



**Tadpole Farm**  
CE Primary Academy

Early Years  
Policy  
2023-2024

## Introduction

At Tadpole Farm our School Curriculum is underpinned by 12 Christian values and is designed to meet the needs of our pupils in mind with an extensive range of diverse learning opportunities. Our curriculum is planned to promote a **LOVE** of learning; the courage to **ENQUIRE** and ask questions; a place where each child can **ACHIEVE** their individual potential academically, socially and emotionally through working in **PARTNERSHIP** with their teachers, peers and parents/carers.

## Curriculum Intent for EYFS

We aim to provide a broad and rich curriculum that:

- Nurtures the needs of each individual child
- Allows children to actively explore the world around them
- Promotes independence
- Encourages a love for learning
- Allows children to explore learning in a variety of ways
- Supports learners to show courage and take risks in their learning in a safe and supportive environment
- Allows children to learn in a way that suits their individual needs
- Encourages resilience and perseverance
- Creates strong learning links between school and home

At Tadpole Farm CE Primary Academy we follow the new Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (2021). Within this framework there are four guiding principles which shape our practice.

These are:

1. **Every child is a unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured.
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
4. Children **develop and learn at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The Framework sets out seven areas of learning and development which are all important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving in their learning.

### Prime areas:

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

### Specific areas:

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

We also encourage the children to become effective learners through the **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:**

- **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

### Communication and Language:

Communication and Language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

### 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 we also promote perseverance

and independence to explore 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 and oral health.

#### 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 be increasingly independent. Children will develop their ability to play and take turns with adult support which will develop their social skills and build strong friendships.

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.

#### 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 and begin 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 for 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 follow a writing progression which takes the children from mark making in Nursery to independently writing short sentences by the end of the Reception year.

## 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. We also encourage the children to explore the natural environment around them, observing nature and talking about change, similarities and differences.

## 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. 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.

Children in Reception will also complete the statutory DFE Baseline Assessment which consists of short activities one on one with their teacher to assess them on entry to school. This is then used by the DFE to track their Progress through to Year 2 and then Year 6.

## Learning:

### Nursery

At the start of each session the children are encouraged to come in and hang up their coats and bags and join the class for stories or complete a morning task. We then join together on the carpet and start the session with our Hello, Days of the Week and Weather songs. 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 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. We do a mixture of topic based learning and In the Moment Learning which follows a child's own interests to develop their learning. The Nursery staff build a solid knowledge of each child and their next steps of learning so that these can be encouraged through various learning opportunities.

We take photographs of our learning and the children's achievements and these are added to our Learning Journey Display to celebrate our learning. This is then all added to our floor book to show our Learning Journey throughout the year. We also add photographs to Tapestry to share with parents.

### Reception

We encourage the children to build their independence and come into the cloakroom by themselves during the first term before joining the class to complete a morning job on the carpet. 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 are recorded on Tapestry.

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 in Nursery and Reception. 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. Adults' key role is to facilitate learning through questioning and support rather than leading ideas.

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.

### Planning

The EYFS team plan learning as one team with overarching themes, which ensure continuity and progression of learning. We plan adult led carpet sessions which focus on learning skills and then carefully planned enhanced provision activities which allow the children to apply the learning skills.

### Phonics and Early Reading

We use Monster Phonics across the school as our Phonics scheme starting in Nursery.

In Nursery we focus on listening for sounds and rhymes and patterns through a variety of activities, songs and rhymes based on Phase 1 Phonics in term 1.

In Reception we begin phonics teaching daily from week 3 after initial settling sessions and Baselines. Sessions involve recapping previously taught sounds, introducing the new sound of the day, building blending and segmenting skills and then applying these skills in various activities in the provision. Small group interventions are then carried out to support the lowest 20% of children to close the gap. We also use Phonics Tracker to track the children's progress in Phonics and use it as a teaching resource to practice phonic skills and learn high Frequency words.

Reading books are sent home with the Reception children. Each week they will have a reading book that is matched with their phonic stage in order for them to practise their skills without adding extra challenge as well as a Library book for parents to share with their child to help develop their understanding of stories.

### Assessment

In both Nursery and Reception we continually assess the children's learning through observation and interaction which allows us to plan each child's next step of learning for progression and ensuring they are on track to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year.

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. Tapestry will be open to parents at points throughout the year for them to see their child's learning and add their own achievements from home.

All children have next steps to work on throughout the year to move their learning forward. Pupil progress meetings will be held 3 times a year to discuss progress of the children and next steps and support for learning.

### 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 Framework and enable them to explore a range of natural objects and resources. 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 encourage you to also upload photographs of children's learning and experiences onto Tapestry for us to share. This will help us to build a broad picture of your child as 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.

### 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.

Reception will join whole school worships from Term 2. Nursery have a daily reflection focussing on the school values and then join Whole school worship from Term 6.

### 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 children also have fresh fruit and milk each day as part of their snack.

In Reception the children have a piece of fruit and milk each day until they are 5 years old. We begin by having our snack as a whole class each day to help develop our social skills. We then move to having open snack where the children can independently help themselves to fruit and milk during the morning session. The children are also taught how to clear up and place it in the correct bin which helps look after our environment.



## Transition

We ensure that all children have a transition from YN to YR and YR to Y1. If children are moving to a different school we ensure we have an in depth conversation about the child transferring in order to detail their current achievements and progress and what their next steps of learning are.

- Transition into Nursery we organise a stay and play picnic in July for children due to start in September so that staff have an opportunity to meet the children and families. The children will then start settling sessions in the first few weeks in September and build on these so that they are in for their normal full sessions by the end of September.
- Transition into YR - Parents and their child are invited
- in during May for an initial meeting so we can get to know the child and their family during a short individual play session. We then arrange stay and play sessions for the children who will be joining YR in September. These are organised into 2 sessions where 30 children will attend for each session. This allows for smaller numbers and for the staff to spend quality time with each child to get to know them. Parents are then invited in for an information evening with the staff where we share what School looks like for those children.
- We ensure that we have in depth conversations with all feeder nurseries and childminders to share information on the children.

All parents of EYFS children also complete "All ABOUT Me" forms to share information, achievements, and concerns about their children.

Review date: July 2024