
RUPERT HOUSE SCHOOL



EYFS POLICY

Reviewed by: Joint Heads of EYFS

SMT Overseeing: Deputy Head, Pastoral

Governors' Committee: Education Committee

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WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT, THE TERM EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE IS USED TO DESCRIBE CHILDREN WHO ARE IN OUR NURSERY AND RECEPTION CLASSES.

AIM

At Rupert House we aim to provide the **consistently** highest **quality** care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong **and secure foundation** for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable **each** child to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and **work alongside parents** and others to meet their needs and help every child to **equality of opportunity** to enable them to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS Statutory Framework: 'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy; SEND Policy; Behaviour Policy; Anti Bullying Policy; Parents as Partners Policy.

We adhere to the standards set in EYFS Statutory Framework 2023 and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- Importance of **learning and development, Children** develop and learn at different rates. (see Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning). The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND).

PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the main vehicle for learning

- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach to develop close relationships with individual children. The key person is the class teacher
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors

FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Medium term plans are written based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans are reviewed by the Deputy Heads. See plans

for more details. These plans, along with observations, inform our short-term weekly planning, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Nursery will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Rupert House and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times (which increase as they progress through the Nursery and into Reception), with times for teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including individual reading as well as a daily phonics session using the Twinkl phonics scheme and enhanced by other phonics supplements.

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

We create a stimulating environment to using both the indoor and outdoor space and we have timetabled afternoons during which the Nursery and Reception mix together, undertake adult led activities and we offer free flow inside and out.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We primarily use Tapestry and iPads, but observations may be recorded in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute, and through excellent staff relationships daily discussions take place regarding children, their progress and supporting their next steps together.

Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings and they also receive end of term reports in Autumn and Summer terms.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parents with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals which may include the characteristics of their learning. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1.

We moderate internally as well as taking part in the Oxfordshire moderation procedures to ensure that our judgements are sound.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

Through our ethos, our PSED teaching and the JIGSAW program of study, we ensure that children's wellbeing is at the centre of our EYFS. We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Please see our separate policies on Health and Safety, Safeguarding & Child Protection, Intimate Care & Toileting Policy, Sick Child Policy, First Aid Policy, Managing Medication Policy, Forest School Policy.

INCLUSION

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that all of our children can reach their own potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate policies on SEND and Equality & Diversity.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are carefully planned for, and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Nursery and Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

As children move from Nursery to Reception, teachers liaise to ensure a smooth transition for children. Likewise, in the final term in Reception, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

See also Transition Policy

STAFFING

There is one Nursery class with one teacher and one TA. There are two parallel Reception Classes with one teacher and one TA each. These teachers are the key person for their class.

We adhere to the statutory staffing requirements and adult to child ratios for the EYFS at all times.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS AND THE WIDER CONTEXT

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that, together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways – see our separate Parents as Partners policy.

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

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting.