

THOMAS'S BATTERSEA EARLY YEARS POLICY (Incorporating the Outdoor Play & Healthy Eating Policies)

INTRODUCTION

By producing a specific EY policy we are recognising the importance of the Early Years as a distinct Key Stage. This document is a statement of the rationale, aims and guidelines for settling in, learning and teaching and the curriculum in the Reception classes at Thomas's Battersea.

This policy is reviewed by the Head of Lower School and Reception Leader. The revised EY policy was implemented in September 2012 to take into account the EY framework. **The policy is to be read in conjunction with whole school and curriculum policies.**

The Early Years applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Thomas's, all children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Key Stage 1 begins for our children at the beginning of Year 1. The Early Years stage is most important in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Early Years.

The four principles of the EY set the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. At Thomas's, practitioners use the principles: *A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments, Learning and Development* to guide everyday teaching and learning. These principles run alongside the government's Every Child Matters outcomes: *Staying Safe, Being Healthy, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution, Achieving Economic Well-being*.

Learning Journeys are now electronic and 'Tapestry' is used to record the children's achievements.

The EY seeks to provide:

- Quality and Consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress
- A Secure Foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly;
- Partnership Working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers;
- Equality of Opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported and British values are a key focus.

AIMS

The Themes and Commitments laid out in the *Early Years Statutory Framework* underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's:

- personal, social and emotional well-being
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning
- social skills
- attention skills and persistence
- language and communication
- reading and writing
- problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- knowledge and understanding of the world
- physical development
- creative development

We aim:

- for children to develop positive dispositions to their learning
- for children to feel safe and comfortable in their learning environment
- for children to form good relationships with adults and peers
- for children to understand what is right, what is wrong and be able to make informed choices
- for parents to put trust and confidence in the professionalism and experience of practitioners
- for parents to feel secure about leaving their children in the setting
- for parents to feel involved in their child's development and learning and work in partnership with practitioners
- for practitioners to be sensitive and responsive to the specific needs of children and parents at all times

Settling In

At Thomas's we want to make the transition from pre-school to Reception, for both children and parents, as smooth as possible. The majority of children will have attended a form of Early Years setting prior to admission and we acknowledge that these settings vary in style and curriculum. We take into account the wide range of life experiences and value the diversity of all children.

We want:

- children to develop positive dispositions to their learning
- children to feel safe and comfortable in their learning environment
- children to form good relationships with adults and peers
- children to understand what is right, what is wrong and to be able to make informed choices
- parents to put trust and confidence in the professionalism and experience of practitioners
- parents to feel secure about leaving their child in the setting
- parents to feel involved in their child's development and learning and work in partnership with practitioners
- practitioners who are sensitive and responsive to the specific needs of children and parents at this time

The transition from pre-school settings to Reception is addressed in the following ways:

- Prior to entry the children are invited to attend a party, where they meet their future peers and teachers.
- Parents attend an event during which they get the opportunity to meet each other, representatives of the PTA and staff in a social context. A pack of information is handed out including the Lower School Parents' Handbook and a sheet called 'All About Me', which is filled in by the parent and child as introduction for the teacher and gives parents an opportunity to express their concerns.
- Reception teachers visit Thomas's Kindergarten to introduce themselves and have a transition meeting with staff.
- The Kindergarten children spend a morning at Thomas's Battersea prior to starting.
- The school hosts an event for the Heads of settings sending children to Thomas's at 4+.
- The Head of Lower School or/and EY Co-ordinator aim to visit settings during the year.
- A 'New Parent Handbook' is distributed in the summer term prior to entry, this is completed by parent and child and includes such things as the child's interests and favourite things and Medical details. This information is then given to form teachers.
- The child's EY Learning Journey, final report and transfer sheet is requested from the previous setting.
- All children join us in September for the Michaelmas term
- All children leave after lunch for the first two weeks of term.
- Children born after 1st April have the option of a ½ day each Tuesday and Thursday during the Michaelmas term. This option is also open to children born up to the end of March if it is felt an individual child would benefit.
- Parents bring children into the setting each morning to settle them in.
- Parents attend a social event during the first term, called Syllabus Evening, when practitioners talk through the day to day routines of the setting, curriculum, forthcoming events etc. followed by a Q&A session in individual classes.
- During the Michaelmas and Lent terms parents attend a formal meeting with their child's form teacher to discuss their child's development thus far.
- Parents receive a written report which addresses the EY 7 Areas of Learning at the end of the Michaelmas and summer terms.
- Practitioners are always able to discuss issues arising with parents at short notice.
- Each class has a designated PTA rep who acts as a liaison between the parent body and practitioners in Reception classes. This is a parent who is already familiar with the setting.
- Holding and responding to Parent and Pupil surveys.
- By supporting fundamental British values.

Parents and Carers as Partners

We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played and their future role in educating their child. At Thomas's Battersea we value all parent contributions and seek to involve parents in all aspects of their child's learning and development. We see working together with parents as a vital aspect of all we do. We recognise that the parent knows the child best and aim to respect the parent's wishes even though they may differ from that of the school.

We do this through:

- schools visits and tours
- 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
- encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents with the class teacher twice per year at which the child's progress is discussed
- providing a formal report for parents on their child's attainment and progress twice per year
- encouraging parents to regularly view and contribute to their child's Early Years profile
- having an open door policy every morning where parents bring children into the classroom and have the opportunity to be part of their child's learning experience
- having a parents' notice board for each class/ all information on show in classroom or on an area of the TLP
- ensuring the class PTA rep has regular contact with the teacher
- arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents
- encouraging regular communication between school and home through the child's school diary
- inviting parents to a Syllabus Evening at the beginning of the school year where practitioners talk through the day to day routines of the setting, curriculum, forthcoming events etc.
- Learning Journey sharing in the Michaelmas Term and Special visitor's morning in the summer term to share their learning with an adult
- having a parent reading scheme
- holding parent workshops including a Phonics Morning when parents are invited to observe a lesson and then given ideas of activities appropriate to support phonics at home
- Sending an annual questionnaire to invite comment and approval ratings for what we do
- updating the TLP with activities to encourage parents to engage with learning at home
- encouraging parents to contribute to proud cloud
- secret readers
- mathematics and digital workshops

Arrivals and Departures

Children are to arrive at school by 8.30am and collected at 3.20pm by a parent/carer. If a child is to be collected by a third party this must be communicated to the class teacher prior to the 3.20pm collection, preferably through the Homework Diary. Children not collected by 3.20pm are taken to a supervised Late Room. Children not collected by 4.00pm are taken to the school office where parents/carers are contacted. Bus children wait in the Late Room and are escorted to the dining room to meet their respective bus drivers.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Rationale

At Thomas's we believe that the Early Years is fundamental in instilling positive dispositions towards learning. Children need to be involved actively in their learning, the process of which should be a rewarding, enjoyable and enriching experience. As stated in the Introduction,

effective practice in the Early Years is built on four guiding principles. These principles provide a context for the EY requirements and describe how practitioners should support the development, learning and care of young children. The principles are each broken down into four commitments describing how they can be put into practice. The *EY Principles into Practice* cards explain how practitioners can use these in everyday teaching and learning.

‘Every aspect of learning for young children is interrelated and interdependent. Children are competent learners from birth and develop and learn in a wide variety of ways.’ *EY Statutory Framework*

AIMS OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

At Thomas’s learning and teaching is guided by the EY 7 Areas of Learning: The three prime areas being Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Communication and Language, Physical Development, with the remaining four specific areas being Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding of the World; Expressive Arts and Design.

We aim:

- to provide children with opportunities to initiate their own learning and to learn from each other
- to encourage children to develop positive dispositions towards their learning
- to allow children time to consolidate their learning
- to encourage independence
- to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment
- for children to develop a positive self-image
- for children to learn through movement and use of all the senses
- for children to make links in their learning
- to promote the development and use of language
- to ensure that play is progressive and matches children’s level of development
- for practitioners to use their expertise to gauge when it is appropriate to teach skills and knowledge directly
- for practitioners to model a range of positive behaviour and promote rich language experiences
- to plan the indoor and outdoor learning environment in a manner appropriate to their level and which encourages purposeful play
- to work with parents in partnership and recognise their continued role in their child’s development
- to undertake skilful and well-planned observations to assess children’s development and progress

Play in the Early Years

The aims set out above are achieved through delivering the curriculum based upon planned, purposeful play which has an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated play. We encourage children to: explore and develop their own learning experiences, practise and develop their skills and ideas, learn how to control and extend themselves, and understand the need for rules and responsibility. Children have the opportunity to think creatively alone and alongside others and are encouraged to communicate as they investigate and problem solve.

