



# Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

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Signature: Mark Tabbernor..... (Chair of Governors)

Print name: Mark Tabbernor.....Date: November 28<sup>th</sup> 2022

**Aims:**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parent carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

**Legislation:**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

**Structure of the EYFS:**

At Rigby Hall, pupils in Reception and Key Stage One follow the EYFS curriculum. Key Stage One classes are included in the EYFS curriculum due to the prime areas of learning better meeting their learning needs at their stage of development (Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development).

Pupils in the Reception year begin their schooling at Rigby Hall with a carefully planned transition. This includes meeting the pupils in their nursery/childminder provision prior to them starting school, gaining information from their key worker and SENCO (if applicable). Parents/carers are invited to Rigby Hall to have a tour of the environment and meet with the Early Years Lead to allow time for information to be shared and allow parents/carers opportunities for questions. Rigby Hall then hold a number of 'stay and play' sessions in the late Summer Term, for the children to explore their new environment with the security of their parent carers. Following this, during the first week of the Autumn term, home visits are carried out by two key members of staff. During these home visits, information is gathered on pupils, including likes and dislikes, how they are supported in self-regulation, medical needs, personal care needs. Home visits also allow staff the opportunity to talk through routines and structures of a school day at Rigby Hall and allow parent carers opportunities to ask questions. Following the home visits, pupils build up to a full day at school, following several half day sessions. We work with parent carers to ensure a smooth transition over the first two weeks of term. This will be tailored to the child's needs.

Pupils have opportunities to learn outdoors throughout their day. There will be as many opportunities as possible available to pupils to extend their learning through play in the outdoor environment. This is not restricted to the outdoor area (Sapling and Sycamore have their own outside space attached to the classroom), and may include the Forest School site, field, playground, as well as educational visits to the local area. Outdoor learning is recognised as important to child development, allowing them the opportunities to be active in their learning and explore all that nature has to offer in their immediate environment.

## **Curriculum:**

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2021 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

## **Planning:**

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively. Staff ensure sensory elements are included in planning to enthuse and attract pupils to learning experiences.

Learning opportunities are play based, allowing children the opportunities to discover and explore, whilst staff scaffold their learning and development.

Staff take into account the current developmental stage of each pupil and plan for learning opportunities around the individual child. Staff use observations as a basis for planning learning experiences, and make learning opportunities as exciting and engaging as possible based on the knowledge of individual learners. Next steps are identified from learning experiences, with staff being aware of these when supporting pupils in their play.

Staff are aware of the different ways pupils learn, and use this knowledge to support pupils in maximising their learning potential.

## **Teaching:**

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's

emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Staff aim to promote a love of learning through carefully planned activities and provision.

Staff support pupils in following an adult agenda over time, by using strategies such as now and next boards, as well as other visual aids. Pupils will develop this skill throughout Early Years into being able to play and work with an adult and peers in a small group, ready for learning in their later schooling years.

Staff promote Communication and Language development through every available opportunity. Staff support all pupils in their understanding of language through their use of a total communication approach (signing, as well as using objects of reference, symbols and communication aids). Staff promote a language rich environment through symbols, aided language displays and their interactions with pupils. Pupils have daily story time and song time to support their communication and language development. Staff support pupils in becoming effective communicators through close liaison with Speech and Language Therapists, developing their skills in being able to state their needs and become effective communicators. Parents and carers are regularly updated with current communication skills to promote consistency in communication approaches in both home and school.

Staff promote Personal, Social and Emotional Development through building up strong and supportive relationships with each child in their class. Pupils are supported in forming positive relationships and interactions with their peers through carefully planned activities with visual support, as well as modelling and scaffolding during their interactions throughout the day. Pupils are supported in their emotional literacy skills through regular opportunities to use the Zones of Regulation to recognise how they are feeling, as well as adults labelling basic emotional language as emotions are encountered. Pupils will learn to manage their emotions through the Zones of Regulation approach, having visual support help them to become independent in self-regulation techniques. Staff support pupils in becoming more resilient learners through their modelling and guidance and helping them to recognise their own achievements through praise and positive reward systems.

Staff promote Physical Development through carefully planned gross and fine motor skills activities. Pupils in the EYFS have weekly teaching of gross motor skills (including PE sessions), handwriting, as well as weekly cooking sessions whereby pupils are encouraged to develop their hand to eye coordination skills, explore new textures and tastes and have an increased confidence around exploring foods.

Staff promote Literacy development through daily sharing of books, song and rhyme time and mark making opportunities. For those pupils who are ready for phonics learning, they will engage in weekly systematic synthetic phonic learning through the school's Bug Club Phonics scheme. Pupils also share books individually with staff each week and parent carers are supported to engage in regular reading with their child at home.

Staff promote Mathematics development through exploring number and shape, space and measures in both discrete teaching of knowledge and skills, as well as through everyday opportunities. Staff plan learning opportunities for direct teaching of skill development in Mathematics, as well as through continuous provision activities. Pupils also explore number development each morning through play based activities.

Staff promote Understanding the World development through everyday opportunities, such as talking about the weather, exploration of sensory play, as well as through stories, songs, rhymes and small world play. Use of the outdoor environment and educational visits also support enrichment of their learning and help them to make sense of the world around them through these first hand experiences. Pupils will experience a wide range of festivals and celebrations through sensory experiences to develop their cultural knowledge.

Staff promote Expressive Arts and Design development through their exploration of media and materials. Pupils are supported through carefully planned activities to develop their use of a range of tools to create and experiment with their own pieces of work. Pupils are supported to develop their imaginary play skills through modelling and scaffolding from familiar staff. Songs, rhymes and musical instruments are explored regularly to develop a love for music.

### **Assessment:**

At Rigby Hall School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Observations are recorded using an online learning journal – Tapestry. Observations are shared with parents through this platform.

Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers, and they have the opportunity to share these using our online learning journal – Tapestry.

Learning and development is assessed using the school's assessment package: Solar. Solar assesses pupils working within EYFS with Early Years Steps (based on the Birth to 5 Matters non-statutory guidance). This assessment tool is updated regularly, with data analysed thoroughly at the end of each term by the Early Years Lead. Interventions or adaptations to teaching practice are reviewed and implemented as a result of data scrutiny. Upon enrolment at Rigby Hall, pupils are baselined during the first four weeks, using knowledge of observations and discussions with previous settings.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

For those pupils in reception, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child at the end of the reception year. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers through their end of year report.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local special schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

### **Working with parents:**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parent carers.

Parent carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development using Tapestry (online journal). Staff also write in the home-school book daily, as well as having regular conversations with parent carers. Parents evenings are held twice a year to provide formal feedback, including the sharing of assessments. Parent carers also receive an end of year report in the Summer term. This provides parents with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities throughout the year.

The class teacher is the child's key person, approving observations to be shared with parents on Tapestry, and holding parents evening meetings. Whilst the class teacher holds the overall responsibility for being the 'key person', all staff in the classroom work with the children and have positive and trusting relationships with them.

Parents and carers are invited to a EYFS curriculum knowledge evening during the first term of the academic year, sharing how we support pupils in their learning and development through all seven areas.

### **Safeguarding and welfare procedures:**

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years through role play, stories, songs, circle time and cooking lessons by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth
- The importance of a healthy diet

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

### **Monitoring arrangements:**

This policy will be reviewed by the Early Years Phase Lead every three years and be approved by the governing board.

## Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See Health and Safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See Health and Safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See Complaints policy