



Early Years Foundation Stage

Reviewed

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Co-ordinator:

Mrs J Goddard

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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.’

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

Aims

At Ryhill Junior and Infant School we aim:

- ✚ To give each child a happy, positive and fun start to their school life in which they can establish solid foundations on which to expand and foster a deep love of learning;
- ✚ To offer each child a wide range of new and exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test them out along with their own, individual experiences;
- ✚ To enable each child, through encouragement and high expectations, to develop, to the full, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally;
- ✚ To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunity for development;
- ✚ To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere;
- ✚ To support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing;
- ✚ To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Daily routine

We have a 26 place nursery and offer morning or afternoon sessions each day. Children enter our nursery in the term after they turn 3. We offer 15 hours funded places. Our children enter at three points during the year (September, January and April). The majority of children who attend our nursery gain a place in our reception class but we do have some children who do not receive a place and others who we gain from different settings in the area. For these children, we do a personalised transition programme tailored to their needs. Our 30 place reception class have the same timings as the school day. They will use the hall and large playground at lunchtime playtime. Flexible timetables are in place to allow us to follow the children’s interest. Towards the end of reception, we aim to aid the transition into year one by having a timetable where the children have daily short literacy, maths, phonics and reading whole class sessions for children who are ready for this.

Our Nursery and Reception classes follow the framework laid down in the EYFS statutory framework which aims to support children's development in seven areas of learning and development. They

are also underpinned by the characteristics of effective learning. '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.' (Development matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012)

The three prime areas are:

-  Communication and language
-  Physical development
-  Personal, social and emotional development

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

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

SMSC

In the Early Years Foundation Stage we recognise that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of cultures. All curriculum areas within the EYFS have a contribution to make to the child's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and opportunities for this will be planned in each area of the curriculum. All adults will model and promote expected behaviour, treating all people as unique and valuable individuals, showing compassion and respect for pupils and their families.

British Values

[Fundamental British values](#) have been implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage since 2014. Democracy: everyone is treated equally and has equal rights; Rule of law: we teach children to manage their own feelings and behaviour, learn right from wrong; individual liberty: we focus on children's self-confidence and self-awareness and people and communities; Finally, **mutual respect and tolerance**: where the children learn to treat others as they want to be treated and how to be part of a community, forming relationships with others.

Planning

We believe many children need to be given a starting point to learn new things and find topics are a great way to fire the imagination. We have a two year topic cycle so both classes are working together on the same theme. The topics are flexible to ensure we also follow the children's interests, school themes and local or national events e.g. the Olympics. Every half term, staff plan the next topic, and book visits and visitors that will enhance the learning of our children. We also use topics from the skills builder programme to teach and embed from an early age the eight essential skills we promote as a school: listening, presenting, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, leadership and team work.

Staff plan in more detail on a weekly basis using daily notes, observations and interactions with children and assessments to inform where the learning journey should move to. A long term plan for nursery and reception ensures we have coverage of objectives over the year from the framework. Topic overviews for each half term can be found on our school website. These are flexible and will adapt as we move with the children's interests. We ensure our planning is objective led and therefore differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils. Groups of children will be identified on planning so that their learning can be moved forward quickly. Visitors also really enhance a topic and we like to have 'experts' coming in to talk to the children. We often ask parents if they are able (and brave enough!) to share knowledge or a skill, be it cooking, how to bath a baby, painting mehndi patterns on hands or playing guitar.

Teaching strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities across the day. At different points in the day, the children will receive short bursts of teacher led learning, sufficiently timed for the age of the children. However, much of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks with adults observing or intervening to extend learning where appropriate. The interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. Assessments are used to allow the teachers to plan objective led learning experiences, and wherever possible, staff will take the learning to the child to ensure there is always a high level of engagement. In reception, daily phonics, literacy and maths lessons will take place and the children will begin to be taught in groups where appropriate. Reading books will be sent home for Nursery children, which may only be picture books or books with limited words. In reception, books based and matched to their phonic knowledge will be used in guided reading and sent home.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play. Getting the balance right between child- initiated play, which is controlled, and adult led activities is very important to us.

Classroom organisation

Our Early Years classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them easily. Each classroom is set up in a way to provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Classrooms have a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction area, small world area, and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day but children can

self-initiate tasks at any time from the resources available. The adults move to whichever area their focus for the session/day is.

