



THE ROWANS SCHOOL

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

Contents

- 1. Rationale**
- 2. Aims**
- 3. Learning and Development**
- 4. Planning**
- 5. Staffing and Organisation**
- 6. Assessment, Recording and Monitoring**
- 7. Learning through play**
- 8. Introduction to The Rowans School**
- 9. Home/school links: partnership with parents**
- 10. Equal Opportunities**
- 11. Inclusion**
- 12. Safeguarding children**
- 13. Health and Safety**
- 14. Medical Matters**
- 15. Complaints procedure**
- 16. School Policies**
- 17. EYFS Policy Monitoring and Review**

1.0 Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007.

1.1 Early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. It provides a framework for care, learning and development. At The Rowans, we believe that all children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to set in place solid foundations which will enable them to flourish throughout their school life and into adulthood. It is, therefore, vital to consider the EYFS as preparation not only for the next stage of the education process, but for life.

1.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and Early Learning Goals relate to children from birth to five years of age, or the end of the Reception year, post a child’s fifth birthday. Children at The Rowans School will be provided with the experience that will support them in reaching these goals at the appropriate time.

1.3 All children begin school life with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of practitioners working in the Early Years setting to take on the task of building upon and extending this prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning. High quality, well-resourced, integrated early education all contribute to a positive development in all seven areas of learning. It is our aim that key workers, parents and carers work together to establish a supportive and communicative relationship in supporting children’s learning and development.

2.0 Aims

2.1 It is every child’s right to grow up in a safe, healthy environment, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution to the world around them and, ultimately, achieving economic well-being. At The Rowans School, the overall aim of the EYFS is to help children to achieve these five *Every Child Matters* outcomes. (*Please refer to the school’s Every Child Matters Policy, available from the School Office.)

2.2 The education for the Early Years Foundation Stage is achieved through:

- clear educational goals
- sustained shared thinking
- meeting every child’s needs
- warm, responsive relationships between adults and children
- parents who supported and involved in their children’s learning
- high quality learning environments

2.3 Our aim is that children are exposed to a wealth of learning opportunities and experiences within a welcoming, positive and motivating learning environment. Children enter a friendly, safe and communicative setting and learn in colourful, vibrant and stimulating classrooms and communal areas where achievements are displayed and recognised and where activities and resources are appropriate, varied and accessible.

2.4 Our comprehensive planning process allows us to specify clear learning objectives within the EYFS framework, encompassing and developing all areas of the children's learning and development. We evaluate our own performance and are responsive to our evaluations in order to ensure that the goals we set are challenging yet achievable. Furthermore, through our planning and evaluation processes, we continue to promote the sharing of ideas, practices and outcomes in order to enrich the children's individual experiences and opportunities at school.

2.5 We regard the core EYFS principal of "learning through experience" as a true opportunity to promote individualised learning within a class context. This is achieved not only through our own close interaction with the children but also through a balance of well-planned child- and adult-led activities which enable us to observe and respond to the needs, interests and achievements of the children in our care. As such, the concept of a "unique child" is intrinsically linked with the positive and nurturing relationships that staff aim to develop with the children. In this regard, we will continue to promote an open, informative and supportive relationship with parents, starting from a parent's first contact with the school. Through both written contact (such as welcome letters, practical information, learning journeys, reading records, formal reports) and face-to-face contact on a daily basis, as well as curriculum and parent's evenings, we recognise and encourage parents' roles as co-educators.

2.6 The delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage programme encompasses every aspect of planning, delivery, observation and evaluation, ensuring that every child achieves their full potential and enjoys a rich and rewarding experience in the Early Years setting.

3.0 Learning and Development

3.1 The Early Learning Goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the Reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in *Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage* and the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (Department for Education 2014).

3.2 The seven areas of Learning and Development are:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**

We provide experiences and support to enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others. We support children's emotional well-being, helping them to know themselves and what they can do. We also help children to develop respect for others, social skills and a positive disposition to learn.

- **Communication and Language (CL)**

We support children's learning and competence in communicating, speaking and listening and being read to. We also work to give them the confidence, opportunity, encouragement, support and disposition to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes.

- **Physical Development (PD)**

We encourage the physical development of the children through offering opportunities for them to learn through being active and interactive, improving their skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. We aim to encourage use all of their senses to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know. Furthermore, we support children in developing an understanding of the importance of making healthy choices in relation to food.

- **Literacy (L)**

We support the children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

- **Mathematics (M)**

We support children in developing their understanding of mathematics and numeracy in a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about their developing understanding. We create opportunities for these skills to be practised, in order to give children confidence and competence in their use.

- **Understanding the World (UW)**

In supporting children's development of the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world, we offer opportunities for them to: learn to use a range of tools safely; encounter creatures, people, plants and objects in their natural environments and in real-life situations; undertake practical 'experiments'; and work with a range of materials.

- **Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)**

We extend children's creativity by supporting their curiosity, exploration and play, providing them with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings, for example through a variety of art, music, movement, imaginative and role-play activities, mathematics, and design and technology.

3.3 We believe that these seven areas are of equal importance and are inter-dependent in promoting the development of a rounded child. We are also mindful of the school's position as a pre-preparatory school, preparing children for the transition to Year 1 and ultimately for the 7+ prep school entrance procedures. It is our aim that this preparation and development across all areas of learning is delivered through planned, purposeful play-based activities, with a balance of adult- and child-led activities.

4.0 Planning

Effective planning is the key to ensuring that our children's learning is exciting, varied and progressive. Effective planning allows us to build upon children's existing learning and experience. Our planning shows how the EYFS goals will be achieved, is informed by our observations and interactions with the children and aims to develop all aspects of children's learning and development, considering their interests and supporting them at all stages. We aim to take into account the children's interests as much as possible and to choose topic areas that are stimulating, practical, relevant and developmentally appropriate for them.

Planning is a collaborative process between all practitioners who work with the children. There are three stages to the planning process:

4.1 Long-term planning

We have developed a framework which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are carefully planned and the early learning goals are distributed throughout the year in order to ensure breadth and balance of delivery of these objectives. Particular early learning goals pertain specifically to certain topics (this is especially the case for Understanding the World).

	Kindergarten	Reception
Autumn	Journeys	All about me People who help us
Spring	Tell me a story	Splish, Splash, Splosh Feathers and Nests
Summer	Growing and Changing	Creatures Great and Small

4.2 Medium-term planning

Medium-term planning incorporates more specific areas of the curriculum in greater detail for each half-term. We identify links between areas of learning and development. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities and experiences in each area of learning and development are identified.

4.3.1 Short-term planning

As part of the short-term planning process, we identify learning objectives, activities, differentiation and deployment of staff and resources where appropriate on a weekly and day-to-day basis. We have developed this to increase the flexibility of teaching and learning in response to children’s interests and for revision and modification and informed by on-going observational assessment.

5.0 Staffing and Organisation

5.1 There is one Kindergarten class and two Reception classes. The Rowans School has a maximum class size of 24 children. The Kindergarten class has one teacher and two teaching assistants. Each Reception class has one teacher and one teaching assistant. We aim to maintain a ratio of 1:8 or less in Kindergarten, and 1:12 or less in Reception.

5.2 The children have opportunities for structured and practical, play-based activities. Practitioners and support staff enjoy a communicative, team-based approach to planning, organisation, preparation and assessment. We strive to constantly update our skills, knowledge and understanding and, as such, all practitioners are encouraged to attend courses and participate in regular and varied school INSETS in order to propagate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods amongst colleagues.

5.3 Miss L Spratt is the EYFS co-ordinator and Deputy Head. Mrs J Hubbard is the named deputy who will take charge in Miss Spratt's absence.

6.0 Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

We undertake assessment for learning. We consider and constantly evaluate what we know about each child's development and learning and make informed decisions about the child's learning and appropriate next steps. This enables us to meet both their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

6.1 Formative Assessment

We undertake baseline assessments at the beginning of the Kindergarten and Reception year. In addition to this, our monitoring, observation and tracking of the Early Years Outcomes are recorded in assessment folders and provide useful markers in identifying potential areas of concern or gifts/talents.

Activities that the children have participated in are recorded through photographs, observations, a wide range of work, all of which are displayed and gathered together in a collection of books, including individual EYFS Profiles. Parents can consult any of these books at any point in the year and all books are sent home upon completion. EYFS Profiles are handed on to the next class teacher.

6.2 Summative Assessment

The EYFS profile summarises all the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements against the scales, indicating the child's progress with regard to the Early Learning Goals. At the end of the Summer Term, parents are given a formal report identifying children's achievements in line with Early Learning Goals and have the opportunity to discuss this with their child's teacher.

6.3 Providing support

Comprehensive communication with parents is of paramount importance to us with regard to assessment and monitoring and, in consultation with the parents, we aim to devise a personal programme of support for those children who require it. As well as utilising the SEND support available within school, we may also help the parents in seeking more information regarding their child's difficulties from an outside body, such as an educational psychologist or occupational therapist, should they so wish. Staff working with the child aim to establish a 'team' of support for that child, in conjunction with both support staff within or outside school and parents, and carry out recommended activities or strategies in the classroom.

In addition to the above practices, profile data and all relevant information pertaining to the children is discussed with next teachers prior to entry into Year 1. This is a crucial part of easing the transition to Year 1 and of enabling children to achieve any outstanding Early Learning Goals that they may not have already reached before accessing the KS1 curriculum.

7.0 Learning through play

“Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.”

‘Early Years Foundation Stage’, (DCSF, 2007).

7.1 It is our primary belief that play underpins the delivery of the EYFS curriculum. We support children’s learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children’s learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves. Children are given the opportunity to explore and discover within a safe and supportive environment.

7.2 Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. The children 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. They are able to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in managed, safe situations. The children are involved with both group and individual play, some initiated by adults, some initiated by the children. They learn through being active learners, working with a wide range of resources.

8.0 Introduction to The Rowans School

8.1 During the Summer Term, children who will be starting Kindergarten and Reception in September are invited to attend an introductory session with their new class. They have the opportunity to engage in their choice of activities, to become familiar with the classroom and their key workers and to interact with their future peers. This enables us to make each child’s transition from their previous setting to The Rowans School as smooth as possible.

8.2 Prior to their child starting, parents can access, through the school’s website, a Parent Handbook containing a booklet which outlines the EYFS curriculum and school routines, along with a parent-child information sheet to be completed and returned to school, designed to give staff as much information about the new children, their preferences, interests and any concerns that they may have prior to joining.

8.3 At the start of the Autumn Term, parents are invited to a ‘Welcome Evening’ - at this time they can get to know the staff and meet other parents. Parents and carers have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and Head Teacher and to spend time in the classroom. They are also invited to attend an interactive presentation providing information on curriculum matters.

9.0 Home/school links: partnership with parents

9.1 From our very first interactions with them, we strive to create a comprehensive approach to our relationship with children and their parents/carers. A key part of this is ensuring they feel part of the school community before they arrive. We want to get to know the children before they start school, through meeting them and speaking to parents/carers.

9.2 Outlined below are some of the means through which we aim to develop strong partnerships with parents and carers:

- Introductory morning in the Summer Term for children and parents to attend;
- Welcome Evening to inform parents/carers about school life and to help them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home;
- weekly 'come and play' sessions for parents of Kindergarten children to attend;
- encouraging parents/carers to complete the information sheet;
- organising transition meetings as detailed above;
- operating an 'open door' policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner;
- email and Link Book contact with parents, promoting efficient sharing of practical information;
- sharing information via the Weekly Newsletter;
- sharing children's progress at school through regular dialogue between the EY staff and parent/carers as part of the 'open door' policy;
- inviting parents/carers to the class to accompany the children on class outings;
- family events at school;
- encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child read each night or to engage relevant child-led learning activities at home such as holiday journals, etc;
- discussing individual progress and targets with parents/carers at Parents' Evenings (Autumn and Spring Terms and informed by the EYFS Profile);
- providing a formal, bi-annual written report to parents/carers in December and July summarising the child's progress against the Early Years Outcomes, Early Learning Goals and Characteristics of Effective Learning.

9.3 This strong and friendly relationship with parents sets a very positive tone for our relationship with the children. They see that parents and teachers know each other and work as a team. We actively encourage the introduction of aspects of home life into school, such as good news and achievements, so that children do not see a major distinction between home and school life and are pleased with our interest in their outside activities and being given the opportunity to be able to share them with their peers. Similarly, photographic recording of activities and sharing these with parents has enabled parents and carers to gain a greater appreciation of what goes on in school and has prompted more meaningful conversations about school life between parents and children. Parent event days and attendance of assemblies are also very popular and parents' feedback indicates they relish this insight into school life.

