



Tadpole Farm
CE Primary Academy

Approach to Early Years



Introduction

At Tadpole Farm CE Primary Academy we aim to provide the children with an extensive range of diverse learning opportunities enabling them to become confident and independent learners. Through this we believe they will build solid foundations for their learning and continue to reach their full potential as they progress through their school years.

In September 2014, Tadpole Farm CE Primary Academy opened a 52 place Nursery and a 60 place Reception setting.

In September 2015, Tadpole Farm CE Primary Academy opened the brand new permanent school building based in the heart of the new Tadpole Garden Village development with a 52 place Nursery, 60 place Reception Class and two 30 place Year 1 classes.

Early Years Foundation Stage at Tadpole Farm CE Primary Academy

In the Foundation Stage the children's learning is embedded through the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, which is broken down into 7 key areas of learning.

Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Specific Areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

We also encourage the children to become effective learners through:

The ability to play and explore

The ability to be an active learning

The ability to be a creative and critical thinker

Well being and involvement (Leuven Scale)

In our Nursery we initially focus upon the Prime areas of learning and develop the Specific areas of learning throughout the children's time at Nursery to ensure the children are developing a broad range of early skills to prepare them for Reception.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

Children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development is nurtured at Tadpole Farm CE Primary Academy and they will be encouraged to leave their parents and carers and choose resources and activities with increasing independence. Children will develop their ability to play and take turns with adult support which will develop their social skills and build strong friendships. In our Nursery we do not follow a keyworker approach as many other Nurseries do as we feel it is beneficial for children to develop confidence talking and building relationships with a range of adults. We also feel it is valuable for all members of staff to have an overview of all children's learning and next steps. We encourage a sense of right and wrong throughout the school by promoting positive praise, as well as sanctions, to help children develop a good sense of self-worth and pride for their achievements. In Reception social skills are further developed through a range of activities and experiences. We encourage the children to build new friendships, resolve simple conflicts and consider their own and other people's feelings.

Communication and Language:

Communication is key to children's early learning, in our Nursery and Reception children will learn how to listen in small groups as well whole class and respond in appropriate ways to ensure they are learning to their full potential. We will demonstrate appropriate ways of communicating to enable children to build strong relationships with peers and adults alike. We will develop the importance of the children's spoken language and listening skills to give each child the skills to converse and ask questions to develop their play and enquiry. We will do this by giving the children opportunities to express themselves through a variety of activities including singing, role-play and storytelling. The children will be learning how to socialise with others in their class by playing as part of a group, we will support the children's play by learning how to take turns and responding to what others say.

Physical Development:

Children will develop a range of gross and fine motor movements in a variety of ways through structured Physical Education sessions in addition to daily continuous provision, play and exploration. In Nursery we promote independence in the children's daily routines to enable them with the skills needed to support the transition to Reception. This will include building confidence when getting dressed, toileting and managing their own personal hygiene. We will expect the children to select their own resources to help them with an activity, we will encourage the children to seek support when they need it but also promote perseverance and exploring new experiences. During our daily snack times children will be introduced to a variety of foods and discussions about healthy food choices and where our food comes from. In Reception we continue to develop these key skills and develop pencil control and letter formation to build strong and confident writers. We also develop the children's knowledge and understanding of how to lead a fit and healthy lifestyle through making healthy choices and looking after our own personal hygiene.

Literacy:

In Nursery the children will be introduced to a variety of songs, rhymes and stories 1:1, in small groups and in whole class sessions. Many topics and themes will be based around songs and stories to help the children grow an enthusiasm for joining in with stories and looking at text in their environment.

Early writing skills are developed through a sensory approach at an early stage. The children will be introduced to a wide range of materials, tools and activities to help develop their gross and fine motor skills to enable them to begin to use tools effectively. The children will learn to give meaning to the marks they make and begin to represent words with marks they make using pencils, chalk, paint and messy play both inside and outside. The children will learn to recognise their names in a variety of ways for example finding their own peg every

morning, the children will be taught to recognise the letters in their names. We will begin to introduce an awareness of sounds in the environment to build the children's phonological awareness. In Reception we aim to encourage children to become confident and independent writers as well as developing a love for writing in a range of different purposes. We continue to use a range of tools to develop writing skills in a range of different ways. Through phonics we teach the children to read and write the initial sounds and then teach them how to blend and segment so that they can begin the next stage of reading and writing. We ensure that the environment is rich in a variety of text for the children to read and develop their skills. We do not have writing books in Reception as we encourage children to select their own resources for writing. Samples of the children's writing are collected and placed in their individual learning journeys.

Maths:

The children in our Nursery will explore fundamental Maths skills in physical ways through construction and exploration of shapes, space and measurements. They will learn problem solving skills that they can apply in everyday situations: comparing and measuring, recognising patterns and naming characteristics of shapes and other objects. The children will learn to count through songs and actions. They will develop the use of mathematical vocabulary through adult questioning and their own enquiry and observation of their environment as they play and explore. We will learn through both adult led and child initiated activities that provide the children with the opportunity to learn through play and exploration. In Reception these skills are developed in a practical and hands on approach. The children develop their number skills and are able to apply them in a range of mathematical situations. We encourage the children to problem solve with a "have a go" approach to build confidence and skills.

Understanding the World:

In Nursery and Reception we encourage children to talk about their lives and draw upon past experiences to celebrate similarities and differences between themselves and others. We provide enriching activities to explore the world they live in, to enable them to question and observe things they have seen. It is important that, whilst celebrating the Christian faith, the children respect diversity, and know that we are all individuals and enjoy different things. Technology will play an integral role in your child's learning, as they have access to a range of equipment. They will learn that they can use ICT to develop an understanding of how things work through cause and effect.

