

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's individual Early Years Policies.

Introduction

In Rainham Mark Education Trust, our Foundation Stage Classes have children from the ages of 3-5.

All children begin school or nursery with a wide variety of experiences and learning and it is important for the adults working in the Foundation Stage to accept the task of building upon that prior learning experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning ensuring that parents and guardians and the Foundation Stage teamwork effectively together to support the learning and development of the children in their care.

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 parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

The Foundation Stage Curriculum

Our early years settings follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. However, three 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 four specific areas:

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

Through creating an enabling environment both inside and out and planning engaging activities we make sure each of these areas are covered and meet the needs of all the children.

Achievement in these prime and specific areas of learning is supported by monitoring how the children learn. These are the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and Exploring.

- Active Learning.
- Creating and Thinking Critically.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively across all areas. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the three prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. Activities provided are a mixture of adult led and child initiated and take place both inside and outside.

Assessment in the EYFS is ongoing and can include recorded observations, discussions with adults and photos. This involves the teacher and other adults in the setting as appropriate. These are collected together in a child's Learning Journey.

At regular intervals throughout the year, we assess the children's learning and track their progress and attainment against the Development Matters age bands. This includes an On Entry assessment and assessment against the Early Learning Goals at the end of the EYFS. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting **expected** levels of development
- **Exceeding** expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels (**'emerging'**)

This is then shared with parents at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Home and School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the schools, parents, and carers to work closely together.

Intimate Care

"Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet, changing a nappy and changing underwear following an accident.

Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Ongoing intimate care, for example nappy changing, is given with written permission by the parent or guardian of the child when they join the Foundation unit. On occasion, children will need intimate care, for example following a toileting accident. When this is the case, parents are informed on the day that this care has taken place.

Monitoring

There is regular monitoring of the EYFS. This is carried out by either the Headteacher, EYFS lead, SLT or Governors.

Monitoring with schools within the trust takes place to moderate our judgements and ensure they are accurate and consistent.

Safeguarding

All staff have a current DBS and follow the Trust's safe guarding policy and any concerns are raised with a DSL.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual.