



Truro and Penwith
Academy Trust

Strategy document to develop EYFS education across our trust schools

Academic Year 2025-2026

Truro & Penwith Academy Trust

Chris Gould - Director of Education
Lizzie Stokes - TPAT EYFS lead

Our Vision

At the heart of our Early Years provision is the belief that a high-quality early education is a powerful, lifelong protective factor. We are committed to laying strong foundations from the very start—nurturing curious, confident learners who are ready to thrive both in school and beyond.

Our vision is to ensure every child experiences a positive and enriching start to their educational journey. We focus on the whole child, fostering a love of learning, strong learning behaviours, and achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD), particularly through the prime areas and the characteristics of effective learning. We view this early progress as just as significant as later academic benchmarks.

We champion early identification of needs and successes, breaking down barriers with timely, high-quality support. Our environments are inclusive, adaptive, and rooted in expert knowledge of child development. We believe every interaction is an opportunity for meaningful intervention—and that when we get it right for the most vulnerable, we get it right for all.

Informed by the latest, evidence-based research and best practice, the Trust continually reviews and updates its EYFS priorities. This research-led approach ensures that our curriculum, pedagogy, and support strategies are aligned with current understandings of child development, allowing us to respond dynamically to the evolving needs of our learners and maintain high standards across all settings. In addition the development of curriculum is focused on supporting the individual needs of the community that they serve.

Through strong parental partnerships, skilled and nurturing professionals with high aspirations, and a deep commitment to continuous professional development, we ensure every child in our trust begins their education supported, valued, and inspired to flourish.

We are committed to supporting all our schools to achieve the government target of 75% of all pupils gaining a good level of Development.



Transition into Nursery and Reception

We are aware that children joining us will be attending from a range of environments, cultures, backgrounds and experiences. Therefore, children who attend an Early Years setting at a TPAT school will be supported to transition into our settings, to ensure all children have the same, strong start. We offer a mixture of:

- 'stay and play' sessions
- Home visits
- Parent meetings
- Visits to previous settings
- Teacher and leadership presentations
- Informal events, such as family picnics
- Transition packs for families

Priorities for 2025-26

➤ The 'Starting Reception' materials will be shared with all parents and carers as part of the nationwide initiative to support families to prepare for the transition into an educational setting. [Starting-Reception.pdf](#)

Personal Development

Our TPAT approach to personal development in the Early Years is centred on nurturing confident, resilient, and curious learners through a rich and varied curriculum that reflects the unique locality of Cornwall. We place strong emphasis on developing the whole child—emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually—through high-quality interactions, planned experiences, and a language-rich environment. Children are encouraged to form positive relationships, understand their emotions, and develop a sense of belonging within their school and wider community. Real-life experiences such as exploring local beaches, woodlands, and farms, as well as engaging with Cornish traditions and seasonal events, support children in making meaningful connections with the world around them. Our approach ensures children build a secure foundation for lifelong learning, with personal development woven through every aspect of the Early Years curriculum

JIGSAW

We follow the JIGSAW curriculum through weekly sessions that support PSED development within Nursery and Reception

Jigsaw is sequential, the six puzzles (units) starting with 'Being Me in My World' (BM) at the beginning of the school year and working through to the end of the year:

BM (Being Me in My World)
'Who am I and how do I fit?'

CD (Celebrating Difference)

Respect for similarity and difference. Anti-bullying and being unique

DG (Dreams and Goals)

Aspirations, how to achieve goals and understanding the emotions that go with this

HM (Healthy Me)

Being and keeping safe and healthy

RL (Relationships)

Building positive, healthy relationships

CM (Changing Me)

Coping positively with change

Priorities for 2025-26

- Effective use of data analysis through INSIGHT to support the gaps in personal development
- Emotional literacy tools/programme – eg: zones of regulation
- Settings utilising the relational tool assessments (support from PB)

Curriculum

Prime Areas

In our Early Years settings, the Prime Areas of learning—**Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED), Physical Development (PD), and Communication and Language (C&L)**—are given the highest priority, as they are fundamental to every child's ability to access and succeed in all other areas of the curriculum. These areas form the essential building blocks for lifelong learning and development, enabling children to form positive relationships, regulate emotions, communicate effectively, and engage confidently with the world around them. We use carefully structured, school written **Progression of Skills** documents to guide and support development across the Prime Areas and the wider EYFS curriculum, ensuring that learning is consistent, responsive, and aligned with each child's individual needs and stage of development.

Communication and Language

Supporting communication and language development is a key priority across our trust and aligns with national focus areas. All pupils are screened upon entry to EYFS using one of the following evidence-based tools: Language Screen, WellComm and Language Link. This allows us to identify needs early and provide targeted support.

We use structured interventions including the Speech, Language and Communication Progression Tool, Talk Boost, and NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) to help close gaps and accelerate progress. Children benefit from a rich language environment where both planned activities and high-quality incidental interactions are used to develop vocabulary, expressive language, and listening skills, laying strong foundations for future learning and communication success.

Settings across TPAT have adopted the ShREC Approach, (Education Endowment Fund) to promote shared attention and back and forth conversation in the early years. Practitioners are trained to improve early education through high quality interaction.

Physical Development

At TPAT, we recognise that physical development and health are fundamental to nurturing happy, healthy, and engaged learners. All pupils spend sustained periods of time outdoors each day, where they are encouraged to explore, move, and play, developing both their gross and fine motor skills in meaningful ways. Our outdoor provision is planned with the same care and intention as our indoor environments, ensuring it supports all areas of learning, particularly physical development. Children are taught the importance of hygiene and are supported to develop personal care independence, such as handwashing, toileting, and self-care routines. Targeted initiatives and interventions such as We Movers, Fun Fit, and Big Brush Club are used to enhance physical skills, support coordination, and promote lifelong healthy habits, ensuring every child can thrive physically and emotionally.

Real PE – We follow the Real PE curriculum to support children to develop positive attitudes to physical activity. We believe that the approach enables children to have fun and feel successful whilst developing their physical, social, cognitive, creative, and personal skills.

Healthy movers - We use Healthy Movers as a tool to support children's physical development and emotional wellbeing across our EYFS. Children develop a love of movement through engaging, active and fun sessions.

Dough Disco/Peaceful Plasticine – We use a range of tools to support children to strengthen the small muscles in their hands and fingers. These activities also help to improve hand-eye coordination, and build the foundational strength needed for a proper pencil grip.

Big Brush Club - Children will be involved in a range of activities throughout the year that will enhance their understanding of the importance of oral health. Parents will be involved in this in order for messages to be shared with families. Oral health features regularly in our Life Skills lessons. In Reception our children take part in the Big Brush Club, a government funded scheme to support the children develop their oral health through daily tooth brushing in school.

Personal Social and Emotional Development

At TPAT, personal development is at the heart of our EYFS approach, ensuring that children grow into confident, resilient, and caring individuals. Adults model positive relationships and self-regulation throughout the provision, helping children learn how to interact kindly, resolve conflicts, and manage their emotions. Pupils are supported to recognise and name their feelings, laying the foundation for emotional literacy and wellbeing. Through play and daily routines, children learn to socialise, work co-operatively, and become responsible, respectful citizens. We foster resilience and confidence by encouraging children to embrace challenges and try new things, celebrating effort and perseverance. A strong emphasis is placed on having a healthy body and mind, with children learning about balanced diets and being encouraged to enjoy the healthy foods provided. Each school's values and rules are embedded throughout the day, helping children understand expectations and develop a strong sense of belonging and community.

Literacy

In the Early Years, phonics is taught through a consistent, synthetic systematic phonics programme that begins immediately when children join the setting. The approach is proactive, with a strong emphasis on helping all pupils to keep up with the pace of learning, rather than having to catch up

later. Progress is closely tracked and assessed to ensure each child is making steady development in their phonics knowledge. Reading materials are carefully matched to the phonemes that have already been taught, allowing children to apply their learning with confidence and success. The most skilled practitioners work closely with the most vulnerable pupils to provide targeted, high-quality support, and the phonics programme is regularly shared with parents to ensure they are informed and able to support learning at home.

Phonics programmes used by the Trust are:

- Read Write Inc
- Little Wandle
- Other synthetic systematic phonics programmes

RWI – We follow the evidence based phonics programme RWI to teach children to read and write. In Reception an assessment of the children's prior phonic knowledge is carried out within the first week. During this time the children will be introduced to the picture cards linked to each letter sound. Five pictures a day are introduced and children are encouraged to recognise these at pace, throughout the day.

Daily RWI sessions are taught as a whole class, focusing on the rapid recall of all Set 1 sounds. A daily 20 minute speed sound lesson ensures that sounds are learnt quickly. Children have an opportunity to practise letter formation and word blending in small groups during this session.

Sounds are displayed and referred to throughout the day. Regular 'pinny time' ensures that regular practice takes place and Fred Talk games encourage the development of oral blending skills. The RWI Starting Strong Tracker is used for ongoing assessment and RWI assessments take place every half term and children are grouped from this point if necessary.

All staff that deliver RWI teaching in Reception class have been trained to deliver RWI.

RWI is quality controlled and coached by Zach Hughes our school's reading lead and through development days delivered by the Cornwall English Hub and RWI staff.

Nursery staff focus on phase 1 phonics activities, planning regular opportunities throughout the week where children can develop their 'pre-reading' skills. During the Summer term RWI sounds are introduced, looking at the pictures that accompany each letter sound. The children are encouraged to instantly recognise these pictures and this is continued when the children transition into Reception.

At TPAT, our EYFS writing strategy recognises that children must be developmentally ready to write, and as such, we place a strong emphasis on fine motor activities to build the physical skills required for writing. Correct letter formation is a key focus across all settings, ensuring children develop good habits from the outset. Writing is primarily taught through systematic phonics programmes, enabling pupils to apply their growing phonic knowledge to spell and write with increasing independence. Our settings also enhance this with rich, imaginative approaches such as Drawing Club and storytelling prompts, which help to inspire a love of writing. Adults consistently model writing to demonstrate the writing process, vocabulary choices and sentence construction. In independent provision, children have access to varied opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Practitioners carefully plan for children to write phonemes, words and phrases that align with their phonics learning, ensuring progression and consolidation in meaningful contexts.

Scribble It! – In Nursery we use Scribble It! as a precursor of Drawing Club in Reception. We use Scribble It! to support children to immerse themselves in the joy and exploration of mark making whilst also developing interactions between children and adults. Our Nursery teacher has completed Scribble It! Training with Greg Bottrill.

Drawing Club – All Reception teachers have taken part in Drawing Club training with Greg Bottrill and introduce Drawing Club after the first three settling weeks are complete. This involves introducing the children to key stories and popular culture cartoon clips which inspire the children to mark make in small groups. The children are introduced to key vocabulary linked to each text and cartoon, along with actions which encourage the children to remember each word or phrase. Teachers model drawing linked to characters and settings within each text, adding maths and phonics concepts accordingly. Children are invited to join Drawing Club in a small group session to draw their own interpretation each day. The vocabulary introduced each day will be used by staff during Independent Learning opportunities. Once established the children will be able to take part in whole class Drawing Club sessions, all working and drawing at the same time and having time to discuss their mark making and creative ideas with an adult as well as their peers.

Talk for Writing – Our Talk for Writing texts are identified on the whole school long term plan and selected to ensure language progression from Nursery and a balance of text types throughout the year. Story maps and school agreed actions are used to learn each text. Time is given to imitate and innovate each text. Story maps and action photos are displayed in reading areas to encourage children to practise them during Independent Learning sessions.

Maths

Our trust-wide strategy for teaching mathematics in the Early Years is rooted in a mastery approach, ensuring that all children develop a deep and secure understanding of number. Teaching is carefully planned with an emphasis on building strong number sense through high-quality, consistent programmes. Mathematical learning is made meaningful by relating concepts to real-life experiences, enabling children to apply their understanding in practical, purposeful contexts. Within continuous provision, carefully selected resources are used to support exploration, promote mathematical talk, and deepen conceptual understanding. Through this integrated approach, we aim to foster curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of maths from the very beginning of a child's learning journey.

The following schemes are used across the Trust:

- Mastering Number
- Number Sense
- White Rose
- NCTEM

Mastering Number – In Reception we are currently taking part in the NCETM's Mastering Number programme EEF trial (September 2025-ongoing)

Maths Champions - This year members of our Early Years team will be taking part in Maths Champions, a professional development programme to support develop our knowledge and confidence in supporting early mathematics within our Nursery. In reception we will taking part in the EEF trial of the NCETM's Mastering Number programme.

Approaches to building early mathematical skills

Research has been carried out into the 6 main areas that collectively underpin children's early mathematical learning, and which provide the firm foundations for the Maths that children will encounter:

Cardinality and Counting

Comparison

Composition

Pattern

Shape and Space

Measures

All teaching staff have undertaken training with Karen Wilding based on developing early maths skills through subitising and the development of the children's noticing skills. This is threaded through daily routines – self registration using tens frames, voting station for stories to be read – using tens frames, calendar – using vocabulary linked to time, visual timetable – what will be happening next, snack time opportunities – linked to setting out enough places and cups and tidy up time – sorting, classifying and matching 2 and 3D shapes.

In our Nursery children are encouraged to self-register using 5 frames, develop their noticing skills using real life opportunities inside and outside, tidy up time, use of daily calendar to find out what will be happening and when, encouraging children to use mathematical language to talk about what they see.

In Reception maths talk is encouraged throughout the day and the children's subitising skills are developed first, throughout the first term. This enables the children to see amounts up to 4 instantly without the need to rely on counting.

Stories will be used as a way of encouraging maths talk and introducing maths concepts using manipulatives and real life contexts as a way of making maths memorable.

Maths learning will be documented on the maths display board in each classroom. Once complete, this will be transferred to the maths floorbook. This floorbook will be revisited by the children, encouraging them to talk about the maths learning that has taken place. Maths will be linked to our topics where possible.

White Rose and NCETM documents are consulted when planning for maths sessions each week.

Reception children will have a daily maths session for up to 20 minutes followed by opportunities within the provision to apply their learning. Small group tasks will be planned for when appropriate.

Understanding the World

Understanding the World in the EYFS lays the essential foundations for the Humanities curriculum across the wider school, supporting children to develop a strong sense of identity and their place in the world. We place great importance on grounding children's understanding in real-life experiences and the local context, making full use of the rich Cornish landscapes, heritage, and traditions to foster curiosity and a connection to their community. Through purposeful and carefully planned experiences, children begin to explore geography, history, and culture in meaningful ways that are rooted in their everyday lives. At the same time, we recognise the need to extend children's horizons beyond

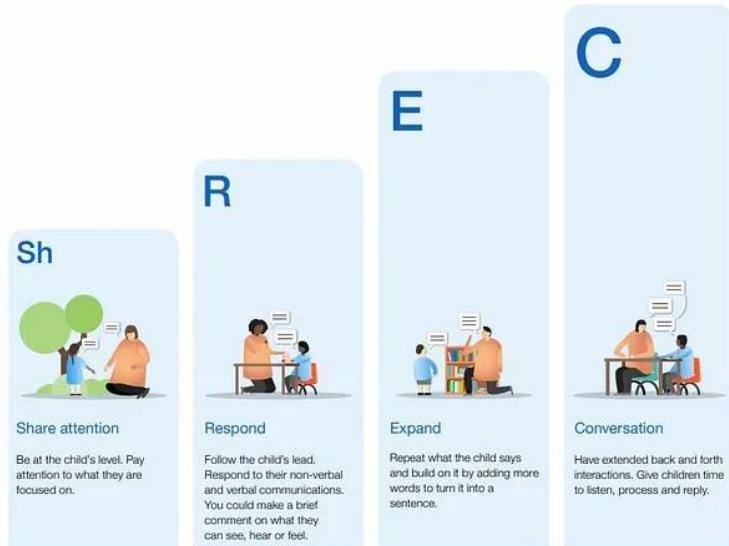
Cornwall by intentionally planning opportunities to learn about different countries, cultures, and times outside of their own experiences. This includes introducing children to global diversity through stories, celebrations, visitors, and resources that reflect a wide range of communities and traditions. In doing so, we ensure that every child begins to build the cultural capital and global awareness they need to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Expressive Arts and Design

Expressive Arts and Design is a vital part of our EYFS curriculum, encouraging children to develop their creativity, imagination, and confidence in expressing themselves. From the earliest stages, children learn to use a range of tools and materials to create, explore, and communicate their ideas. They are supported by inventing and recount stories alongside peers and adults, bringing their imaginations to life through role play, music, and art. Our curriculum includes a carefully planned progression of songs and rhymes, enriched by links to local artists and traditional Cornish songs that help foster a strong sense of cultural identity. At the same time, we intentionally broaden children's creative horizons by introducing them to music, stories, and artistic styles from a wide range of cultures, helping them appreciate diversity and new perspectives. Where possible, children visit local places of cultural interest such as the Tate St Ives and Hall for Cornwall, deepening their engagement with the arts. We also provide opportunities for children to share their creations with the wider community, building pride in their achievements and strengthening connections beyond the classroom.

