

RAMSEY MANOR LOWER SCHOOL **FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY**

Ramsey Manor Lower School is committed to safeguarding children and providing a safe, secure and healthy environment for them.

Ramsey Manor Lower School is a Values Education School. Our Values underpin everything we do.

Introduction

The Foundation Stage applies to children from age three years to the end of the Reception Year. At Ramsey Manor Lower School children join us the term after their fourth birthday. Key Stage One begins at the beginning of Year One. In Year R children receive The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The 17 Early Learning goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of their Reception year.

When children start school they have already learnt a great deal. Many have been to a pre-school setting. The Early Years education we offer is based on the following principles:

- it builds on what our children already know and can do;
- it ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- it offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points;
- content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- it provides a rich and stimulating environment.

Philosophy

We believe that all children entering our Early Years provision should receive a wide ranging curriculum with good breadth, balance and relevance, differentiated to meet their individual needs. We believe that learning should always be motivating and stimulating, generating success, confidence and security. We believe that our links with home should be strong to allow for the children's previous experiences and interests to be reflected in our planning and to allow relationships with parents to flourish. We believe in equal opportunities for all

children and our entry procedure and practice reflects this. Our approach ensures that the EYFS meets the aim of improving outcomes and reflects that it is every child's right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being.

Characteristics of young learners

Our practice is underpinned by the following five statements:

- A Unique Child - every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Positive Relationships - children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships
- Enabling Environments - the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- Play - through play our children explore and develop the learning experiences that help them make sense of the world; they practise and build up their ideas, learn how to control themselves, and begin to understand the need for rules; they have the opportunity to think creatively both alongside other children and on their own; they communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems; they express fears or re-live anxious experiences, in controlled and safe situations.
- Learning and Development - children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates; all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

Organisation

Equality of Opportunity

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our their range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. We set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Admission, induction and entry

Children are offered a full time place the term after their fourth birthday, although, compulsory schooling starts the term after their fifth birthday.

An Open Day is held in the year prior to that of the children starting school, so that parents and children can come and spend time in the setting while the current cohort are there, to look round, talk to staff and children and see how the day is run.

Parents are then invited to attend an evening meeting in the summer term before their child starts school when the curriculum and the daily routines and organisation of Rainbow Class are outlined. They are also offered the chance to sign up for a home visit which takes place in the ten days prior to their child starting school in September. We have found, to date, that all parents take up this offer.

The children are invited to spend a morning in Rainbow Class in July. Their parents are welcome to stay with them, or leave if their child is happy for them to do so.

The Rainbow Class Teachers visit Barton Pre-School in the summer term to see the children and discuss any issues with colleagues already working with them.

During the first two weeks of term we make home visits to the children. This enables them to meet us in the security of home. They show us their toys and pets and we are then familiar to them when they start school the following week. It also enables their parents to discuss any concerns they have in private. We take the opportunity to ask if we may borrow any Pre-School records of progress so that we may plan a smooth continuation to their learning.

We have a staggered entry over the period of a week. The children with summer birthdays start first as they benefit from having the extra support we can give to a small group. Then two days later the children with spring birthdays join them and finally two days later the children with autumn birthdays start.

Starting and finishing times

The doors open at 8.50am and the children come in as they arrive. They organise their belongings, register themselves on the Smartboard and find a 'finger learning' activity to do while the registers are completed. The doors close at 9.00am.

School finishes at 3.15pm. Parents/carers come to the Rainbow playground to collect their children where we hand them to the person nominated to collect them. We have a Parents' Book which is available in the morning and we ask parents to write in it if someone other than usual will be collecting their child.

The Environment

The classroom is well organised and designed to give the children space to move about between the different play activities safely and with ease. We encourage the children to become autonomous and independent

by ensuring that resources and equipment are accessible to them. Displays promote, support and reflect children's current interests and are changed frequently.

Structure of the day

We encourage the children to be as independent as possible at all times. They start their day by organising their belongings and registering themselves, indicating what they will be having for lunch.

We have a short time for daily organisational routines followed by Assembly if it is one that is appropriate for our children.

The majority of the children's day is based on self-initiated play, but during the morning they receive a twenty minute whole class Literacy session and a twenty minute whole class Maths session. Over a two week period they will all undertake a short adult led Literacy and Numeracy task working in small groups.

Indoor and Outdoor provision

The children have free access to both the indoor and outdoor classrooms.

Both classrooms are organised to offer access to the seven Areas of Learning and are designed to give the children first hand experiences and independence to choose the resources and materials that they need for their play.

Snack and lunchtime provision

We are a Healthy School and the snacks that we provide for the children reflect this. The children make their own snacks from recipes which we provide. There are two different recipes each week and if they do not like one of them there are always breadsticks or cheese twists for them to have instead. They pour their own drinks and wash up after themselves.

We are part of the free fruit scheme and after lunch each day the children sit together to eat their fruit and have 'Show and Tell' time or story.

Lunchtime starts at 12 noon and the children can choose to have a school dinner or a packed lunch. The school meals are cooked on the premises. Rainbow Class eat in the hall, but go in before the majority of the school, and have the same two MSAs throughout the year so the children feel more secure at lunchtimes.

Group organisation

We have provision for fifty eight children and they are organised into two registration groups, Stars and Diamonds. They are in those groups for registration times and whole class teaching sessions, otherwise all the children mix freely. Each class has a teacher and the provision also has a full time HLTA and a full time TA. We share the supervision of the children. There is always one member of staff working outside with the children, two working inside on adult led tasks and another working inside observing and extending their learning.

During self initiated activities the children work with whoever they want to. During adult led activities they work in a variety of ways- whole class, small groups (up to five children) and in pairs. They read to us individually or in a small group.

Trips and Visits

We try to give the children a variety of experiences both in and out of school. We walk to the local church and visit a farm to support our topic work. We also invite members of organisations in the community in to share their experiences with the children. These include the local vicar, fire fighters, police, doctor, vet and a grandparent.

Medical issues

When the children start school their parents complete a form giving their contact details and indicating if their child has any medical conditions or allergies. These forms are kept in the school office. A list of children with allergies is kept in the classroom.

If a child is unwell the parent is informed and a member of staff cares for the child until the parent arrives.

If a child bangs their head in school the parent is always contacted and given the option of collecting their child or coming to check on them.

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Curriculum of the EYFS underpins all future learning by supporting, promoting and developing:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional well-being;
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Teaching and learning

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our Teaching and Learning Policy. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in the rest of the school.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;

- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

The Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum is planned to provide a range of activities and experiences through which children have opportunities to make choices and decisions, manipulate materials, use language for a variety of reasons and receive appropriate adult support and guidance.

The curriculum is organised in seven areas of learning, three **prime areas** and four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical development**

- **Personal, social and emotional development**
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

These seven areas help us to plan within an overall curriculum framework thereby ensuring development for all children in all areas of the curriculum. For the children, however, learning is holistic and cannot be compartmentalised. One experience may provide children with opportunities to develop a range of competences, skills and concepts across several areas of learning.

The areas of learning are further broken down into 17 Early Learning Goals, which most children are expected to achieve by the end of the EYFS. We plan a curriculum supported by the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy, which will help children make good progress towards, and where appropriate beyond, these goals.

We plan together to ensure progression and continuity. The learning experiences will offer a balance of adult supported, adult directed and child initiated activities. They will also allow for a variety of learning styles e.g. individual, small or large group.

Planning

Successful planning involves clear perceptions about the objectives of the curriculum and how different activities can contribute towards their achievement.

Curriculum planning is related to:

- the children's stage of development
- individual needs
- the Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage
- assessment and progression

Planning involves all members of the team to ensure a continuity of expectation and understanding of the individual stages of a child's learning.

Planning is seen as a continuous process. Learning intentions are identified and supporting experiences and activities are planned. Adults observe children's responses to these activities and use this knowledge to promote and extend learning. There is a continuous cycle involving planning, observing and assessing.

Planning process

1. Long term curriculum planning, which is part of the whole school planning, ensures continuity, progression and coverage
2. Medium term planning, which identifies broad learning intentions for all areas of learning, assessment opportunities and differentiation.
3. Short term planning shows specific learning intentions, supporting activities and daily organisation. It identifies in more detail differentiation and assessment and opportunities for observation, this then feeds back into future planning needs.

Staffing, equipment and resources

The role of the Coordinator is:

- to exemplify good Early Years practice
- to maintain the shared philosophy and ethos
- to be responsible for the general management of Rainbow Class
- to be ultimately responsible for Health and Safety within Rainbow Class
- to ensure teamwork
- to support staff
- to meet the children' needs by ensuring that high standards are maintained in all aspects of Rainbow class
- to ensure that the curriculum planned is broad, balanced and appropriate
- to take ultimate responsibility for all documentation
- to initiate improvements
- to keep abreast of professional and legal developments in Early Years practice
- to attend relevant professional development courses
- to ensure that all practice within Rainbow Class is in line with the authority and national guidelines of good practice and with curriculum documents published for Early Years
- to support the training of students

The role of the Teachers is:

- to uphold the shared philosophy and ethos
- to contribute to the planning of the curriculum and share the associated documentation
- to be responsible for teaching a group of children
- to maintain the environment to a good standard
- to exemplify standards of behaviour, respect and presentation
- to be aware of Health and Safety issues
- to contribute to the team in a wider sense during discussion, monitoring, assessment, developments and initiatives
- to keep abreast of professional and legal developments in Early Years education

- to attend relevant professional courses

The role of the HLTA is:

- to uphold the shared philosophy and ethos
- to work as a member of the team in planning and developing appropriate learning experiences
- to maintain the environment to a good standard
- to exemplify standards of behaviour, respect and presentation
- to contribute to the team in a wider sense during discussion, monitoring, assessment, developments and initiatives
- to provide general care
- to attend relevant professional courses

The role of the Teaching Assistants is:

- to uphold the shared philosophy and ethos
- to work as a member of the team
- to maintain the environment to a good standard
- to exemplify standards of behaviour, respect and presentation
- to contribute to the team in a wider sense during discussion, monitoring, assessment, developments and initiatives
- to provide general care
- to attend relevant professional courses

Resources

Rainbow Class consists of two large interconnecting rooms, a smaller 'quiet room', a kitchen area, an area for the children to make and eat their own snacks and wash up afterwards, two cloakroom areas toilets and a large outside area. Equipment is carefully maintained and replaced regularly. The children are taught to treat resources responsibly.

Rainbow Class has its own budget for the replacement of disposable items.

We ask for a weekly voluntary contribution of £1 from parents to pay for snacks, cookery items and technology materials. This accumulates over time and allows us to buy extra equipment, eg microwave for Home Corner etc.

The PTA periodically fund large purchases, eg the climbing frame.

The school collects Tesco and Sainsbury vouchers and a proportion of the amount collected are allocated to Rainbow Class. We use these to increase our ICT equipment and to buy wheeled toys etc.

Observation and Assessment

During their first half term in school we assesses the ability of each child, using the Foundation Stage Profile. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort in order to inform our planning for

individual children and groups of children.

Assessment and record keeping, informed by careful observations, enables us to plan a curriculum that will meet the needs of individuals and ensure effective continuity and progression. Observations and assessments are built into the planning process.

The observation and assessment of children's learning helps to:

- inform planning
- ensure obstacles to learning are identified and responded to
- provide an all round picture of the child's development
- provide information which can be used to evaluate the quality of curriculum provision

Evidence of children's progress and achievement is collected through:

- observations, both formal and of a targeted child
- questioning and interaction
- samples of work
- talking to parents and colleagues

All members of team are involved in the observation process.

We complete an assessment each term, and then update the Foundation Stage Profile. We share the information contained in the Foundation Stage Profile at our parental consultation meetings. At the end of the final term in reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LEA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to inform their planning for the year ahead.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

'Parents are children's first and most enduring educators'

We value and greatly enjoy the relationships we establish with parents of children in our care. We believe that a partnership between parents/carers and the adults involved in the child's learning are crucial. We build on what children already know and parents are our first port of call for this crucial information. We believe in creating an atmosphere, which is welcoming to parents, which makes them feel appreciated and encourages an all-important two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

- All children and parents have the opportunity to spend time with the teacher, meet other children and become more familiar with the setting

prior to starting the school. This results in an easier transition and a smoother settling in period.

- At the Home Visit, alongside the teacher, the parents discuss and complete an information sheet which informs 'The Foundation Stage Profile'. This helps to provide a clearer picture of the overall child and enables us to learn about the family as a whole, and more about what motivates their child.
- We offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in formal meetings.
- On an informal daily basis, we encourage parents to talk to class teachers and support staff about any concerns they may have and share any information that they feel that is relevant to their child.
- Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to our assessment process by recording observations of their child's progress or achievements on our 'Good News' slips, which are included on newsletters and are available on the Learning Platform.
- We encourage parents to accompany children on visits and to help out in classroom.
- We provide a weekly newsletter identifying what we will be doing that week and including suggestions about how parents can support their children's learning at home.
- The children invite their parents to look round the classroom with them on the last Tuesday or Thursday of the month to show them what they have achieved.

Transfer

The Year One teachers spend a morning in Rainbow Class during the summer term to familiarise themselves with the children and vice versa.

The children spend a morning in their new classroom with their new teacher.

The Rainbow and Year One teachers meet and discuss each child, sharing their strengths, needs and any personal information that is likely to affect their well being in school.

The children's assessment records are passed to their next teacher.

Evaluation and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body. It will be evaluated and reviewed every year.