Expressive Art and Design:

We aim to engage the children's imagination and creativity through a variety of experiences in their environment. Children will be able to explore musical instruments to develop an understanding of rhythm and make their own music. Role play and imaginative play will be themed and changed to suit topics and to enable children to introduce storylines to their role play and create props to support their role play. Provision will ensure children have independence in their preferred form of expression to explore colour, texture, lines and construction.

Baseline:

During the first six weeks the children are in school, staff will get to know each individual child through a range of activities in order to assess their level of development on entry to the school in each of the areas of learning as well as their well being and involvement. Children will be assessed through observations, short tasks and

collecting evidence to support judgements. This data will then help set next steps of learning for each child and future targets.

Learning:

Nursery

Each morning the children will have the opportunity to complete a morning task with their parent or carer to help them settle into the classroom environment. The children will then be encouraged to join in with morning routines to build social and communication skills. The day will consist of a mixture of short whole class teaching sessions where the children will learn and build new skills and then have opportunities to apply this knowledge in a variety of play situations supported by the adults. Children will also work on short focussed tasks with adults to extend their learning. Children will have the opportunity to apply their learning in a wide range of activities that will be accessible for extended periods allowing the children to independently develop what they have learnt. Children's learning achievements will be recorded and celebrated through observation notes, photographs and work samples which will be collated in their personal Learning Journey, which will be regularly shared with parents.

Reception

In the first term, parents are encouraged to carry out a morning activity in the classroom with their child to help them settle each day. We then encourage the children to come into the cloakroom by themselves after the half term in order to help build their confidence and independence. After we have completed the morning register children have a mixture of short teaching sessions on the carpet, small group activities or independent learning activities to apply their learning. Staff are on hand to support and extend learning as well as record the children's achievements through observation notes and photos which, as nursery, are recorded in their learning Journeys.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children learn in a variety of ways, this is to ensure the children access a broad and varied curriculum in their time at Nursery. At this early stage in their education children learn through play. Activities and experiences are planned around the children's needs and interests through indoor and outdoor provision.

We strive to motivate children's learning and development by allowing children to take ownership of their own learning by initiating ideas and making decisions. We encourage children to share their interests and curiosities in order to incorporate this into the learning opportunities and make the learning meaningful and in context to the children.

We aim to provide a stimulating and exciting environment, which meets the differing needs of each child and where everyone feels happy and secure. Our learning environment enables children to develop their independence and realise their potential in order to gain from each learning opportunity. The learning environments are also rich in vocabulary and resources to assist the children with their learning as well as being stimulating to encourage children's imaginations and creativity. Children are given every opportunity to explore different learning environments in a free flow capacity. Children are supported in each area through continuous provision, adult initiated and child initiated activities to engage and inspire their enquiry and learn through play with their peers.

At this early stage children learn all their skills and concepts through play. Play is a vital part of the learning process and is key to ensure success.

Assessment

In both Nursery and Reception we assess the children against the Age Bands and plan each child's next step of learning. Evidence of children's learning and achievements are recorded electronically on Tapestry or in their individual learning journeys. This enables us to confidently track the children's achievements in learning and the progression they make. We have two parent meetings a year where we share each child's progress with their parents as well as their next steps of learning. From 2016 we will open up Tapestry so that parents can also record their children's achievements that they have at home.

Outdoor Learning:

We aim to give children a rich learning environment including the outdoors as much as possible. Exploring the environment is a vital part of the learning process, outdoor learning gives children the freedom to explore and communicate in different ways to the classroom environment. Outdoor learning allows children to express themselves and their ideas freely on a larger scale. We aim for our outside areas to enrich the children's time at school through the different areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. All children will be able to access the outdoor environment whatever the weather to encourage them to explore and take safe risks in imaginative play and experiential learning.

Parent Partnership:

You, as the primary carers of your children play the most important part in their education. We are keen to develop our relationship with you and involve you in everything that happens at school, so that we are able to support each other in helping your child reach their full potential. We are aware that your child continues to learn at home as well as at school so we would like you to share that learning with us and contribute to their learning journeys by recording Magnificent Moments. This will help us to build a picture of your child, there are many things they may do at home but not at school so your contribution is essential.

We will offer many opportunities for you to be involved with the school including stay and play sessions, parents evenings, fundraising and after school events. We also provide an invitation for you to join us in the classroom to support learning by joining in with activities and sharing your own skills or knowledge. Parent helpers play an important role in the progress of all children.

Collective Worship

We are proud to be a church academy, we aim for our children to be developed socially, morally spiritually and culturally through our ethos and values. Collective Worship is a time where we come together as a whole school, year group or class and learn and reflect on our values that we endeavour to promote in our children every day.

Snack

In Nursery we have snack time together, as a group, sat around a table with an adult. This helps develop the children's speaking and listening skills and develop their independence with eating and preparing food. We base our snack around our topic to encourage children to try lots of different foods. We aim to cook with the children throughout the term to develop their understanding of where food comes from and how the food we buy is made. The items we cook are then eaten at snack time and talked about. In Reception we have a piece of fruit and milk each day until the children are 5 years old. We begin by having our snack as a whole class each day to help develop our social skills. When we are more independent and confident we take our snack into the playground at playtime. We are taught to finish our snack and place it in the correct bin which helps look after our environment.

Burrow

To support the transition from Nursery to Reception we have established a shared area for our Nursery and Reception children to learn together. In the 'burrow' there are shared resources and learning spaces which are carefully planned to develop gaps in the children's development. Reception children are able to support the Nursery children and Nursery and Reception staff work together to support the children in the burrow through play and adult led activities. The learning space is adapted termly or more regularly to suit the children's needs and interests. Children are encouraged to play in a free flow capacity so that they gain independence through purposeful play and learning.