The Learning Environment

Using the EY 7 Areas of Learning, practitioners plan activities and create enabling environments which allow children to initiate their own learning.

‘None of these areas of Learning & Development can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development.’ *EY Statutory Framework*.

Within the learning environment:

- children’s efforts are rewarded and commented on positively according to their differing levels of ability / experience
- children’s work is regularly displayed and celebrated
- practitioners recognise the importance of allowing children time for sustained concentration across the broad range of learning experiences
- mutual respect and trust is encouraged between children, parents and practitioners
- practitioners regularly review the children’s learning environment, both indoor and outdoor to ensure health and safety criteria are met
- in accordance with Thomas’s London Day Schools equal opportunities, SEN and inclusion policies all children are included and not disadvantaged in terms of their gender, ethnicity, home language, SEN disability or ability
- activities are planned to offer appropriate physical and sensory challenges
- practitioners recognise that they have responsibility for encouraging and developing in the children an ability to express thoughts and ideas through conversation
- practitioners provide a challenging play environment, which extends and develops children’s experiences
- practitioners use their knowledge of the children and their observational skills to plan appropriate teacher directed activities
- play opportunities are planned and supported to allow the children to develop in all seven areas of learning
- importance is placed on open lines of communication between home and school; (Refer to Settling In section)
- children are assessed through observation in groups and individually across their range of experiences to inform practitioners of attainments and to target areas for development and thus inform future planning
- opportunities for children to learn from each other are encouraged
- practitioners aim to organise the environment in an attractive stimulating way, which allows the children ease of access to resources that will aid their development in all areas of learning

Transition to Key Stage 1

At Thomas’s Battersea we are committed to the need of a smooth transition between different phases. Entering a new situation (e.g. a new classroom and a new teacher) can be a stressful time, and some points of transition e.g. Foundation stage to Key stage 1, can be especially so due to the change of play based curriculum to a more formal approach. Rapid change can lead to insecurity and stress. Children under stress may become withdrawn and unresponsive or demonstrate inappropriate behaviour. The Early Years is a separate stage of learning; we therefore need to plan

for and manage the transition of pupils from Reception to Year 1.

The management of transition is part of the broader whole school approach to achieving good curricular continuity and progression in children's learning.

All children complete a transition booklet at school at the end of the summer term. This includes such things as, their favourite memory of Reception, making a list of things they are good at, what they would like to get better at and what they are most looking forward to in Year 1.

AIMS

We want our children to experience a smooth transition from the Early Years into Key Stage 1, so that the pace and quality of learning are maintained to ensure that children continue to make excellent progress.

Principles that underpin the policy

- Approaches to teaching and learning are harmonised at the point of transition
- At the start of the year planning is based upon assessment information from the previous class
- Styles of teaching and learning meet the needs of the individual children
- There is a professional regard for the information from the previous class
- Children are able to enjoy new approaches at transition
- Transition motivates and challenges children
- Staff allocation gives particular attention to the particular needs of the children

The Transition Process

As Year 1 is the first year where formal education begins we introduce many of the subject areas that become a central part of every child's life. There are distinctive differences between the Early Years and KS1; however, we will continue to promote children's personal independence, independent learning and the ability to choose activities and resources through decision-making.

Personal and Social Needs of Pupils at Transition

All children need to feel secure about moving to a new class and a new Key Stage.

To ensure this takes place staff will:

- communicate with children and parents so they are fully informed about the process of transition
- prepare Reception children during their Summer Term by increasing the amount of time spent in focused groups and working independently
- provide opportunities for children to spend time exploring their new Year 1 environment with their Reception teacher and teaching assistant
- introduce children to their new teacher and teaching assistant in Year 1

Continuity of Teaching and Learning

At the end of Reception (summer term), information passed onto the Year 1 teacher to include;

- knowledge of sight words (high frequency words)
- knowledge of phonics and letters
- reading ability and level

- each child's last level assessed piece of writing, if applicable
- maths ability and level
- printed version of each child's foundation profile highlighting each of the targets achieved,
- EY profiles
- Characteristics of effective learning
- previous reports and parents evening notes

The information is then used to group pupils; to adjust/fine-tune the curriculum, and to set future targets.

