

Richmond Avenue Primary School



EYFS POLICY

Updated: September 2021

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to reach their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. When parents choose to use early years services they want to know the provision will keep their children safe and help them to thrive. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.” (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007)

Aims and objectives

Our Aims:

- To provide a secure, safe, caring and stimulating environment.
- To ensure that all children are valued and respected.
- To build on what the child already knows and develop a positive attitude and enjoyment for learning.
- To provide a range of opportunities that enable children to achieve their potential through direct experience, enquiry and active exploration, in the classroom and outdoors, using a wide variety of equipment and materials.
- To encourage independence and confidence.
- To value the role parents and carers can play to work together in partnership.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- **Quality and consistency** in the Early Years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child is left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of the child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and with parent and/or carers.
- **Equal opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, some children join us in our nursery class in the term following their 3rd birthday. All 3 and 4 year old children are entitled to 15 hours of free child care and some children of working parents are entitled to 30 hours funding.

At our nursery, children can access either part time or full day care provision. Children become eligible for the funding the term after their third birthday according to the cut off dates below:

Date of birth of child	Term in which child is eligible to be considered for entry to the nursery	Application deadline
1 st April and 31 st August	1st September (Autumn Term)	Friday prior to May half term break
1 st September and 31 st December	1st January (Spring Term)	Friday prior to October half term break
1 st January and 31 st March	1st April (Summer Term)	Friday prior to February half term break

Applications to our nursery are welcomed at any point before the cut-off date above. Early applications will be placed on a holding list and the nursery manager will contact parents to discuss applications where necessary.

Applications for our nursery are available from the school office or from the nursery section of the school website.

In accordance with the Local Authority application process, children will join our reception class in the school year in which they will turn 5 years old. Applications can be made to Southend Borough Council Admissions Team between the September and January before they would be due to start.

Strategies for Teaching & Learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based around four Key Themes, three Prime areas and Four Specific Areas of Learning.

The themes are:

- **A Unique Child** - Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** - Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** - The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** - Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas are:

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

The four specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

At Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School we recognise that the characteristics of effective learning and the prime and specific areas of learning and development are all interconnected. Within the Early Years Foundation Stage the **Unique Child** reaches out to relate to people and things through the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**, which move through all areas of learning.

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creating and thinking critically

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Play

At Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School we recognise play as the most effective way for our children within the EYFS to learn. Fun, exciting and challenging activities are carefully planned to engage children in learning through play using topics, themes and ideas that are of interest to the children. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

At Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School we value the need for children to be actively involved in their learning and provide a variety of creative teaching methods to encourage opportunities for active learning to take place. Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested and have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their learning and helps them to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

At Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School we value our role as a facilitator in children's learning and provide opportunities for children to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts to support their critical and innovative thinking. Within the EYFS we support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. We provide continual opportunities and encourage children to access resources freely and move them around the classroom to extend their learning as needed.

In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. To support each child's progress when planning, the EYFS practitioner makes use of the 'Development Matters' skills that contribute to children's achievement of the Early Learning Goals .

Enabling Environment

Our Nursery is a purpose-built building separate to the main school building but within the school grounds. There are large indoor and outdoor spaces supportive of continuous provision and the school playground and field can be used as an additional learning spaces. The nursery can accommodate up to a maximum of 24 children per session and maintains a ratio of 1:8 for each session.

The Reception base, which consists of two classrooms is a separate building within the school grounds. There are indoor and outdoor spaces supportive of continuous provision and the school playground and field can be used as an additional learning spaces. The Reception classes can accommodate up to a maximum of 30 children per class.

All EYFS classes have weekly plans for continuous provision which will be based on the seven areas of learning and development and which will create experiences to suit the individual needs of the children.

The topics will be updated accordingly on the school website to enable parent/carers to continue the learning at home.

Literacy and Mathematics learning appropriate to the age and stage of the child begins once the children have completed their inductions sessions and are settled within the environment.

Phonics teaching will be in groups appropriate for each child's stage of development to ensure that their individual needs are met.

Practitioners also use the characteristics of effective learning to support the day-to-day planning of the environment to ensure that it reflects the different way in which children learn. Practitioners will work with children during continuous provision within both adult-led and child-activities, both inside and outside. This will then be recorded in the child's online learning journey (Tapestry) to monitor progress and celebrate their successes.

