



# **EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

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## **Introduction**

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Roundswell Community Primary Academy.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including both teaching and non-teaching adults.

In the policy the term 'setting' refers to the Early Years educational provision at Roundswell Community Primary Academy. This is available to children who enter school in the term they turn 3 in to our Nursery through to Reception.

In the policy the term 'practitioner' refers to the members of staff working with children within the setting.

## **Aims**

In the EYFS setting at Roundswell Community Primary Academy we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.

- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.
- Providing opportunities and experiences for children to become responsible and active members of the school community.

### The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Teaching in the EYFS setting at Roundswell Community Primary Academy is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage-setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five (April 2017). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates.'

At Roundswell Community Primary Academy we provide a carefully structured curriculum based on the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' we will offer provision which takes account of the differing starting points of the children in the Early Years across the seven areas of learning.

The Development Statements provide a progression from Nursery through to the end of Reception. Children are provided with activities and experiences that allow them to achieve their full developmental potential. Activities are designed to challenge and extend their skills and knowledge.

The curriculum is based around Prime and Specific areas of learning, where the three prime areas underpin all of a child's learning experiences.

The teaching within the Early Years takes into account the 'Characteristics of learning' of individual learners to ensure that they are supported and taught in ways that suit them best.

The seven areas of learning support, foster, promote and develop children's well-being and development.

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This is crucial for all aspects of life which will give the children the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning. Each child needs a positive sense of him/herself and respect for others.

#### **Communication and Language Development**

The key skills will develop confidence in communication, teaching speaking, listening and understanding in a variety of settings and purposes.

#### **Physical Development**

Children will develop the skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement both in fine motor and gross motor movement. It helps children to gain confidence and feel positive about being healthy and active. This promotes a positive feeling of well-being.

#### **Literacy**

Learners will have a wide range of books read to them and will read simple texts for themselves. Familiar books will help learners rehearse phrases and interesting vocabulary that will become part of their own speech and ultimately writing. They will also be provided with a range of opportunities for writing and mark making for a variety of purposes. The school uses the Letters and Sounds document and jolly phonics to support our teaching of phonics.

#### **Mathematics**

We will develop confidence and competence in learning and using key skills. This includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures.

#### **Understanding of the World**

Crucial skills of problem solving, exploring and understanding will help them to make sense of the world.

Foundations are developed for the later teaching of Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and I.C.T.

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. It enables children to make connections and extend their thoughts, feelings and understanding. It will include art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative activities.

## **Active Learning through Play**

At Roundswell Community Primary Academy we recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS setting at Roundswell Community Primary Academy practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. We ensure there is a mix of adult-led and child-led learning opportunities.

In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery within settings.

## **Assessment and Record Keeping**

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting at Roundswell Community Primary Academy. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs. A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept by retaining and filing their assessment data.

The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities (which include direct teaching and guided groups) and child initiated play. Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally). Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning. Observations are recorded in different formats (e.g. Observation forms, whole class grids, photographs). All practitioners are involved in observing children. Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.

Other methods of assessing children in the EYFS setting include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children's written work, talking with children about their task or play and in Learning Journeys and working with parents. Parents are given the opportunity to complete 'Wow' slips to inform the school of 'new learning' that has happened in the home. We also collect evidence from other adults working within the school and to input into children's Learning Journeys.

Learning Journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations. These are recorded using our online Learning Journey (EExAT) which tracks the children's assessment and progress. This is shared with parents using a secure login system.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook (2018). This is updated at the end of each term to track individual progress. At the end of the year it provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS Profile during the children's first six weeks upon entering the setting. Judgments made on children's development in the Profile are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all Areas of Learning and Development.

Progress and attainment against the Development Bands is tracked for all children on a whole school tracking system called EExAT (Early Excellence Assessment Tracker). This is updated termly and reports on children's development

across the 7 areas of learning and the Characteristics of Learning. School Pupil Tracker Online is also used to track children's progress in phonics throughout Reception and Nursery. Parents have access to their child's profile on EExAT and have opportunities throughout the year to look through and add to their child's Learning Journey which supports the judgements that are being made by practitioners. Parents meet with Teachers 3 times a year and a written report is created annually and presented to parents in July (for Nursery 2 children and Reception).

Internal moderation of children's evidence is undertaken 3 times a year and issues arising are fed back to the SLT.

Learning Journeys form part of the work scrutiny and planning evaluation and monitoring undertaken by the SLT on a termly basis.

The Senior Leadership team meet with teachers 3 times a year to analyse pupil progress. During this meeting cohorts are discussed and particular groups of children are tracked. Children with Special Educational Needs, children in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding and those who are seen to be 'More able' are highlighted.

## Planning

Planning takes place collaboratively between all of those working within Reception and Nursery and is used to meet children's needs socially and academically based upon observations and assessments of individual learners. It is underpinned by four themes and principles: A Unique Child, Positive Relationships, Enabling Environments and Learning and Development and the 16 commitments that support them.

- Planning will take place on a weekly basis taking into account both the needs of the children and their particular interests and learning styles whilst using the Development statements as a means of continuity and progression for their learning.
- The views of the learners are sought at the beginning of each topic to support the planning for progression in the next learning.
- The needs of the learners will be fully understood by careful observation of their play, assessment during adult led tasks and through their own self-reflection.
- The learners will be given opportunities to explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world through structured play.
- They will be given the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They will communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- The learning environment is planned for both indoors and outdoors to encourage a positive attitude to learning that is not exclusive to a classroom setting and provides different approaches and tasks to be adapted to different learning styles. The children make their own selection of the activities on offer as this encourages independent learning.
- Planning covers 3 daily direct teach sessions for Reception (topic, phonics and maths), guided groups sessions (reading, literacy/phonics and maths) and objective led planning to ensure children reach their next steps within continuous provision. In the Nursery direct teach sessions happen at the start of each new session (twice a day) and focus on topic. There are twice daily guided groups in Nursery which rotate on a weekly basis through maths, funky fingers (fine motor skills) and phonics.
- Texts that teach support every topic for children in Reception and Nursery and form the basis of topic planning ensuring all children learn through high quality texts.

We use the **EYFS Statutory Framework and EExAT objectives** to inform our planning and we have developed long term, medium term and short term plans to implement the document.

## Reading

- Each Reception child has a reading diary, which is taken home each day and serves as a record of books shared with a parent or carer. The children are encouraged to comment on the book that has been read to them. Parents and carers are encouraged to comment on the child's reactions or thoughts. The class teacher adds a written comment, twice week, in each diary.
- Banded reading books are used to support the development of reading across the class. We use both guided reading book sets and phonically decodable individual books.

## Parents as Partners

At Roundswell Community Primary Academy we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, reading records and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day. Weekly home learning suggestions are sent out which include new sounds and tricky words to practise and consolidate and an example of maths work covered in class alongside an optional activity to do at home. Termly a themed project based around Understanding the World is suggested to do at home. (see home learning policy). Whole school newsletters are also sent home on a weekly and monthly basis.

Parents are invited in to school for phonics workshops with their child, coffee afternoons and courses including Book Start and Solihull.

[Admissions to the Nursery](#) (see updated nursery policy)

### [Starting School in the Nursery](#)

Children may gain a place in our Nursery from the age of 3. There are 3 intakes of children throughout the year and parents are offered the opportunity to attend an induction meeting and make an appointment to view the school. Home visits are made to meet children in their home environment and find out about their interests. This aids a smooth transition into school.

[Admissions to Reception](#) (please see admissions policy)

### [Starting School in the Reception Class](#)

Parents and children will be invited to induction sessions where they will be able to ask questions about areas such as uniform and lunchtimes and meet members of staff. Parents are invited to an induction evening. Children are then invited for an induction morning. Please note that all pupils will enter the reception classes together regardless of birthday unless parents opt for deferred, delayed or part-time entry.

Home visits will be undertaken at this stage for parents whose child has not been in our Nursery.

### [Links with Pre School and other Nurseries](#)

Working closely with Pre Schools and Nurseries in the locality is very important in aiding a smooth transition for parents and children and plays an important role in making children feel safe and secure in a new environment. At Roundswell Community Primary Academy we do this through visits to other settings, sharing of documents and telephone conversations to ensure a smooth transition for all children.

### [Links and Transition to Y1](#)

The transition into Y1 from Foundation Stage is carried out smoothly by the development of strong links with KS1. There are several meetings concerning the compilation of class lists and information exchange. The children's attainment is shared with new teachers and the curriculum is designed to support the varying needs of the children through a continuation of EYFS provision where needed. Any exceeding judgements are agreed by both Reception teachers and Year 1 teachers in a moderation process.

Where appropriate children will continue to work towards the ELG and this will be evident within Y1 planning.

### [Links to other policies](#)

- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Home/School Agreement
- SEN
- Admissions Policy
- Home Learning Policy
- Parent Partnership Policy