EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) Policy

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1. Introduction

This is an overarching EYFS Policy in accordance with the Statutory Framework for Early Years, September 2026, giving a holistic view of the School's Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

The Statutory Framework for Early Years states, "Every child deserves the care and support to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at

any other time of their lives, so their experiences have a major impact on future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality early learning provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential."

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Tower House School, children join us full time at the beginning of the School year in which they are five.

We follow the Learning, Development and Assessment requirements of Statutory Framework for Early Years, September 2026 and the following four guiding principles shape our practice:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- 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.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

In line with EYFS principles, at THS we:

- Have a key person approach which develops close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment, indoors and out
- Provide a balanced curriculum
- Plan challenging and enjoyable learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation, assessment, and the child's interest
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are both adult-initiated and child-initiated
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Provide equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every pupil is included and supported.

2. The Early Years Curriculum

Using the important and inter-connected Prime and Specific Areas of learning from the Statutory Framework for Early Years, September 2026 we plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of the children's needs, interests and stages of development.

In planning and guiding pupil activities, we reflect on the different ways that pupils learn and ensure we are enabling them to explore, create and think critically and be active. Schemes of work are based on a series of topics, offering experiences across the Prime and Specific Areas of learning, using both the inside and outside learning areas. We follow the pupils' interests, and this is reflected in our short-term planning. We continually draw on our links with the community to enrich their experiences by taking them on visits and inviting engaging speakers and workshop providers into the School.

The Prime Areas are crucial in igniting the pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. The four Specific Areas enable the Prime Areas to be strengthened and applied.

Prime Areas of Learning		
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Physical Development	Communication and Language
Self-regulation Managing Self Building Relationships	Gross Motor Fine Motor	Listening, Attention and Understanding Speaking

Specific Areas of Learning			
Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the world	Expressive Arts and Design
Comprehension Word Reading Writing	Number Numerical Patterns	Past and Present People, Culture and Communities The Natural World	Creating with Materials Being Imaginative and Expressive

Each Area encompasses a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning. Pupils have whole group and small group teaching, the former increasing as the pupils move through their Reception year, thus preparing them for the more formal environment of Year 1.

3. Inclusion

We value all of our pupils as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We believe all our pupils matter and we give each and every one of them the opportunity to achieve their best.

We continually monitor pupils' progress and strongly believe that early identification of individuals requiring additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the pupil the support that they need. We provide additional 1:1 support for those needing extra time to consolidate learning and work closely with parents and outside agencies.

We plan challenging activities for pupils whose ability and understanding are more advanced.

We provide resources that reflect and celebrate diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping. All children create photo collages, and we ask parents to complete questionnaires so we can learn more about each child's mother tongue, particularly supporting those with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

4. The Learning Environment

The Reception classroom is organised to allow pupils to explore and learn independently and collaboratively, securely, and safely. The room is set up in learning spaces, supporting the Prime and Specific Areas.

5. Observation and Assessment

We recognise assessment plays an essential role in helping parents/carers and School staff to recognise pupils' progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and offer appropriate, targeted support.

All pupils are assessed on entry into Reception. Prior to starting school the children and their families participate in a comprehensive induction process, which includes a home visit from the Head of EYFS and the Head Teacher, two 'Stay and Play' sessions during the week, and a whole-family 'Stay and Play' session at the weekend. As part of our transition support, selected Year 8 pupils also take part in the induction process to help the Reception boys settle confidently into school routines. These sessions, known as 'Getting to Know You', ensure that each child is supported to flourish socially, emotionally and academically.

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of our learning and development process. Staff observe the pupils to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to shape learning experiences for them reflecting those observations.

Observations (formative assessments) are recorded on Tapestry, a secure internal online platform. Children's work is also collated in individual work folders, which parents can view during Parents' Evenings. We ensure that assessment opportunities do not involve prolonged breaks from interaction with pupils and do not generate excessive paperwork, allowing staff to remain focused on high-quality interactions and learning.

Pupils are assessed (summative assessment) in September as a baseline and then at the end of each term in all 7 strands of learning. The progress of the pupils is continually monitored, with termly meetings scheduled to discuss judgements, set targets, and implement booster and support groups where appropriate.

In the Autumn term we administer on a one-to-one basis, the 'on entry' CEM BASE assessment (summative) for all Reception pupils, giving standardised baseline data in literacy and mathematics. In May the Reception pupils complete the CEM 'on exit' BASE assessment, again giving standardised data and allowing for an analysis of progress across the year to be made.

Formal reports for all pupils in Reception pupils are provided twice over the course of the year. In Reception the Autumn term report comments on the three Prime Areas of Learning, Literacy, and a general summary of the 3 other Specific Areas, as well as a social commentary, incorporating the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

In the Summer term report, comments cover all Prime and Specific Areas, including strengths and next steps and additionally give a social summary. An overview which indicates attainment against each of the 17 Early Learning Goals, and a summary on their Characteristics of Effective Learning, is also be published to parents. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

Parent evenings are held in both the Autumn and Spring terms, and give the opportunity to discuss a child's social, emotional, and academic gains and areas for ongoing targets.

6. Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for, and time is given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the pupil's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved; with the pupil and other settings, including nurseries and carers. Pupils entering Reception attend both an activity morning, a Teddy Bears' Picnic and classroom inductions, developing familiarity with the setting and staff.

In the final term of Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Reception staff and discuss each pupil's development against the Early Learning Goals and their Characteristics of Effective Learning. This supports a smooth transition into Year 1 and helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive, and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of each individual pupil.

7. Partnership

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the pupils and their families. Parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make and encourage them to play an active part in their child's education both at home and at School.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice, in order to meet the needs of our pupils. At times we may need to share information with other professionals, providing the best support possible.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare

Children's safeguarding and welfare is paramount. We have a secure environment and stringent policies, procedures, and documents in place. We teach pupils how to be safe, make choices and assess risks.

We comply with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2026) and meet the associated regulatory requirements for Safeguarding and Welfare to:

- Promote the welfare of children
- Promote good health, including oral health
- Prevent 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 we maintain the correct pupil to adult ratios and that all staff are suitably qualified
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose

- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe, efficient management of the School and to meet the needs of the children
- Protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children. See the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- The School follows the revised EYFS notification requirements. Ofsted will be notified of any allegation of harm or abuse by anyone living, working or looking after children on the premises, together with the action taken in response, as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 14 days after the allegation is made. See the School's Safeguarding Policy.
- Safer recruitment procedures are followed for all relevant staff and volunteers working with EYFS pupils. Required enhanced DBS and barred list checks are completed in accordance with the revised EYFS requirements before an employee begins work or a volunteer commences volunteering. See the School's Safer Recruitment Policy.
- The School's Whistleblowing Policy enables all staff, students and volunteers to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice across any area of provision and sets out how concerns should be reported and the process that will follow.
- All staff and prospective staff are informed of their responsibility to disclose any information that may affect their suitability to work with children. Suitability is considered through recruitment, induction and ongoing safeguarding procedures.
- In the EYFS, the School has regard to Department for Education guidance on children's screen use in early years settings and ensures that the use of screens is appropriate and purposeful.
- Smoking and vaping, including the use of e-cigarettes, are prohibited on the premises when children are present or about to be present.

9. Oral Health

Healthy eating habits and good oral health are continually promoted. The latter is further supported by termly visits from a local dental practitioner.
Food and drink provided to Reception pupils meet relevant health requirements. Pupils are appropriately supervised during mealtimes and arrangements are in place to reduce the risk of choking.

10. Behaviour

The Head of EYFS is the named person responsible for behaviour management issues regarding Early Years (Reception) pupils. The School has a Behaviour Policy, an Anti-Bullying Strategy and a Use of Reasonable Force Policy. All of which pertain to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

11. Ratios

We ensure that pupils are adequately supervised and that children are always within sight and hearing of staff. We meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2026) with the following adult to child ratios:

	Reception
Level 6	1:30
Instructor	1:30
Level 3-5	1:13
Level 2	1:8, in the presence of a Level 3 or above

12. Full Paediatric First Aid

All EYFS staff hold a recognised Full Paediatric First Aid certificate, as noted in Annex A of Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The School therefore meets the regulation that new staff qualifying post 30 June 2016 and working with EYFS children are trained in Paediatric First Aid.

The School ensures at least one person with the aforementioned certificate is on the premises and is available at all times. Paediatric First Aid training is renewed every three years. Lists of staff holding a valid Full Paediatric First Aid certificate are displayed in the Reception classroom. At least one person with a current Paediatric First Aid certificate accompanies EYFS pupils on outings.

13. Disqualification from Childcare

All staff working with children aged 8 and under in out of School care, and all those working with pupils in the EYFS complete the declaration on disqualification from childcare.

14. Premises

Indoor space requirement meets the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements, of 2.3 m2 for pupils aged 3-5 years.

15. Risk Assessments

We ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff and pupils are not exposed to risks. Rigorous daily checks and enhanced cleaning procedures are in place. A battery of written risk assessments, informing staff practice and management of risk are available on request.

16. Staff supervision

EYFS staff receive termly supervision which provides support, coaching and training and promotes the interests of pupils. Supervision fosters a culture of mutual support, teamwork, and continuous improvement, which encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues. It also provides further opportunities for staff to discuss any issues particularly concerning pupil development or well-being.

17. Monitoring and Review

- Priorities relating to the EYFS are identified in the School development plan.
- Relevant staff training and development needs are outlined in the development plan.
- The Head of EYFS carries out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole School monitoring.
- The Head of EYFS reports to the Head of Junior School on the Senior Leadership Team.
- Whole School policies equally apply to the EYFS, as they incorporate the mandatory requirements.

Tower House School is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment