

RUSKIN INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

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EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

1. AIMS OF THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- To provide children with a safe and nurturing learning environment
- To allow children to explore their own ideas and interests.
- To support children in developing key skills and knowledge through the Characteristics of Effective Learning and the Prime and Specific Areas of Learning and Development.

To work in partnership with parents to enable each child to achieve to their highest potential.

2. FOUNDATION STAGE KEY PRINCIPLES

The key principles from the Every Child Matters document underpin practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Unique Child: 'Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be capable, confident and self assured.'
- Positive Relationships: 'Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.'
- Enabling Environments: '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 carers.'
- Learning and Development: 'Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.'

(Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012, page 3)

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a carefully planned balance of direct teaching, small group learning experiences and child initiated play. Effective teaching and learning relies on planning that is informed by observational assessments of children's learning and interests.

3.1 The Learning Environment

Across the foundation stage the learning environment:

- Reflects the children within the class, for example through displays and selection of resources for play
- Is safe and welcoming
- Allows the children to develop independence in selecting resources
- Celebrates children's achievements and interests
- Includes both an indoor and outdoor learning spaces
- Reflects the seven areas of learning
- Supports parents in developing their understanding of teaching and learning in the foundation stage, for example through sharing weekly themes and learning intentions

3.2 The role of adults

Adults:

- Build positive relationships with children
- Work in partnership with parents.
- Support and extend children's learning through play.
- Make regular observations of children's learning to assess their progress and inform future planning.
- To make ongoing formative assessments through observations, assessment and planning.
- Make summative assessments and share findings with parents at two points: between 24 and 36 months in the prime areas of learning and at the end of the EYFS in the EYFS profile.
- Keep records of children's progress.
- To write regular reports about each child throughout the year.
- To meet with parents three times a year at parent's evenings.
- Set targets for pupil achievement across the year.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

“Characteristics of Effective Learning and the prime and specific Areas of Learning and development are all interconnected.”

(Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012, page 5)

We support the children in engaging and learning with other people and their environment through playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically. We believe that these characteristics underpin all learning and development.

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically - exploring

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

5. SPECIFIC AND PRIME AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are “prime areas,” and four “specific areas.”

The prime areas are:

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

The specific areas are:

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

At Ruskin Infant School and Nursery

“Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

Play is used as an essential part children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an on-going judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.”

(Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012)

Learning through play is a balance of child initiated and adult directed or structured play based experiences. High quality, purposeful play uses both the indoor and outdoor environment, supporting learning across the seven areas of learning and through characteristics of effective learning.

Child initiated play offers children the opportunity to explore their own ideas and interests selecting their own resources. Adults support and extend this play through modelling, questioning, mirroring, affirming and celebrating achievements.

5.1. Prime Areas of Learning and Development

5.1.1 Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Making Relationships
- Self Awareness and Self Confidence
- Managing Feelings and Behaviour

We support children in developing independence, self confidence, perseverance, social skills, appropriate and reflective behaviour and self control, respect for the views, needs, cultures and beliefs they hold and those of others.

The SEAL program is used to support teaching and learning in Personal, Social and Emotional Development. This program is adapted as necessary to tailor it to the needs of individuals and the class as a whole. SEAL sessions are timetabled weekly.

The R-Time program can be used where appropriate with a particular focus on developing good social skills.

Adults support children’s Personal, Social and Emotional Development on a daily basis by responding to their individual needs and circumstances.

Children’s wellbeing and involvement are monitored through the Laevers scales

Relax Kids and the Massage in Schools programme is used to support children’s sense of wellbeing, confidence and development of social skills.

5.1.2. Communication and Language

- Listening and Attention
- Understanding
- Speaking

At Ruskin Infant School and Nursery, we believe that children need to have good communication skills as a basis for all their learning and development and we are passionate about the importance of children talking and listening in wide range of situations.

We support children in developing:

- Confidence to speak clearly sharing their ideas
- The ability to take turns in conversation listening and responding to the contributions of others
- An enjoyment in language through stories, songs, rhymes and poems
- The ability to use talk to organise, sequence and clarify their thinking, ideas, feelings and events
- The ability to use language to imagine and recreate roles and events

5.1.3 Physical Development

- Moving and Handling
- Health and Self Care

Provision for Physical Development focuses on fine and gross motor skills as well as the use of a wide variety of equipment. The outdoor environment plays a crucial part in providing space for physical development and expression.

The development of Physical skill also includes fine motor skill and handwriting. Children in Reception will be formally taught letter formation, and across the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are supported in developing good fine motor control through a variety of play based experiences both indoors and outdoors, for example, the use of pegs, scissors, malleable and tactile play.

