



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Approved by: Full Governing Body

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Signed: Chair: Mr. C Harris

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy – 2026 - 2027

Aims

- To provide children with a happy, positive and fun start to their school life allowing them to establish solid foundations on which they can expand and develop a deep love of learning.
- To offer each child a wide range of exciting experiences and give them the opportunity to consolidate, explore and investigate alongside their own personal experiences.
- To enable each child, through encouragement, guidance and high expectations, to reach their full potential socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally.
- To offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited opportunities for development.
- To encourage children to develop independence within a loving, secure and friendly atmosphere.
- To support children in building relationships with their peers and adults.
- To help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements by experiencing success and developing the confidence to work towards their next steps.

The Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected, but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3). These prime areas support the specific areas of learning.

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and Language** (Listening, Attention and Understanding, and Speaking)
- **Physical Development** (Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills)
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** (Managing Self, Self-regulation and Making Relationships)

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. The specific areas are:

- **Literacy** (Comprehension, Word Reading and Writing)
- **Mathematics** (Number and Numerical Patterns)
- **Understanding the World** (Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities)
- **Expressive Arts and Design** (Creating Materials and Being Imaginative and Expressive)

The planning and guiding of the children's work will reflect upon the different ways that children learn. The three characteristics of 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 achieving.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – children have and develop their own ideas; make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Our topics offer a broad and balance curriculum carefully planned to build on our children's previous knowledge and skills. Topics give our children the best possible start in life by providing them with a range of experiences to prepare them for future success.

Pedagogy

Child Led Learning

At Reddal Hill, we will consider the individual needs, interests and stages of development for each child. The curriculum will be delivered through a mixture of adult-led, adult directed and child-initiated learning opportunities. These opportunities are clearly defined on the class timetables. In EYFS, we have separate planning for adult-led and continuous provision opportunities. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to come and complete a task or game with them; at other times they will participate in a child's game, extending it where possible. Adults use daily notes, observations and interactions with children to inform the planning. Weekly plans are displayed in the individual classrooms.

By the final term in reception, the children will experience many more adult-led tasks as they prepare for their transition to Year 1 (See Foundation to Key Stage One Transition Policy).

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. At Reddal Hill, we have two one-hour continuous provision sessions, entitled Discovery Time, each day. During this time, children free flow between different areas of learning. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world around them. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically, alongside other children, as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experience at their own level and pace. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending play.

Adult-Led Learning

At Reddal Hill, we carefully plan adult-led experiences for children in the form of structured adult-led teaching and adult-led group activities.

In nursery, opportunities are carefully planned to allow for daily phonics, maths, Word Aware and WellComm activities. Other learning opportunities, i.e. fine and gross motor opportunities, expressive arts and design and understanding the world are provided throughout the week.

In reception, opportunities are carefully planned to allow for daily phonics, reading, writing, Word Aware, Kinetic Letters and maths. Other learning opportunities, i.e. expressive arts and design, understanding the world and fine motor and gross motor activities are provided throughout the week. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge, and it is often through children's play, that we see how much of this learning children have understood and can apply in different situations.

In nursery and reception, stories and singing are an important part of the day. We want to make sure our children have a love of books and songs, and will leave the EYFS with a bank of stories and songs that they know well. We have daily story time in nursery and opportunities for two story time sessions, each day, in reception and our writing sessions, in reception, are structured around a focus text. Every child is given their own book bag with a reading book to share / read at home. The children's reading books are changed throughout the week. Adults aim to listen to all children read at least once during the week.

Classroom Organisation

Our classrooms have defined areas with clearly labelled resources to ensure children can access them independently. Across EYFS, we provide children with experiences and activities in all of the seven areas of learning. Children have access to a writing area, maths area, creative area, book corner, role play area, construction area, small world area, and carpeted teaching area. A variety of activities are planned for and set up in the different areas each day.

Each child has their own labelled peg in their classroom. We encourage children to take responsibility for keeping their clothes and book bags safely in one place!

Assessment

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in the EYFS. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting upon those observations.

To ensure we provide parents with regular updates regarding their child's progress in the EYFS, learning opportunities are shared weekly via the ClassDojo APP. Staff have iPads, which are used to capture

observations of learning and the activities provided within the environment. All iPads are password protected.

On entry to nursery and reception, we carry out a baseline assessment for each child. Throughout the Early Years, the class teacher submits end of term assessment data to the Headteacher showing each child's development across the areas of learning. Progress and next steps are shared with parents / carers through termly at Parents' / Carers' Evenings.

At the end of reception, the class teacher assesses each child against the seventeen Early Learning Goals (ELG) and comments on whether their development, within each ELG, is either 'emerging' or 'expected'. This information is also communicated to parents and carers in the reception child's end of year report and can be discussed in the final Parents / Carers' Evening in reception.

Staff Roles

Each child in EYFS has a named key worker. Their role is to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs. All adults within the Early Years setting actively seek to form positive, respectful relationships with the children in their care. The formation of healthy relationships between adults and children is essential in enabling children's well-being and their future successes. There are rare occasions when significant adults cannot be in the class and we aim to be consistent in who covers these absences.

Partnership with Parents / Carers

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore, we work very closely to ensure that they are involved in what we do with their child at school. We want parents / carers to feel they can speak to us about their child at any time and feel comfortable in our setting. As well as the nursery and reception home visits, we offer Inspire workshops and other sessions for parents, such as trips.

Attendance

Parents/ carers must notify the school office if a child will be absent. Unexplained or prolonged absences will be proactively investigated by office staff, the Parent Support Advisor or Senior Leaders. If contact cannot be established or concerns arise, matters will be escalated to local Children's Social Care or statutory services as appropriate. Every child enrolled at the setting must have a minimum of two valid emergency contact numbers recorded on file.

Special Educational Needs / Disability

Children new to the EYFS with Special Educational Needs and / or a Disability (SEND), will be referred to the Assistant Headteacher of Inclusion. The Assistant Headteacher of Inclusion and other agencies will support teachers to ensure that all children's needs are met (See whole school SEND Policy and SEND

Information Report). If a parent or teacher has a concern about the progress or development of a child, this will also be referred to the Assistant Headteacher of Inclusion using an initial concerns form. The Assistant Headteacher of Inclusion will work closely with the parents and staff to monitor the child's progress and ensure that strategies are put in place to allow the child to make progress.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. At Reddal Hill, the staff always take necessary steps to keep children safe and well. Every door within the EYFS Department has keypad locks, so only adults that are permitted have access to this area. The outdoor area has CCTV, which is monitored daily.

The EYFS staff will report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within the school. Such issues will be addressed following the whole school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Please see whole school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information).

We regularly provide our children with the opportunity to learn how to keep themselves safe. We use play-based opportunities and stories to educate children about stranger danger, road safety, medicine safety, sun safety and internet safety etc.

The staff, on a daily basis, check all large climbing equipment and the outdoor environment. All small equipment and toys are checked throughout daily activities and any damages or repairs are addressed immediately. There is an annual internal and external check of equipment. The Site Manager checks all electrical equipment visually, each month, and Portable Appliance Testing is carried out annually. Regular fire testing and drills are carried out following the whole school policy (See whole school Fire Policy). Weekly shower flushes are carried out by the Site Manager in line with Legionella regulations (See Local Authority Legionella Policy).

As outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2026), banned dog breeds (meaning dogs to which section 1 of the Dangerous Dog Act 1991 applies including the XL Bully) will not be present on the premises at any time.

IPads / Mobile Phone / Camera / Video Use

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. This is in line with the whole school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in children's individual books, floor books, on class displays and on ClassDojo/ school website. All parents / carers are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used throughout school on the paperwork in their initial admission packs.

The EYFS staff will maintain records and share information with parents and relevant agencies. However, all necessary steps will be taken to protect the privacy of the children and information will be handled in a way that ensures confidentiality (See whole school GDPR Policy).

Screen Use

Evidence shows that screens can have a big impact on children and their development in the early years. DfE advice states that screen use should be avoided for under 2s and limited to up to an hour a day for children aged 2 to 5. As an Early Years setting, we take a precautionary approach to using screens by limiting screen use for children, only using it carefully and intentionally, for specific learning and development aims.

Restricting time children spend on screens at home and in the setting supports healthy child development, which requires sufficient sleep, play, real-world interaction and responsive adult engagement. Screen exposure will be minimal, purposeful, age-appropriate, and directly supported by an adult. Children will not use screens unsupervised. Content will be slow-paced, educational, and advert-free, as outlined by the Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, DfE, Screen Use guidance (2006).

Some children with Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities or English as an additional language may need a more tailored approach when it comes to screen use. This includes children with communication challenges which may or may not be diagnosed. Screen-based assistive technology can be an important tool to help these children and families communicate, take part in everyday activities, and create an inclusive learning environment. Staff will use professional judgement to determine whether assistive technologies will support children's learning on a case-by-case basis.

Health and Well-Being

Reddal Hill EYFS follows the whole school policy with regards to the health and well-being of children. Parents / carers are encouraged, where possible, to administer prescription medication themselves. Many parents come into school, at dinnertime, to give children a required dosage of their medication. Any medication, e.g. inhalers, given by staff must be recorded and signed for in the individual class medication folder located in each room. All medication is stored in the medical cabinets in individual classrooms.

All EYFS staff are paediatric first aid trained. We take all accidents seriously and always record incidents in the first aid book located in disabled toilet. First aid is kept in the cabinet also in the disabled toilet. We have cold compresses stored in the freezer. Children are given a note if they receive any first aid treatment, which is sent home on the same day.

Children are encouraged to dress appropriately depending on the season / weather. During warm weather, children are encouraged to wear a sun hat and sun cream. Children can bring sun cream into school in a labelled bottle and will be encouraged to re-apply it throughout the day. Children will also

be given extra water and encouraged to sit in shaded areas in warmer weather. We also provide waterproof suits for outdoor play on rainy days.

We encourage all children to start school without nappies / pull-ups, but will support any children struggling with this (See Sandwell's Toileting Guidance and the school's Intimate Care Policy). We acknowledge that young children often have toileting accidents. We request that parents send children with a change of clothing in case of accidents.

In line with the **DfE's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Nutrition Guidance, 2025**, Reddal Hill recognises that the early childhood years are a critical period for establishing healthy eating habits, addressing health inequalities, and laying the foundations for lifelong well-being. To ensure food safety and reduce the risk of choking, all food items provided to pupils **under the age of five** are prepared and served in line with national food safety advice and appropriate monitoring is provided whilst pupils are eating. Staff follow the clear guidelines outlined within our Food and Nutrition Policy (2025-2026) during meal and snack times. A qualified Paediatric First Aider (PFA) will be present during all mealtimes. Staff will maintain strict supervision and ensure children are seated while eating to minimise choking risks. Detailed records of dietary requirements, allergies, and intolerance action plans must be maintained and visibly accessible to catering/ supervisory staff.

At Reddal Hill, we participate in the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, which provides one portion of free fresh fruit or vegetables daily, to all pupils in Early Years. To support our commitment to healthy eating and ensure compliance with **Natasha's Law, 2019, and the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance, 2025**, pupils are not permitted to bring any food items to share for birthdays or other celebrations.

Trips

At Reddal Hill, we always ask permission before taking the children out on any trips. On occasions, we may ask parents to attend with their child. If this is not necessary, the correct ratios will be maintained using school staff. Students, apprentices, or volunteers aged 16 or over may only be included in staff-to-child ratio calculations if they hold a valid, full Paediatric First Aid certificate from a reputable training provider and are assessed as competent. The relevant risk assessments are always completed and submitted to the Educational Visits Officer using Evolve (See separate whole school Risk Assessment Policy).