9.4 We recognise the role of parents and carers as co-educators of the children and, from the outset, aim to establish meaningful and honest relationships with children, parents and carers through the sharing of information and experiences.

10.0 Equal Opportunities

10.1 We aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence, where appropriate, to challenge stereotypical ideas. Children are encouraged

and assisted in developing positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability.

10.2 The school is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a child's gender, gender reassignment, race, ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, linguistic background, SEN and disability or cultural background.

*Please refer to the school Equal Opportunities Policy.

11.0 Inclusion

11.1 Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. Individual Support Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.

11.2 The class teacher discusses these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The Learning Enrichment Teacher/Head Teacher will help by providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents, and assisting in the arrangement of external intervention and support where necessary.

*Please refer to the school Special Educational Needs and Inclusion policies.

12.0 Safeguarding

* Please refer to the school Safeguarding Policy.

13.0 Health and Safety

13.1 We regularly update and review our risk assessments on classrooms, communal areas, outdoor areas and equipment and toys used by children in the EYFS, in order to identify and minimise potential hazards. Risk assessment documentation is displayed in each EY classroom and within planning documentation where appropriate.

*Please refer to our school Risk Assessment Policy. Additional reference should also be made to the Educational Visits Policy.

14.0 Medical Matters

14.1 Parents should keep their child at home if s/he is ill or infectious and telephone the School Office by 8.45am on each day that s/he is ill and will not be attending school. Any child who is ill will struggle with the demands of the school day and may possibly infect others. Following sickness or diarrhoea a child must not return to school for 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea has ended. If a child has been diagnosed with an infectious disease, parents/carers should follow doctor's instructions with regard to his/her return to school. The school should be informed in order that other children can be monitored for similar symptoms.

14.2 If a child has a medical condition that necessitates regular access to medication, parents/carers are asked to provide full and current medical information in order to ensure that the child's needs can be appropriately provided for, or that they can be looked after in the event of an accident. Parents/carers must complete the Health Questionnaire Form prior to their child's first term at school and are responsible for ensuring that they are updated when necessary.

14.3 Should a child need to be given medicine during the school day, parents are required to fill in and sign a Medication Form in the School Office. Without this consent, staff are unable to administer medicine. The School Office will then administer the correct dosage when necessary and complete a form to indicate the dosage and time of medication administered. Medicines should be signed in/out by the parent/carer at the School Office. They should not be sent in via the children, in book bags or given to the class teaching staff.

14.4 Several of the EYFS staff have been trained in Paediatric First Aid. First Aid boxes are situated on every level in the school and are taken outside during playtimes as well as Games lessons and on outings. Parents will be contacted if their child suffers anything more than a trivial injury, or if there are any concerns about his/her health. If a child has a minor accident, bump or graze at school during the day, this will be reported by the class teacher at collection time.

*Please refer to the school's First Aid Policy, available on our website and in the School Office.

15.0 Complaints Procedure

We strive to make The Rowans School a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for the children. We hope that parents will not feel the need to complain and that any difficulty can be efficiently and sensitively handled before it reaches this stage. However, the school's complaints procedure (which applies equally to the EYFS) is available on the school's website or can be sent to parents by request.

Parents of children in the EYFS are entitled to make a complaint directly to IAPS. A record of complaints will be made available to ISI upon request.

A record of any complaint in respect of the EYFS will be kept for at least 3 years. All complaints relating to the EYFS requirements will be fully investigated within 28 days of having received the complaint. The complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation.

In the event of a complaint parents will be given the details for contacting ISI or Ofsted and guidance on how a complaint can be made.

Contact details are –

Ofsted

Alexandra House,

33, Kingsway, London WC2B 6SE

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Tel: 08456 404040

Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)
Cap House
9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA
TEL: 0207 600 0100

16.0 School Policies

To ensure that the school operates efficiently and effectively, we have a comprehensive range of policies, procedures and guidelines. These are available from the school office.

17.0 EYFS Policy Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Head Teacher and Deputy Head, and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This policy will be reviewed annually
Policy Reviewed: September 2016 by LS
Next Review: September 2017 by LS