

Rushwick CE Primary School Early Years Policy

Our Vision

Through a positive nurturing environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We embrace Christian values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps.

“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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education, March 2012

The Reception year must provide every child with a feeling of security, being valued and the confidence to explore new learning. The Reception year is unique in that it can set the tone for later school life.

The EYFS is based on four overarching principles:

- 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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

This Early Years Policy includes the following:

- Aims and Principles
- Planning and organising the curriculum
- Classroom organisation and resources
- Use of whole school resources
- Induction
- Involving parents

- Language and Literacy Supporting the Reception Child
- Assessment and record keeping
- Monitoring and evaluation

Aims and Principles

- Early Years practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued.
- To provide a relevant curriculum with tasks that make sense to the children and are both practical and purposeful.
- To provide opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that children plan or initiate themselves. Practitioners must consider the individual needs and interests of each child, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience in all areas of learning and development.
- Practitioners acknowledge the holistic nature of young children's learning and natural links will be made between different areas of the curriculum, with the emphasis on learning through play and the importance of developing speaking and listening skills.
- Practitioners must create a learning environment that develops children's imagination and encourages children to explore and express their ideas and feelings.
- Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding development through positive interaction.
- Involve parents and carers.

Planning and organising the curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that must provide a framework for planning, teaching and assessment in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are inter-connected.

The three prime areas are:

- Communication and Language – children will be given lots of opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- Physical Development – children will be provided with opportunities to be active and interactive; to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children will be taught the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – children will be supported to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; forming positive relationships and develop respect for others; develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and have confidence in their own abilities.

There are also four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy – children will be taught to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
- Mathematics – children will be provided with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
- Understanding the World – Children will make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- Expressive Arts and Design – Children will explore and play with a range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.
- The curriculum is planned through a series of themes that reflect and respond to the children’s interests, offering experiences in all areas of the curriculum with opportunities for play and child- initiated activities.
- Planning should provide for all learners, supporting children with additional needs and challenging the most able children to exceed the .ELGs.
- By the end of the Reception year, children will be prepared to continue their journey into year 1 and work within the National Curriculum.

Classroom Organisation and Resources

The organisation of the classroom reflects the importance that is placed on children learning through play and first-hand experience, developing independence and having opportunities to initiate their own activities.

The Reception class provides the following continuous provision:

- Small world resources
- Role play area
- Large and small construction
- Sand and water
- Book corner with a range of fiction and non-fiction books
- Writing table with a range of writing resources
- Making area with access to a selection of materials
- Table top and small world toys

- Access to laptops
- Interactive whiteboard
- Malleable materials
- Musical instruments
- Painting and creative equipment
- Maths games and equipment
- Outside area

Use of Whole School Resources

- The Reception class use the hall for dance, drama, physical education and assemblies.
- Use of outside field, playground and outdoor classroom.
- Forest School area.
- The kitchen/ staffroom for cooking activities.
- Laptop trolley.
- Large range of musical instruments.
- Library.
- Thrive/ Nurture room.
- Group work room.

Induction

We have close links with Rushwick Preschool, meeting regularly to share stories. This allows the Preschool children and the Reception teacher to become familiar with each other before the transition period begins.

The Reception teacher visits Rushwick Preschool and other feeder nurseries to meet the children and speak to their keyworkers during the summer term. The new intake children are then invited to visit the Reception class for a 'stay and play' session, a story time session and then a morning taster session.

In May, a meeting is held by the Headteacher and Reception teacher to introduce parents/carers to the school, Reception procedures and curriculum. Parents/carers are given a welcome booklet which outlines the curriculum and school routines, along with a document pack to be completed and returned to school.

At the start of the autumn term, the Reception teacher and a Teaching Assistant visits each child at home to gather important information and to reassure children and families ahead of children starting school.

When school starts in September, all parents/carers have the option to have their children in school full time if they feel that their child is ready. Children with specific difficulties or additional needs can attend part time for a short period, by arrangement.

Reception children are introduced to the life of the wider school gently. Playtimes are separate in the first few days allowing the children to settle with their classmates in a quiet atmosphere, building to full participation in school playtimes. The process is the same for assemblies and lunch times. New children are introduced to the Year 6 children who have an important role to play in the daily routines of Reception children.

Involving Parents

Parents/carers are the child's first and most enduring educators. When Parents/carers and practitioners work together in Early Years settings, the results have a positive impact on the child's development. A successful partnership needs to be a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We aim to develop this by:

- Outlining how the EYFS is being delivered to Parents/carers during the new parents meeting in May, to enable them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home and how they can access more information.
- Curriculum letters are sent home periodically to keep parents informed of their child's current curriculum and learning needs, with an outline of activities which could be undertaken at home to support this.
- Operating an "open door" policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner before or after school and also attend "open classroom" after school on a Tuesday.
- Using 'Wow vouchers' to record any special moments or achievements at home.
- Inviting parents/carers to workshops and sharing sessions.
- Inviting parents to class assemblies.
- In the autumn term, providing an evening meeting for parents to further explain the curriculum, with a particular focus on phonics and reading, and to share ideas on how parents can be involved. Followed by other evenings as appropriate to support parents.
- Discussing individual next steps and progress with parents/carers at parents' evening in autumn and spring terms.
- Providing an annual written report to parents/carers in July summarising the child's progress against the Early Learning Goals and EYFS Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- All parents will be invited to join Rushwick PTA, which exists to facilitate social occasions so that families can get to know one another and feel part of the school, to raise money to provide extras that enhance the education of all children in school and to contribute

to the ethos of the school by providing support for staff e.g. on special occasions by organising refreshments and making new-comers feel welcome.

- Any concerns over special needs will be discussed with parents and the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) for the school.

Language and Literacy Supporting the Reception Child

- Early in the first half term at school, children will begin to bring home Jolly Phonics homework activities so that parents/carers can support their child with the sounds he/she has learnt at school. This will be explained in detail at the autumn meeting for parents.
- The first books that children bring home to share with parents/carers will be library books for adults to read followed by reading scheme books with simple repetitive text and rhymes for children to read with parents.

Assessment and Recording

This is in line with the school Assessment Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This is in line with the school self-evaluation policy and associated documents.

Roles and Responsibilities beyond the Class Teacher

Teaching Assistants

A TA is assigned to work with the Reception class full time and a second TA part time. The TA's work within the class with individuals and groups of children under the direction of the Reception teacher. The TA's are nurturing, supportive and experienced with working with Reception children. They are proactive in encouraging development in all areas of learning as well as aiding assessment, working towards specific targets with children, administration and enhancing the work space.

Police date: February 2018

Jennie Ballinger