected' or is still 'emerging' toward the 'Early Learning Goal')

End of year *Profile* results are submitted to the Local Authority.

## **Parents**

Parents have an important role to play in the education of their children and the school actively seeks to develop a positive partnership with parents in order to help children make the best possible progress. Parents are welcome within the school and are always treated with respect.

We do this through

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- talking to parents about their children before their child starts school through \*home visits, our open day or transition day (\*COVID-19 Pandemic a telephone meeting)
- inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress with the class teacher
- encouraging parents to talk to the class teacher/teaching assistants if there are any concerns
- all parents having access to their own child's learning profile through our electronic monitoring and assessment tool – Tapestry; parents are actively encouraged to add their own comments, photographs or videos to their own child's electronic learning journey
- arranging activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- regular liaison through the daily reading record (in Reception)
- \*parents coming in to support children's learning (when COVID restrictions ease)
- Parental consultation meetings 2x a year
- class page, accessible through the school app or school website

## Health and Safety

The school adheres to the LA's policies on Health and Safety. The EYFS Phase Leader and all staff in the Nursery are paediatric first aiders and all teaching and support staff have attended first aid training. This is reviewed and training delivered every three years.

Within the school all surfaces are washable; floors are non-slip and carpets well secured. There is a regular programme of monitoring safety aspects and all members of staff are vigilant, informing the Headteacher and/or Site Manager of any concerns they may have. \*(Increased handwashing throughout the day, resources sprayed and wiped when used and increased cleaning routine due to COVID-19)

## Monitoring and Review

### *Role of Governors*

Governors have a duty to promote high educational standards and to make sure the curriculum is balanced and broadly based and in particular that the principles underpinning the Foundation Stage are being carried out.

### *The Headteacher and Practitioners*

The Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, class teachers and practitioners identify areas for improvement in terms of organisation, management, extending resources or training to improve provision and enhance the effectiveness of training.

The policy has been reviewed by the staff and governors.

Sept 2024

K.Piper  
EYFS Phase Leader