During the summer term:

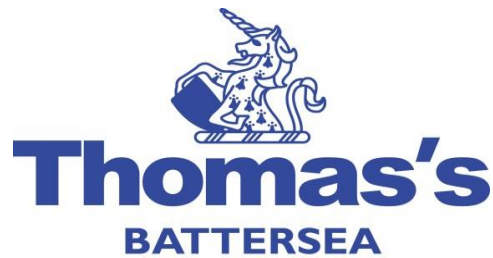
- Reception children are encouraged to visit Year 1 to share good work
- the Year 1 teachers spend time with their new class reading a story or taking part in child initiated play etc
- New Classrooms Morning is held for children to meet their new teachers

At the beginning of Year 1 (Michaelmas term) staff will:

- use the EY Learning Journey to build upon children's learning and ensure the EY curriculum is provided for those who have not yet met their Early Learning Goals
- provide a wide range of child initiated opportunities, set up within an exciting and stimulating classroom environment,
- ensure children continue to be active learners; particularly during Literacy and Numeracy sessions,
- provide opportunities for child-initiated play,
- track according to Early Years achievement and take note of those pupils still to reach a Good Level of Development (GLD)

The Management of Transition

- The Head of Lower School, Reception and KS1 staff will work together, to transfer EYP, SEND, EAL and Most Able information
- to set up groupings for Literacy and Numeracy
- to link ELGs and NCLD in Medium Term Plans using a thematic approach
- KS1 teachers to continue to make observations of the children to inform assessments.
- Children begin to be graded in all subjects
- Reception and Year 1 teachers have a detailed transition meeting to ensure the new teacher best know the individual child



THOMAS'S BATTERSEA OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

To be read in conjunction with the Curriculum policies

RATIONALE

Children should enjoy stimulating and energetic activities both indoors and out and the feeling of well-being and autonomy that it brings. The Outdoor Play Area will provide a multi-sensory learning environment, catering for individual learning styles. It will offer children the chance to experiment with problem solving activities, collaborative tasks and child initiated learning opportunities. The space will complement and enhance all aspects of children's development and the Early Years Curriculum.

AIMS

The EY Effective Practice document highlights the importance of the need for outdoor learning space and clearly holds it in the same importance as a classroom. Therefore, outdoor provision is an essential part of the child's daily environment and life, not an option or an extra. (White 2007)

OBJECTIVES – TAKEN FROM THE EARLY YEARS

The outdoor and indoor environments should contain resources and materials that children can explore and investigate using all their senses.

Some of the materials and resources should be familiar to the children from their home and community environments, and some should be new.

The best materials have many uses, such as wooden hoops and pegs in a tin, with unlimited opportunities for children to use them creatively and imaginatively to support their learning and development.

The Learning Environment offers challenges through which children can learn about risk taking and keeping themselves safe.

As well as providing opportunities for moving around, environments should offer a variety of surfaces and levels, places to sit or lie, to climb or swing and to make big movements such as spinning, dancing, jumping, running and so on.

Adults need to support children's confidence in themselves and their developing skills as they tackle new experiences and develop a sense of what they can do and what they will be able to do

as they practise and meet the challenges in the environment.

Children need opportunities to climb, to swing and to control wheeled toys. They should be able to touch and feel a variety of textures and to move, stretch and crawl. They may like to make marks, to cut and join materials together or to shape and construct materials.

They need to be able to rest and refresh themselves when they are ready.

Children need time to play with what interests them and to make choices.

They need opportunities to watch the natural world changing, to explore and solve problems.

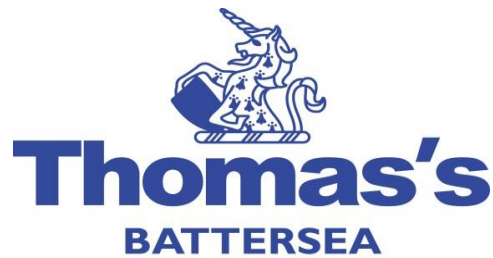
Children need opportunities to make friends and develop relationships.