Assessment

- Practitioners will engage in pre-start sessions with parents, carers and pre-school settings to establish a picture of the whole child before they join the setting.
- Children entering school are also regularly observed during their first weeks to provide the initial baseline information.
- Monitoring of each child will take place through daily observations of both child-initiated and adult-led activities, discussions, photographs and record keeping, planned assessment and observations from home via Tapestry. Activities are collected and work that shows evidence of progress is collated on each child's individual Tapestry learning journey which parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to.
- Practitioners assess the children half termly to update their records of the children's levels of attainment; this is then used by the team to focus planning and to inform any additional support sessions needed for pre and post teaching. Teachers will also use the characteristics of effective learning to support their judgements. At the end of the year the E.Y.F.S. profile results are sent to the L.A. (Southend-on-Sea Borough Council).
- An end of year report summarising the progress the child has made and steps to ensure further progress is sent to parents. This will be supported by an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile which is assessed against the seven areas of learning and development. The report will also detail the characteristics of effective learning which identifies the different ways children learn and how the individual child accesses these in the continuous provision. Each child's level of development will be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners will indicate whether the child has met the expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding the expected levels, or not yet reaching the expected levels ('emerging').
- The profile data is discussed with the future Year 1 teachers so that she/he can continue to help the children to achieve the early learning goals if they have not done so before they can access the KS1 Curriculum.
- Much of the assessment in the EYFS is through observation - children give indications of their learning all of the time through what they say, what they do, how they approach activities etc. and it is primarily by observing children that judgements are made to inform records and planning. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways e.g. annotated photographs, written observations and annotations on work with the applicable level from the EYFS profile. These are recorded on the Tapestry website for parents to view securely as well as contribute to.
- Some of the children's work is documented in a phonic book, writing book and busy learning book for children in Reception. In Nursery they have a book documenting fine motor activities.
- Regular year group, cross-phase and MAT moderation takes place to ensure consistency.

Transition

Changing from a pre-school setting or within school, moving year groups, can be daunting for both parents and children. We aim to make this transition as easy and comfortable as possible for all involved. This will be achieved by undertaking the following before a child joins the school:

- Pre-induction questionnaires are sent to all pre-school settings.
- 1:1 sessions in the classroom with the teacher and LSA, with the child accompanied by a parent to explore the environment on their own.
- Pre-start sessions prior to the summer holidays to allow children and parent/carers to become familiar with the environment.
- Parent/carers are provided with a copy of the school information pack which will include an 'All About Me' booklet to complete with the child which will be shared with practitioners during the initial meetings.
- Parent meetings take place (daytime and evening) to meet the Early Years staff, share the day-to-day running of the setting including the types of activities and experiences their child will be involved in as well as details of the initial stages of Literacy and Numeracy within the EYFS profile.
- Tapestry workshops for parents to support the use of the online program outside of school.
- Phonics and Mathematics parent sessions to enable parent/carers to have a more in-depth understanding of the teaching and learning expectations.
- A staggered start at the beginning of the autumn term to ensure a positive and smooth transition for both the children and parent/carers.
- Learning Mentor support, should it be required.
- Transition to Year 1 will be managed to ensure the appropriate needs for the individual child is met. This will begin in the summer term, involving discussions with the KS1 staff.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We aim to encourage collaboration through our working relationship with parents and support this by:

- offering an 'open door' policy where parents can feel confident in approaching EYFS staff to discuss any information or concerns they may have about their child;
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and encouraging parents to contribute to their child's tapestry learning journal,
- encouraging regular effective communication through face-to-face contact, notice boards, letters and the 'home/school partnership book';
- providing an end of year report informing on the child's attainment, achievement and characteristics of effective learning and outlining their next steps in learning;
- encouraging parents of children in Reception to be involved in their child's learning by providing collaborative homework tasks relevant to the child's current learning in school;
- valuing parents ideas in improving practice by providing opportunities to feedback through parent questionnaires and by encouraging parents to contribute ideas to school policies that impact on the EYFS

Safeguarding and Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

- Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.
- Practitioners will take necessary steps to keep the children safe and well. The requirements are that practitioners will promote good health, manage behaviour and maintain records, policies and procedures, including a daily risk assessment of the outdoor learning environment.
- Ratios – 1QTS/EY Practitioner for a maximum of 30 children.
- Regular risk assessments of both the inside and outside learning environments.

For additional information on school wide safeguarding procedures, please refer to the Safeguarding policy.

Equal Opportunities

At Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas.

Inclusion

Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to benefit from the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Additional support may be provided for children with special medical needs. Individual Support Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs Policy. Early Years teachers discuss these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The school's SEND coordinator and Early Years Phase Leader are responsible for providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents and for arranging external intervention and support where necessary.