



September 2025

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of their reception year. Thornbury's Early Years Foundation Stage accommodates children from the age of 4 to 5. We have additional places allocated for children working within our specialist speech and language unit.

Thornbury Primary School EYFS ethos and aims

At Thornbury, we aim to provide an **abundance of opportunities** for children to **learn through play** and to **'make learning irresistible'**. We provide our children with experiences and activities that are **based upon their interests, deepen their imaginations and enhance their sense of curiosity**. As an EYFS team we pride ourselves on being effective role models, providing **high quality interactions** to foster life long learning skills; encouraging children to be **Resilient Lions, Focused Foxes, Trustworthy Turtles, Confident Cats and Friendly Otters** (linked to our school values).

Our children feel **valued and loved** in school and we are proud of our ability to build **strong relationships** with both parents/carers and children. We **teach** Literacy and Maths to a **high standard** and children make **excellent progress** throughout the EYFS. We treat **every child** as an **individual** and are committed to the **development of the 'whole child'**. Our school is an amazing place to be and the staff and children are all very proud to be part of the **Thornbury family!**

To summarise:

- There is an abundance of opportunities to learn through play.
- We ensure that learning is irresistible.
- Planned activities are based upon children's interests.
- Activities and experiences provided deepen imagination and enhance curiosity.
- We provide high quality interactions.
- We foster skills linked to our school values.
- Children feel valued and loved.
- We are proud of our strong relationships with parents/carers.
- We teach to a high standard so children make excellent progress.
- Every child is an individual and we are committed to the development of the 'whole child'.
- We are a family.

"When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow." Development Matters Sept 2021

Our Curriculum

Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS document. The EYFS is based on seven key features of effective practice as set out in Development Matters 2021.

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

As part of our best practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and inclusive practice
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and, where needed, outside agencies
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child
- Provide opportunities for our children to engage in adult led learning and self-initiated learning
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors
- Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning

Areas of Learning:

The EYFS is made up of three prime areas of learning:

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

There are four specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

At Thornbury Primary School children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first hand experiences, in which children can explore, think creatively and are active. We provide a well-balanced curriculum and our planning ensures that each child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in every area of the EYFS. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful activities and through a mix of adult led and child initiated learning.

Working with Families

At Thornbury, we recognise that children thrive when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers. We value families as active participants in their child's learning and development.

To support this partnership, we:

- Keep families informed about their child's progress and development through termly **Parent Meetings** and an **end-of-year report**.
- Share **home learning videos** regularly via **Tapestry**, our online learning journal, to demonstrate school methods such as phonics, Makaton, and other teaching strategies.
- Share our **weekly learning focuses** with practical examples and guidance on how these can be adapted at home.
- Invite families to join our weekly **"Can You Hear What I Hear?" reading sessions**, promoting a love of reading and sharing strategies used in school, such as **story maps**.
- Plan **sessions throughout the year** to invite families into school to share learning experiences, including **phonics lessons, creative days, and other curriculum activities**.

We believe that open communication and collaborative engagement between home and school enhance children's learning experiences and support their overall development.

Inclusion

All children will receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities will be differentiated accordingly. In addition to this where children have been identified as having a specific need, individual education programmes will be implemented. Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan programmes together and, where needed, liaise with the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator. The needs of children with English as an additional language will be met through planning and intervention groups.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Assessments are made in line with the EYFS.
- Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) through fun, 1:1 activities.
- Daily practice includes observations of children's development and progress.
- Discussions are held with all adults in EYFS about individual children's development and next steps.
- Significant observations of children's' achievements are recorded on their online learning journeys 'Tapestry' which is shared with parents.
- An end of year report is provided to all parents/carers on their child's development against the seven areas of learning.
- At the end of Reception children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals for each area of learning.
- At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:
 - Meeting expected levels of development or,
 - Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

Transitions

At Thornbury Primary School we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both parents and children. To this end we have established a strong set of procedures for transitions to be smooth as possible.

All children starting in our Reception have home visits prior to their child starting school this gives children the security of meeting with their teacher in a safe, familiar environment and gives parents time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child. In addition to this all the children have settling sessions in the school to meet the other staff and get familiar with their new surroundings. Parents are invited to attend welcome meetings and are familiarised with the school and school day by the Headteacher and EYFS Lead.

School staff make every effort to have thorough handovers with pre-schools and to meet children in their existing settings. The children are also given a transition video to share with families over the Summer to familiarise themselves with pictures of their new teachers, routines and their new classrooms and play areas.

In the summer term all of our Reception children visit their new Year 1 teachers prior to them starting Year 1. Reception teachers pass on their knowledge of each child's development, progress and achievement towards the early learning goals to ensure that all teachers have a well -rounded picture of the children prior to starting the new school year.

Health and Safety and Safeguarding

Safeguarding

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.

Through our Early Years curriculum, we promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth

We are a healthy school and participate in the free fruit and milk for under-fives scheme. For our Reception children we provide the universal infant free school meal and the menu is regularly monitored with the chef. We cater for those children who have special dietary requirements and have robust systems in place ensuring that all children receive the correct meal. Fresh water is readily available for all children and we encourage children to bring in water bottles with water only. Children are taught the importance of keeping clean and washing their hands correctly.

We also teach E-safety across our EYFS in age appropriate ways.

We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance, the rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

E.Mantell

Headteacher

L.Smith

Chair of Governors

J.Stelmaszczyk

Early Years Lead

September 2025

Reviewed: Annually