



Rickley Park Primary School Early Years (*Foundation*) Policy (*November 2016*)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy, Behaviour Policy, Assessment Policy, Feedback and Marking Policy, Pupil Progress Meeting Overview, Homework Policy, Curriculum Statement and the Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy.

Approved and adopted by:	Standards and School Improvement Committee
Signed by:	
Date:	April 2018
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Reviews and Amendments		
Date	Committee	Amendments
Summer 2018		Updates

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

EYFS, 2014

1. Key Values

We have the same chances. We have the same choices.

We know that everyone has something special to contribute.

We persevere and work hard, not because we are told to but because we want to improve.

We stick together for the good of all.

We look after ourselves, each other and our world by taking responsibility for our actions.

We let everybody talk and have their say.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

2.2 The Foundation Stage at Rickley Park Primary School is from age three in Nursery, to the end of the Reception year. It is a distinct stage of learning and important in its own right.

2.3 Our Foundation Stage provides an environment rich in well-planned play activities, which support the whole child's development: emotionally, intellectually, socially, physically and morally. These are the strong foundations upon which all other learning can be securely built, as the child progresses through our school.

2.4 At Rickley Park Primary School children attend the Nursery in the September after they are three. We offer funded morning daily sessions from 8.45am – 12pm. Afternoon sessions are also available between 12pm and 3pm where parents provide a packed lunch. A place at the Nursery does not give a child priority of a place in the main school. All children wanting a place in Reception must apply, through the normal LA application process and spaces will be allocated in line with the school's admission criteria. For those children who are offered a place, they are full-time the September after their fourth birthday.

3. Aims

3.1 As a school we aim to create a happy, safe environment that nurtures and supports all members of our school community which:

- ensures that everyone has the opportunity to excel irrespective of their background.
- sets every child high expectations, and provide appropriate support, so that they reach their full potential.
- provides every child with a curriculum, and the provision, to enable them to make good progress.
- develops every child's understanding of the community that they are part of.
- promotes seamless learning, and positive attitudes, between home and school;
- creates a happy, safe environment that nurtures and supports all members of our school community.
- equips each child with the knowledge to make good choices regarding their behaviour, safety, well-being and lifestyle.
- values that we are part of a diverse community, respecting the differences as well as the similarities.
- develops confident children who are able to articulate their views and reflect on the views of others.

3.2 The specific aims of the Early Years policy are:

- To establish positive relationships between children, parents and Foundation staff.
- To establish a caring, co-operative environment enabling children to feel happy and secure.
- To enable pupils to develop self-confidence, independence and resilience to obtain satisfaction and a sense of achievement at each stage of their development.

- To help children to develop lively, enquiring minds, the ability to question and argue rationally and to apply themselves to a variety of tasks and physical skills.
- To provide an exciting broad and balanced curriculum based on first-hand experience and practical activity and allow for the individual needs of the child.
- To foster links and understanding between the school, parents and the wider community.
- To develop and maintain positive links with Pre-School groups.
- To ensure continuity and progression from entry into Nursery through Reception class and into Year 1.

3. Teaching and Learning in the Foundation Stage

3.1 In planning and guiding children's activities practitioners take account of the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

3.2 We ensure that effective teaching and learning will be promoted by application of the following features of good practice:

- Establishing a partnership between parents and teachers to ensure that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- Well-planned opportunities for first hand experimental learning through play.
- Clearly communicated intended learning outcomes and appropriate interventions to extend and develop play.
- Opportunities for children to plan and initiate activities that build on and extend their interests.
- Encouraging children to communicate and discuss their learning to develop their social and intellectual use of language.
- Ensuring a carefully planned curriculum which covers the content of all seven areas of learning.
- Providing support for learning with the use of appropriate indoor and out-door space, facilities and equipment.
- Monitoring progress and identifying future learning needs of children through observations.
- Establishing clear evaluation methods to monitor and improve teaching and learning.
- Identifying training needs of all adults working within the Foundation Stage.

3.3 The curriculum is planned to ensure that all children have an opportunity to progress towards the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Key Stage 1. During the Foundation Stage individuals will progress at varying rates, and some may be supported by a range of activities that are contained in the National Curriculum for children in Year 1.

4. The Foundation Stage Curriculum.

4.1.1 There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

4.1.2 Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

4.1.3 Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Knowledge of the world
- Expressive arts and design

4.1.4 We deliver learning for all of the areas through purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play, children learn at their highest level.”

EYFS, Play & Exploration

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.

4.2 Prime Areas

4.2.1 Communication and Language

Right from the start young children have a strong urge to communicate. The development of the spoken word is important for all language development. The ability to communicate gives children the capacity to participate more fully in their society.

The children will:

- Learn to talk confidently to adults and each other.
- Learn to listen attentively in a range of situations.
- Respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions.
- Follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
- Answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about their experiences and in response to stories and events.