The outdoor area is an important part of the EYFS curriculum and we ensure that children can access this throughout the day. We try to ensure that the range of activities outside reflects the different curriculum areas, for example setting up quiet spaces for a maths game, reading and for construction. In Nursery, physical activity often dominates, with climbing, running, cycling and other active games being key. We also access the school grounds such as the pond and field.

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Assessment, observations and portfolios

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations. To ensure we have evidence of a child's progress in the EYFS we use a range of strategies all of which come together in their individual portfolio. We use Tapestry as a tool for recording our observations as this allows us to share children's learning experiences and progress with parents. We also print off these observations and put them into portfolios so we can use these for moderation (both internal and external) and to inform our assessments. We are very proud of our portfolios: these are collections of children's work, photos and observations which create a detailed picture of the child. Where appropriate, we include individual next steps for children's learning. These next steps are followed up on wherever possible so we can move children's progress forward rapidly. Staff have their own iPad which is used to capture and note observations and next steps for learning. Parents who do not use Tapestry to see their child's observations have access to the portfolios when requested. Parents are encouraged to contribute by commenting on observations or adding their own observations from what children have done at home.

On entry to Nursery and Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. Throughout the Early Years the Class Teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Head Teacher showing each child's development across the seven areas of learning. This is also analysed by the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator. Parents receive information three times each year of where their child is in relation to the ages and stages in the EYFSP. The children are baselined at the beginning

of Reception. At the end of Reception the class teacher assesses each child against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development within each ELG is either 'beginning', 'developing' or 'secure'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the Reception child's end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents' Evening in Reception. Parents are also informed as to whether their child has made the 'Good Level of Development.'

Partnership with parents and carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. Before children start Nursery, parents, carers and children are invited to FEET sessions where the children meet the nursery staff and children in the setting. Information about school is shared at these sessions and any questions or queries answered. Parents are given a starter pack which a booklet 'All About Me' to complete with their child. This gives Nursery staff valuable information about each child on which to base activities and experiences. Over the first few days at the school we encourage parents and carers to stay for as long as they wish in the classroom to ensure the transition into school goes smoothly. We have a three entry points in the year where children arrive into Nursery. Parents are invited to a parents' meeting so the settling period in can be reviewed. Parents are invited to attend a Parents' Meeting each term and teachers are available most mornings and evenings to talk and to discuss more urgent matters. We encourage parents to attend 'Stay and Play' sessions and attend trips and experiences such as visits to church whenever possible.

Transition

Children are invited to FEET sessions before they begin nursery. This is an opportunity for children to become familiar with staff, the setting and other children in the setting. Parents can begin to build important relationships with staff during these hour long, weekly sessions (we aim to deliver 5 weeks of 1 hour sessions). When children are ready to move to reception, the reception teacher will visit children in nursery for several days across the final summer term. However, because nursery and reception work so closely together and share outdoor space, the children will already be familiar with the teacher and staff in reception. The children will have time in their new class and stay all day in the final week of the term and spend dinner time with the whole school. When children move to year 1, they will spend a full week with their new class and the new class teacher in the new setting. The children will have the chance to continue learning through play in the 'Rainbow Room' as well as in the 'traditional' year 1 classroom. The children's teachers will meet to exchange information and data about the children at every transition point so that the teacher has a full picture of the child ready to start the new year. Parents are invited into school for parents information sessions in nursery, reception and year 1 to share transition information and answer questions.

Our year 1 classrooms has been specifically designed to support the children's transition from reception into year 1. The rainbow room offers areas of provision for the children to apply their knowledge and skills in a play based way. The provision is differentiated and appropriate for the year one curriculum.

Children who join us from other settings into reception are offered a personalised transition programme which suits their needs.

Health & safety and safeguarding

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance' (2014). We follow whole school procedures for child protection (see Child protection Policy). Mrs Emma Jones is the named Child Protection Officer and all concerns are discussed with her. We have separate policies for medicine in school and off-site visits and risk assessments. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has undertaken risk assessments of the indoor and outdoor areas and equipment and these can be viewed at any time from the Co-ordinator. A record is also kept for 'intimate care' in the setting.

E Safety

The Foundation Stage works in accordance with the whole school e-safeguarding Policy, which adheres to the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage', and can be found in main school.