Children will also be taught how to care for themselves, including personal hygiene such as toileting and hand-washing. Children will be supported in learning to dress and undress for PE.

A snack of fruit, milk and water is available daily and the children will be encouraged to become confident in selecting their own healthy snack. Drinking water is constantly available throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Children will use a wide range of environments through which they will explore physicality; the school hall, playgrounds, garden areas and covered play space.

Parents are advised about healthy and appropriate lunches at the introduction meetings. These can be a packed lunch or a cooked meal provided by Nourish caterers.

5.2 Specific Areas of Learning and Development

5.2.1 Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

In the Nursery setting, children are encouraged to explore mark making and early reading.

In the Reception classes, reading skills and an enthusiasm for exploring books are developed through a combination of individual reading, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading (book areas indoors and outdoors), library sessions and story time.

When in Reception, children take home a reading book matching the level on which they are currently reading in school. This book can be changed by parents as often as they wish. Children also take home Keyword Bookmarks with words from 'Letters and Sounds 100 Reception Words' to learn, with new book marks being given as the words are learned.

Writing skills and enthusiasm for mark making are developed through shared writing, guided writing and independent writing. Independent writing is encouraged across the setting, for example, through role-play areas, the use of mark making tool kit boxes, a range of resources available for mark making at all times including clip boards, pencils, pens, crayons, notebooks, diaries etc.

In Reception children are given spellings to take home and practise.

5.2.2 Mathematics

- Numbers
- Shape, Space and Measures

We teach children in developing mathematical awareness and understanding. Adults support children's abilities to apply their knowledge within their own child initiated learning. Resources to support mathematical play are available at all times for children's independent selection including number cards, number lines, shape and counting equipment. Children engage in adult led learning experiences developing problem solving reasoning and numeracy knowledge and skills. Children will be taught to use mathematical skills to include using numbers within 20 to add, subtract, halve and double, to name, recognise and describe 2D and 3D shapes and to have an understanding of weight, height and volume.

5.2.3 Understanding the World

- People and Communities
- The World
- Technology

We begin to teach children about the world immediately around them and the wider world where possible through first hand practical experiences. Visits and trips, visitors, and learning in the indoor and outdoor environment will happen throughout each year. Children are taught to develop skills for enquiry and sharing their knowledge and understanding. Children will share their thoughts and knowledge about their own lives and the lives of people they know. They will relate different experiences to events that happen in the world around them.

We will encourage children to show curiosity and be keen to explore, commenting on their own observations and questioning things around them, using open ended resources in their play and learning, to make predictions and discuss and critically explain their findings.

Children across the Early Years Foundation Stage will have independent access to a wide range of everyday technology (computers, interactive whiteboard programs, BeeBots, microphones, cameras and video cameras). Children in Reception will be taught basic skills using laptops or other tablets or electronic devices.

5.2.4 Expressive Arts and Design

- Using and Exploring Media and Materials
- Being Imaginative

Children have opportunities to use their imagination in play, building, making and exploring in the indoor and outdoor environment. Each classroom and the outside area will have areas for free choice and planned access to a wide variety of media. Children will be taught skills in using the equipment effectively. They will be encouraged to be imaginative and creative.

Music will be used within the setting in a variety of ways, with children exploring sounds and rhythm of different instruments and musical genres. Singing and rhymes will be incorporated into children's learning. Reception children will participate in a weekly whole school singing assembly once settled into school. Here they will share in the love of singing a repertoire of familiar and new songs.

5.3 Timetabled Adult Led Learning

Some areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum are timetabled to be taught regularly.

These include:

- P.E.
- ICT
- Music
- Use of the Library
- Forest School Experiences
- Phonics

6. PLANNING

Medium term planning is completed identifying learning intentions (from long term planning, observations and assessments) and key themes for learning. Medium term planning themes take into account the interests of the children.

Weekly planning is completed outlining group learning times, adult led experiences and provision for child initiated learning. Weekly planning is also completed for the outdoor area encompassing learning experiences to support learning intentions across the foundation stage unit.

In reception additional weekly planning is completed outlining teaching of phonics and guided reading. A timetable is also completed providing an overview of the week.

Weekly planning identifies where groups of children or individuals will receive additional or targeted support in order to meet specific needs.

The planning cycle is important in ensuring planning is derived not simply from long/medium term plans but also following observations of children's immediate previous learning and interests.

