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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Adopted March 2024

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and 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." (EYFS 2021)

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a framework produced by the DFE and sets the standards for learning and development of children from birth to five. At Toad Hall children can join us from 3 months old and stay with us till 5 years old, all which age groups are catered for by the EYFS.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Toad Hall we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. 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, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals. All children at Toad Hall are treated regardless of race, religion, or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our nursery. We believe that all children matter, we give children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of the 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 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.

Children with special educational needs are identified and supported in liaison with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and /or appropriate outside agencies where relevant. We aim to meet the needs of all children through:

Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience, and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.

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 nursery are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries and rules to enable them to make appropriate choices. 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 well-being of all children.

Welfare

"Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them."

At Toad Hall, 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 are 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements.

Positive Relationships

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

Parents as Partners

We acknowledge 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 their children.

We do this through:

- Offering a visit to all children and their parents/carers in the setting prior to their starting nursery.
- Offering parents regular informal opportunities to talk about their child's progress.
- Offering a formal parental consultation meeting for parents each term at which the child's key person and the parents/carers discuss the child's progress in private.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, nursery, and parents e.g., annual fun day, leaver's graduation, Christmas play.

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 Toad Hall, the staff are organised as 'Key persons' and 'co-key persons' who are the first point of care for individual children.

Enabling Environments

At Toad Hall, 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.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

The planning within the EYFS follows the children's interests daily. The child's key person as a guide for weekly planning uses these plans; however, the key person may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

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 child's key person and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded on your child's Tapestry account.

At Toad Hall, we use the EYFS Profile to record judgements against the EYFS Profile 16 assessment scales called Early Learning Goals (ELG's). This information is then shared and passed on with the parent's permission to the child's school. The process of using the EYFS profile only applies to children who are due to turn five during the academic school year.

The Learning Environment

The nursery is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and

resources independently. Each unit has its own outdoor area. This 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 children the opportunity to explore and use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

At Toad Hall 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.

Teaching and Learning Style

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our nursery. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

The partnership between key persons and parents, so that our children feel secure at nursery and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.

The understanding that key persons have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their learning and development.

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.

Learning experiences are carefully planned to help 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.

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." (EYFS 2021)

Through play 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.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources. They discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adults at Toad Hall support in this process and enhance their ability to think critically and ask questions. Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas, and asking open questions. During child initiated and plan- do & review time children have free access to a range of resources both inside and out.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding of the World

Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the child's key person to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Early Years Foundation Stage Coordinator responsible for the EYFS. This EYFS Coordinator has opportunities to observe EYFS practice and provide feedback to the whole staff team, raising any issues that require discussion. The manager and EYFS Coordinator will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole nursery monitoring schedule.