



THOMAS'S KENSINGTON EARLY YEARS POLICY (incorporating Outdoor Play & Physical Activity, Healthy Eating, Immunisation Policies)

INTRODUCTION

By producing a specific Early Years (EY) policy we are recognising the importance of the Early Years stage and guidelines for settling in, learning and teaching and the curriculum in the Reception classes at Thomas's Schools.

The policy is reviewed annually by Reception practitioners. This revised EY policy was implemented in September 2014 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 Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and 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.

The EY seeks to provide:

- Quality and Consistency
- A Secure Foundation
- Partnership Working
- Equality of Opportunity

AIMS

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

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Making relationships, Self-confidence and self-awareness and Managing feelings and behaviour
- Physical Development – Moving and handling and Health and self-care
- Communication and Language – Listening and attention, Understanding and Speaking
- Literacy – Reading and Writing
- Mathematics – Numbers and Shape, space and measure
- Understanding the World – People and communities, The world and Technology
- Expressive Arts and Design – Exploring and using media and materials and Being imaginative

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.

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

- Prior to entry the children are invited for an afternoon in their new classes, 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 sent home 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.
- The school hosts an event for the Heads of settings sending children to Thomas's at 4+.
- The child's EY Learning Journey, final report and transfer sheet is requested from the previous setting.
- Heads and practitioners aim to visit settings during the term prior to entry.
- All children join us in the September term.
- All children do half days for the first two weeks of term to ensure a smooth transition.
- Children born after the end of March have the option of a ½ day each Tuesday and Thursday during 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.
- In the middle of the Michaelmas and Lent terms parents attend a formal meeting 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.

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. We do this through:

- 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 Adventure Folder.
- 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
- 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 planner;
- inviting parents to different presentations such as: School Readiness, Syllabus Evening, Reading, Maths at the beginning of the school year
- hosting 'Special Guest' mornings where the parents are welcome to come and go through their child's Adventure Folder with them

Arrivals and Departures

Children are to arrive at school by 8.45am and collected at 3.10pm 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 3.10pm collection, preferably through the Homework Diary. Children not collected by 3.10pm are taken to the Lower School office. Parents/carers are contacted when their children is not collected by 3.45pm.

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 EY Statutory Framework has three main characteristics of effective learning which are: Playing and Exploring, Active Learning and Creating and Thinking Critically.

‘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 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 2014.

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

The Early Years Stage 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 One.

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 to be 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 as set out in the Literacy Framework),
- knowledge of phonics and letters,
- reading ability and level,
- each child's last level assessed piece of writing, if applicable
- maths ability and level
- EY Learning Journeys.

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

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 ELGs
- 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,

The Management of Transition:

- The Headteacher, Reception and KS1 staff will work together, to transfer EYP, SEN, EAL and G & T information
- to set up groupings for Literacy and Numeracy
- to link ELGs and NCLD in Medium Term Plans using a thematic approach
- Assessment
- KS1 teachers will continue to use the EYP for those who have not yet reached their ELGs.
- KS1 teachers to continue to make observations of the children to inform assessments.
- Children begin to be graded in all subjects.



THOMAS'S KENSINGTON OUTDOOR PLAY & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY 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 Foundation Stage Curriculum.

We minimise the amount of time children spend being sedentary for extended periods and we provide suitable physical activities for all. All of our children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are entitled to a comprehensive programme of physical activity opportunities that allows all children to improve their skills of co-ordination, manipulation, control and movement and to develop positive attitudes towards physical activities including sports. Our provision is also fully inclusive of children from different cultures and religions. All staff are aware of the need to be sensitive to individual beliefs about what is acceptable in relation to physical activity.

Being active is important for children under five because it helps them build and maintain a good level of health; physical activity is critical to optimal growth and development. Children under five need time to play and master their physical environment and fundamental movement skills; the early years are also an important time to establish habits relating to physical activity.

AIMS

Physical activity guidelines for infants (under 5s) who are capable of walking:

1. Children of school age should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours), spread throughout the day (most UK pre-school children currently spend 120-150 minutes a day being physically active, so achieving this guideline means adding another 30-60 minutes each day).
2. All under 5s should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (being inactive, restrained or sitting) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping) by reducing screen

time (e.g. watching TV, using a computer, tablet or smart phone) and reducing time spent in a pushchair or car seat.