This area of learning includes communication, speaking and listening in different situations; being read a wide range of books, reading simple texts and writing for a variety of purposes. Every day children will have the opportunity to talk about their own experiences and listen to others, share books with adults and friends and develop early writing skills.

4.2.2 Personal Social and Emotional Development

Successful personal, social and emotional development is critical for young children in all aspects of their lives and gives them the best opportunity for success in all areas of learning.

The children will:

- Be encouraged to play and co-operate with others, sharing resources and taking turns.
- Develop independence in personal hygiene, dressing and undressing.
- Have opportunities to develop an awareness of their own individuality and take pride in this.
- Become aware of, and begin to respect, the feelings of other children in their play and behaviour.
- Learn to follow rules and know the difference between right and wrong.
- Form positive relationships and develop confidence.

- Develop positive cultural attitudes.

4.2.3 Physical Development

Physical development in the foundation stage is about improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. These are required in all areas of the children's learning, from manipulation skills, to other activities that require hand eye co-ordination, such as writing and reading. Physical development helps children become healthy, active and gain confidence in what they can do, which in turn develops a positive sense of well-being.

The children will:

- Develop gross motor skills through a variety of movements.
- Develop fine motor skills by working with malleable materials and construction toys etc.
- Use a variety of equipment.
- Be aware of the changes in their bodies.

4.3 Specific Areas

4.3.1 Literacy

Early Literacy skills form the basis for reading and writing.

In **Reading** the children will:

- Be encouraged to talk about books, to retell known stories to adults and other children
- To demonstrate understanding when using non-fiction texts.
- Develop their phonic skills through Phase 1 activities of 'Letters and Sounds' in Nursery and then the systematic daily teaching of sounds based on activities from 'Letters and Sounds' (*Phases 1/2- 4/5 as appropriate*) in Reception.

In **Writing** the children will:

- Use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds.
- Experiment with writing regular and irregular common words.
- Begin to write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.

4.3.2 Mathematics

This area of learning and development in the foundation stage is based on practical activities and experiences, which form part of the routine. Through play, games and adult led activities the children will learn to count, sort and match, make patterns and connections, work with numbers, shapes and measures. In applying their skills to achieve a goal, children develop useful strategies such as problem solving, logical thinking and estimating.

The children will:

- Join in with number games and rhymes.
- Learn to use mathematical vocabulary for calculating, size, capacity, weight, position, time and money.
- Count, sort and match real things.
- Recognise and learn the value of numbers.

4.3.3 Understanding the World

This area of learning and development forms the foundation for science, design and technology, history, geography and information technology. The children are able to explore, observe and find out about the world around them, about past events in their own lives and different cultures and beliefs.

The activities are based on first hand experiences that encourage exploration, observation, problem solving, decision-making, prediction, critical thinking and discussion.

The children will:

- Explore their environment.
- Care for living things.
- Be aware of change.
- Solve problems, predict and make informed decisions.

4.3.4 Expressive arts and design

This area of learning and development includes art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. We aim to give children the opportunities to express themselves in a variety of media and forms. Children are helped to represent ideas of what they see, touch, feel and hear; responding by model making, painting, music making, dancing, singing and role-play. Skills that are taught enable them to gain greater control over the materials that they use.

The children will:

- Explore and experiment with different materials.
- Experience colour, texture and shape.
- Listen to music and sing songs and nursery rhymes.
- Have experiences of different cultures.
- Respond to activities using many senses.

5. The Outdoor Learning Environment

5.1 The outdoor area is an essential learning and teaching environment that should offer children opportunities to use a different range of equipment to those generally in use indoors.

5.2 The children are able to move freely from indoors to outdoors throughout the day. This learning environment is planned for separately as an extension of the indoor environment.

6. Partnership with Parents

6.1 We believe that all parents have an important role in the education of their children and that information shared during the induction process forms a very important part of the initial monitoring of pupil progress, in all areas of development, and contributes to an effective partnership with parents.

6.2 At Rickley Park we nurture this very important relationship with the following:

- Open afternoons with Nursery staff and Early Years Leader to look around the setting and register their child
- Entry profile that parents/carers complete with the child's key person.
- Information packs for parents to support transition into Nursery.
- Parent / carer's notice board.
- Curriculum overview each term including suggestions of how parents/carers can support their child's learning.
- 'Sharing Stars' to celebrate achievements at home and at school.
- Open door policy for sharing concerns early.
- Parents/carers accompany their child into their group at the beginning of the session/day and help them to settle before leaving.
- Online Learning Journeys that parents can see and contribute observations and photos to.
- Parent consultation meetings (*termly, or more frequently as required*).