Priorities 2025-26

- **Schools to implement a language screening tool for all pupils based on Wellcom, language screen or language link**
- **Schools to undertake the EEF SHREC work supported by the Cornwall Teaching school - see separate implementation plan from January [The ShREC approach | EEF](#) High quality interactions**
- **Schools to ensure that plans in EYFS focus on supporting pupils to gain the firm foundations in reading, writing, maths.**
- **Defining what knowledge and understanding of the World exemplifies – ensuring this is part of the EYFS CPD programme**



On going priorities

- **Schools to have mapped out progression of skills for their curriculum**
- **Schools to have implemented mastering number/ number sense at Reception**

Assessment

Children within Early Years are part of both formative and summative assessment. Statutory assessments for early years pupils are:

- Two-Year-Old Check - When a child is aged between 2- and 3-years practitioners must review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas.)
- Reception Baseline Assessment – A short online assessment taken in the first six weeks a child starts reception.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - In the final term of the academic year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child.

Aside from the statutory requirements, settings will carry out their own ongoing assessments. This should not require long breaks from interactions with children or require excessive paperwork. Practitioners within the Trust use Insight to record and track pupil progress and expectations around this are set out in the Trust's assessment policy. Additional guidance around baselining pupils as they arrive in the setting can also be found in the Baseline Expectation document.

High importance is placed upon the outcomes for pupils within the EYFS as we understand that this is an early indicator of future success.

Priorities 2025-26

- Embed the implementation of Insight to support schools with the tracking of Foundation stage data to support meeting the government target of 75% of pupils meeting a GLD.
- End of Autumn 1 baseline findings for Literacy and Maths and Primes to be submitted to Insight / End of December then Easter – primes and literacy and Maths and Summer full profile. Return after Autumn half term Priority sheet.
- Support schools to ensure that they have submitted the new baseline assessment procedures effectively. Schools to access and analyse 25/26 baseline from 22nd September
- Schools accessing the 2024-25 school-level data becoming available through the ‘view your education data platform.’ Shows how your school performs compared to other schools both regionally and nationally -The report can be accessed through DfE Sign-in; full details are [available on gov.uk](#).

Training

- Training for EYFS leads on the use of INSIGHT.

Monitoring & Reporting

- Termly meetings for all schools with the Trust, for Tier 2 and 3 schools this will be half termly.

Leadership

At TPAT, we recognise that the Early Years Foundation Stage is the vital starting point of every child's educational journey and, as such, it is central to the design and planning of the whole school curriculum. Our Headteachers and Senior Leaders maintain a clear and in-depth understanding of the practice within their EYFS settings, enabling them to articulate the specific developmental priorities of each cohort and how individual needs are being effectively met.

Through rigorous analysis of EYFS data, leaders implement targeted strategies to secure the best possible outcomes, with a particular focus on ensuring children achieve a Good Level of Development. We place a strong emphasis on continuous professional development, ensuring all EYFS practitioners receive up-to-date training and remain aligned with current legislation and best practice guidance. In addition, subject leaders across the school are supported to understand the progression from nursery through to reception and into Key Stage 1, building a coherent and connected curriculum that supports a seamless educational experience for every child.

All EYFS practice is underpinned by adherence to both trust-wide and school-specific policies, including those relating to intimate care, behaviour, and relationships, ensuring consistency, safety, and high standards across all settings

Priorities 2025-26

- **Leaders to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the context of the pupils**
- **Focused session to support Headteachers in their understanding of the EYFS curriculum – 6th November HT briefing**
- **Schools to access supporting materials from the DFE [Help for early years providers : Support for practitioners](#)**

On going priorities

- **Clear programme of CPD for EYFS leads including termly meetings and links to external training and guidance**

| Termly meeting date | Focus |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2 nd October 1:30pm | Launch of strategy |
| 12 th February | |
| 21 st May | |

Transition into Key Stage 1

It is vital that the strong foundations created in the early years continue into the next stage of children's development. Therefore, to support children to transition into Key Stage 1 effectively, we offer the following transition experiences:

- Continued access to continuous provision in the Autumn Term
- Sharing of effective EYFS strategies and resourcing
- A curriculum planned to bridge EYFS and KS1 expectations
- Information sharing through meetings and visits between EYFS and Key Stage 1 practitioners and teachers

Priorities 2025-26

- **Ensure there is consistent approach in schools to the transition of pupils from EYFS to KS 1**
- **Ensure that curriculum build from Nursery and EYFS seemingly into KS 1**

Nursery Settings

Priorities 2025-26

- **Support from TPAT to ensure that statutory regulations are met for Nursery provision**
- **Supporting the development of more school-based nurseries across the trust**

Safeguarding