Children need time to learn and develop at their own pace.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order for this policy to be successfully implemented within Thomas's Battersea, all Reception staff will:

- provide resources that allow children to self-select
- present resources in a stimulating and attractive fashion
- provide resources that complement all 7 areas of learning with the EY
- encourage children to dress appropriately for weather conditions
- extend and interact children to develop thinking skills and learning opportunities
- be positive role models for expected behaviour and expectations of play outdoors
- ensure the area is safe and secure, adhering to the health and safety policy and risk assessment in place
- raise parental awareness of the educational benefits of outdoor play
- endeavour to provide outdoor activity everyday
- plan in a responsive and progressive manner to ensure a seamless continuation between the indoor and outdoor learning spaces
- use the area to make relevant observation of the children, as individuals, to inform planning
- plan half-termly Woodland Adventures which aim to build on skills previously learned



THOMAS'S BATTERSEA HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Thomas's Battersea is aware that it is important to establish good eating at an early age. We are committed to promoting healthy eating in the Early Years. With this in mind, and by working alongside parents and carers, it is our aim to reduce the children's intake of food and drink containing sugar and salt to encourage the children to make healthy choices.

AIMS

We aim to:

- raise the awareness of nutrition
- encourage and develop children's skills so they can make informed choices about food and drink
- help children develop positive attitudes to diet, health and oral health
- develop healthy eating and drinking activities that can benefit children, staff and parents/carers

PROCEDURES

- Before the child starts in Reception, we find out from the parents/carers their children's dietary requirements, preferences or allergies.
- Dietary needs are recorded on his/her registration record (EPIF) and parents sign the record to signify this is correct.
- We display current information about individual children's dietary needs so that all staff are fully informed about them. Children with particular dietary needs have personalised place mats at lunch clearly stating their requirements
- We include foods from the diet of each of the children's cultural backgrounds, providing children with familiar foods and introducing new ones.
- We take care not to provide food containing NUTS or nut products and are especially vigilant where we have a child who has a known nut allergy.
- Through discussion with parents and carers we obtain information about the dietary rules of the religious groups to which children and their parents belong, and about food allergies.
- We require staff to show sensitivity in providing for children's diets and allergies. Staff do not use a child's diet or allergy as a label for the child, or make a child feel singled out because of his/her diet or allergy.
- Healthy Eating and food fits in as part of the curriculum topics of Ourselves: Our Bodies, Our Families, Growing Up, Healthy Bodies. Children look at food groups, what is healthy food, what food does for you as well as an overall healthy lifestyle. They learn about portion sizes

and what makes up a healthy plate of food.

- We promote healthy lifestyles through healthy eating and drinking.
- We organise break and lunch times so that they are social occasions in which children and staff participate.
- We use break and lunch to help children to develop independence through making choices, serving drink and feeding themselves.
- We have fresh drinking water constantly available for the children. We inform children about how to obtain the water and encourage them to drink water throughout the day.
- We inform parents/carers about the break and lunch provided for the children at school by placing the week's menu in the Bulletin allowing parents to plan their home meals around these to ensure their child gets a good mix of foods throughout the day and importantly the week. The Thomas's menu works on cycle. Parents are encouraged to discuss the menu with their child each day and discuss what the child might choose on a specific day.
- In order to protect children with food allergies, we have rules about children sharing and swapping their food with one another.
- We support and encourage good table manners and social eating skills.
- In Reception, children are taken to lunch and supervised by an adult
- Children put their knives and forks together when they have finished/had enough of their main meal before they eat their pudding. This allows the teacher to monitor how much they have eaten and if they have not eaten much to encourage them to eat more.
- If a particular child has any issues with eating, we encourage parents to talk directly to the class teacher.
- Children independently select from the salad bar and are encouraged to make sure they have a balanced meal consisting of carbohydrates, protein and vegetables.

Break 10.00 – 10.20

- We provide the children with a snack and a drink of water or organic semi-skimmed milk.

Lunch 11.45 – 12.30

- All meals provided are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colouring.
- Menus are planned in advance and the food offered is fresh, wholesome and balanced.
- The dietary rules of religious groups and of vegetarians are known and met in an appropriate way.

See also: [Thomas's Battersea Early Years Assessment and Observation Policy](#)

This policy will be reviewed annually			
Latest Review: February 2018	By:	Megan Greenall, Early Years Co-ordinator, Helen Haslem, Head of Lower School	Changes made
Next Review: February 2019	By:	Megan Greenall, Early Years Co-ordinator	