7. Transition

7.1 Starting Nursery

At Rickley Park our induction programme for children starting into our Nursery includes the following:

- Once a place has been offered, parents are invited to attend a meeting, during the summer term about the Nursery. Parents receive an information pack giving detailed information about the Nursery, the date of their child's home visit and start date.
- Parents are invited to bring their children to an Open Morning towards the end of the summer term. The children are free to join in with the sessions. Parents meet with the child's key-person and have the opportunity to discuss any concerns that they may have.
- In September, before the sessions begin, the child's key-person and an additional Nursery practitioner visit the child's home. This allows an exchange of up-to-date information about the child to take place and to see the child at their most relaxed within their home environment. This visit also helps the child feel secure in having welcomed their key-person into their home and is familiar with us before they start at the Nursery.
- Children start Nursery in small groups of 3 and 4 in each key group staggered over a short induction period until the groups are complete.
- If the children are unsettled, parents are encouraged to stay with them until they feel more confident. Staff work alongside parents and children to help with the smooth transition from home to Nursery.

7.2 Moving to full-time education in Reception.

- Information is shared between Foundation staff to allocate children to their new classes. This takes account of the knowledge that the Nursery staff have of the children and their needs. Progress, achievement and pertinent information are shared by the key person and the YR teachers.
- Reception staff will visit the children in Nursery and play and talk to them in their familiar setting.
- Nursery staff will accompany the children to visit Reception class for short periods to look around, play and familiarise themselves with the area.
- In the Summer term there are frequent opportunities for Nursery and YR children to play together, the internal gate is opened and the children have access to both areas.
- Foundation Stage Leader will make arrangements for staff to visit children who will be joining the school from other settings, and reciprocal visits to our school are offered.
- Parents are invited to a meeting, led by the Foundation Team, where the induction process, the ethos and expectations of Reception, the curriculum and the daily routines are explained.
- Parents are given a 'Starting School Information Pack', which includes a Home-School Agreement and a range of materials for supporting early learning. It also includes a booklet detailing school routines, information about uniform and curriculum.
- During the Summer term, all children are invited, with their parents to an Open Afternoon where they will meet many of their new classmates and be able to play and chat to staff and other parents.
- In September, the child's teacher and a TLSA visit the child's home. This allows an exchange of up-to-date information about the child to take place and to see the child at their most relaxed within their home environment.
- Children are admitted in September, in small, staggered groups over two weeks until each class is complete. The children start full-time unless discussion between parents and staff decide that this would not be in the best interests of the child. In this case there would be flexibility on the part of the school to allow both parents and children to gain confidence in what we have to offer them.
- Parents can access and contribute to online Learning Journeys, documenting observations, photographs and attainment.
- There are regular formal and informal opportunities for parents to discuss their children and we welcome parental support in the classroom.

8. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

8.1 The school Special Needs Policy and the English as a Second Language Policy will be applied throughout the Foundation Stage.

8.2 We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the diverse needs of all the children. We consider the range of life experiences and the needs of individuals when planning. These include children who have special needs, those who are more able, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and different ethnic groups.

8.3 We aim to ensure that resources reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community and the wider world.

9. Assessment

9.1 Nursery

9.1.1 Children are assessed when they enter Nursery using information provided by parents, previous settings and observations made by staff. The outcomes create a baseline judgement for each child in each area of learning.

9.1.2 Each child has an online Learning Journey file which contains observations and photographs as evidence of progress, and form the basis of planning for next steps in learning. Parents can contribute information and photos about home learning.

9.1.3 Children's progress in all areas, including their well-being and involvement (using the Leuven Scale) are assessed and monitored regularly. These judgements inform the planning of activities and opportunities to support the child's progress.

9.1.4 Records are transferred to the child's Reception class teacher at whichever school they are going to. Visits from teachers from other schools are welcomed to share information and assist the smooth transition to a new school. Parents also receive an annual written report detailing their child's progress in Nursery.

9.2 Reception

9.2.1 Children in Reception are assessed, taking into account the information sent through with them from Nursery, from other settings, from initial discussions and Profile information from parents and by observations made by staff.

9.2.2 As the children demonstrate their learning, photographs and observations are made, and cross-referenced to the Early Years Foundation Stage Record statements. They are then used to build up a Learning Journey, in conjunction with discussion with parents which are used, as an evidence base, to inform the Early Years Profile at the end of YR.

9.2.3 The outcomes for individuals and groups are monitored regularly to inform planning and to highlight areas of strength and also areas that require extra intervention.

9.2.4 Observations and judgements against the Early Years Foundation Stage Record are regularly monitored and moderated internally within the staff team, externally with other schools within the Bletchley Moderation Group and by the local authority.

9.2.5 Parents receive an annual written report at the end of the year which is based on the information collated for the Early Years Profile and details their child's progress in all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum.

9.2.6 All data and relevant information are shared with Y1 teachers. Transition arrangements include regular visits for the children into Y1 classes during the Summer term and Y1 teachers working with the children in Reception. Teachers share information and moderate together throughout the year to ensure groupings and levels of work are accurately matched

for a smooth transition into KS1 and so that children are very well prepared for their next stage of their education in KS1.