The Early Years Foundation Stage 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

- 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.
- Families should be consulted and engaged in choosing the materials and resources the children use in a setting so that links can be made with home.
- 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 dig, 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 Kensington all Reception staff will:

- minimise the amount of time children spend being sedentary for extended periods
- interact regularly with every child to encourage lots of movement throughout the day.
- present resources in a stimulating and attractive fashion
- provide resources that compliment all 7 areas of learning with the EY
- dress children 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
- provide resources that allow children to self-select
- raise parental awareness of the educational benefits of outdoor play
- 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

Working with families

Staff are confident in giving out advice to parents and carers in relation to families adopting healthy lifestyles and being physically active. We encourage parents to walk, scoot or cycle with their children for part or all the way to the setting. We facilitate this by providing somewhere safe to leave bicycles or scooters. We regularly promote/hold special events for the children, which promote physical activity such as sports day and encouraging exercise and outdoor learning during the holidays.

We have developed a range of outings that our children can walk to. This supports children's and families' knowledge of places of interest in the local environment that are easy to reach on foot. These include over to St Alban's, the local sports courts and walking up to Kensington gardens.

We are thinking sensibly about health and safety

We are aware that in order for children to learn about managing risks associated with physical activity, we need to offer stimulating and challenging environments; through these environments children are supported to explore and develop their own abilities and understanding. Alongside this we aim to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable dangers. We conduct risk assessments and establish suitable arrangements for off-site visits to encourage children and their families to take advantage of the range of physical activities available within the local community.



THOMAS'S KENSINGTON EARLY YEARS HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Thomas's Kensington 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 (school card) 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.
- 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. Water is provided in free flow cups or water bottles.
- 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. Staff sit with the children while they eat and provide a good role model.
- The teachers' priority is to encourage healthy choices and to ensure that children choose something that they will eat that will sustain them for the rest of the day. Staff are aware of appropriate portion sizes for children and encourage children to stop eating when they are full
- Children scrape their food to the left, put knives and forks together then put their hand up 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.

Break 10.15 – 10.40

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

Lunch 11.50

- 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.

Snack 2pm

- Children are provided with an afternoon snack of fruit

Mothers are welcome to breastfeed (or express breastmilk) and a secluded space will be provided, if required. We can direct mothers to where they can access further breastfeeding support.



THOMAS'S KENSINGTON IMMUNISATION STATEMENT

AIMS

As a Healthy Early Years London setting we aim to ensure that we promote the health and well-being of the whole setting community through encouraging parents/carers to immunise children and by providing consistent messages to children, parents/carers and staff.

PRINCIPLES

We are aware of the importance of immunisation

Immunisation is the safest way of protecting children against serious diseases. Some diseases can kill children or cause lasting damage to their health. Immunisation prepares children's bodies to fight off diseases if they come into contact with them. We are aware that there has recently been a drop in the number of children being immunised which has caused outbreaks of some diseases. The low uptake of childhood immunisation has led to more children suffering from vaccine preventable diseases such as measles, mumps, whooping cough and polio.

We promote positive messages about immunisation and encourage parents/carers to fully immunise their children

We confidently approach parents and carers about children's immunisation status. If a child is not immunised, we encourage parents or carers to go to their GP or talk to their health visitor to find out more about immunisations. There is also information available on the NHS website including information on what immunisations are given and when www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/Pages/childhood-vaccination-schedule.aspx.

We are confident to share key messages to parents and carers about immunisation, such as:

- immunisation save lives
- it is important to make sure babies are protected as early as possible
- it is never too late to have a child immunised even if a child has missed an immunisation and is older than the recommended ages
- vaccines are quick, safe and extremely effective. It is common for children to have some redness, a rash or swelling where the needle goes in, this should only last about a day
- the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine does not cause autism
- when a child is immunised it helps to protect the whole community, this is important because some children with medical conditions or allergies cannot have certain vaccines.

See also: Curriculum Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, Behaviour Policy,
Online Safety Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually			
Latest Review: January 2020	By:	Alison Smith, Deputy Head, Lower School	Changes made
Next Review: January 2021	By:	Alison Smith, Deputy Head, Lower School	Changes made