7. ASSESSMENT

Assessment across the foundation stage is predominantly undertaken through observations. Short 'snapshot' observations are completed using post its or 'snap shot' observation forms and photographs. Areas of Development and Learning, Characteristics of Effective Learning and Wellbeing and Involvement levels are identified.

Long observations are completed 3 times a year (Autumn, Spring and Summer) to provide a view of how children are engaging over a longer period of time, also exploring their wellbeing and their involvement levels.

In the Reception Year, children will produce a piece of unaided writing around the first day of each month. This learning will be compiled in a 1st of the Month Book and assessed against the Development Matters for Writing.

Children are encouraged through questioning and review time to evaluate their own effectiveness and successes. Children will begin to use simple self assessment skills, e.g. thumbs up.

All staff working in the foundation stage are encouraged to make observations of all children regardless of whether they are their key children. Children's targets are displayed allowing all staff

and children to identify progress towards key learning targets. Targets are created and reviewed regularly.

8. RECORDING PROGRESS

A Learning Journey book is compiled for each child in the Foundation Stage collating their learning, observations and key information provided by parents and carers. Pieces of children's work can also be added to this folder to signify key learning steps.

Children will be assessed on entry and exit to each year group to show their attainment against age related expectations. Their progress will be tracked throughout the year on the Ruskin Infants School and Nursery Individual Progress Chart with each age range broken down into bands of beginning, secure, complete. Good progress judged to be move of three bands across the year

At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children will be assessed against each of the seventeen Early Learning Goals (ELG). If they are working below ELG, they will be classified as emerging, within the ELG, expected and beyond the ELG, exceeding.

All information tracked is collated using whole class tracking grids, providing an overview of progress for each child, the class and cohort.

Children's progress is shared with parents and carers throughout the year by written reports and parents evenings. Parents are encouraged to regularly view and add to their child's profile folder.

For children in FS1 at the end of the year their development is shared with parents/carers and future practitioners through the county 'Transition Document'.

At the end of the EYFS, parents will receive a report showing their children's attainment against the Early Learning Goals and the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

The Headteacher meets the teachers three times to discuss the progress of all the children in each class. Vulnerable groups are considered closely and interventions highlighted to ensure that maximum progress is being met.

9. EQUALITY STATEMENT

Ruskin Infant School and Nursery (including Ruskin Childcare) defines itself as a school free from discrimination. We will not discriminate against any member of the school community by treating them less favourably because of their:

- sex,
- race,
- disability,
- religion or belief,
- sexual orientation,
- gender reassignment,
- pregnancy or maternity

The school, through its policies and staff practices will also not discriminate against a pupil because they are associated with a person that displays the 'protected characteristics' as listed above.

Ruskin Infant School and Nursery defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour in relation to the Equality Act 2010, as

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- harassment
- victimisation

No unlawful behaviour will be tolerated in any way.

10. SPECIAL NEEDS

All children and their families are valued at Ruskin Infant School and Nursery. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the schools Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's policy for SEN.

11. ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Pupils with English as an additional language are assessed using the Language in Common tracking document. This assessment is completed on entry to the setting and updated at least 3 times a year (December, March and June). This tracking document provides practitioners with support in identifying next steps for children in their development of learning and using English.

Where additional targeted support is appropriate this will be outlined and monitored through an 'Achievement Planner'. These will be shared with parents.

To support children who have English as an additional language the following strategies are employed:

- practical, hand-on learning experiences
- the use of visual aids including gesture and picture cards
- the use of dual language resources including a key phrases mat and dual language books and audio files
- consistent routines
- effective use of any additional adult support
- assessment in child's home language

12. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS

Parents/carers play a vital role in their child's learning and development. It is of aim of all practitioners that they work with parents to achieve the best for each child.

When all children begin coming to the setting a home school agreement is shared with parents/carers and signed outlining key commitments of parents/carers and the setting.

When children begin attending the setting information from parents/carers about their child is collected through an 'All about me' leaflet. Parents/carer can also share information verbally with the child's key worker/teacher.

Parents/carers are encouraged to look at their child's Learning Journey and add to this through completing simple observations at home or by adding comments on the parent/carer comment sheet.

Parents/carers are offered opportunities to attend parent workshops to inform them about aspects of teaching and learning in the setting.

Home visits will be offered and encouraged at the beginning of each school year to all Nursery and Reception classes. These allow children and staff to get to know each other in a familiar environment. Home visits are opportunities for parents/carers to ask questions about starting at Ruskin Infant School and Nursery in the comfort of their own home.

Parents are offered parent consultations at several points in the year.

Parents are asked to make contributions to our 'We are all stars' boards.

Parents are actively encouraged to attend Parents' Voice.