



Ravensmead Primary School

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The first two years of school are a unique and special time in every child's life and need to be valued as such. This policy has been written to reflect Ravensmead's philosophy in relation to the education and well-being of all Nursery and Reception children. It provides a framework within which both teaching and non-teaching staff can operate and gives guidance on planning, teaching and assessment. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS 2012), which sets out in detail what the children should be taught.

Mission Statement: To be the best that we can be.

General aims and objectives

The aims below set out the rationale behind the teaching of the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' in our school.

1. To create a welcoming, nurturing environment that is warm, positive, stimulating, inclusive and challenging in which to learn and play.
2. To ensure the child feels secure and valued as an individual.
3. To realise that the whole child is important and to promote physical, social, emotional, moral and intellectual development.
4. To foster positive dispositions such as curiosity, confidence, enthusiasm and independence.
5. To develop a sense of achievement by developing a confidence in their ability to become successful learners.
6. To provide opportunities to explore and investigate the environment, both indoors and out.
7. To value children's interests, providing a balance of direct teaching and child initiated activities
8. To provide time to talk and share experiences with a variety of listeners to develop their communication skills and extend the vocabulary they use.
9. To provide a working environment that provides opportunities for the children to work harmoniously together and to cooperate with each other.
10. To build upon their home and community experiences through positive home school links and a successful partnership between school and the children's parents.
11. To provide equal opportunities, regardless of race, gender, religion or disabilities.
12. To assess the learning and development of the child and use the information for forward planning.
13. To help children to develop self-esteem and to form positive relationships with their peers and adults.
14. To ensure that at the forefront of all work undertaken at Ravensmead are the outcomes outlined in 'Every Child Matters'.
15. To provide an environment and curriculum where the children can 'be the best that they

can be'.

The Curriculum and Learning Environment.

The EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped together into four distinct but complimentary themes:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

Each Principle is supported by four Commitments which describe how the Principle can be put into practice.

A Unique Child- *child development; inclusive practice; keeping safe; health and well-being.*

Child Development- At Ravensmead, we understand that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Therefore, we ensure that there is good communication between the Nursery and Reception staff so that activities and tasks can be appropriately planned to support the different ways in which children learn.

Inclusive Practice-At Ravensmead we treat all children fairly, regardless of race, gender, religion or ability. Outside agencies are called upon for additional support for those who require it.

Without it children will not get the help they need at the right time, in a way that is right for them.

Keeping Safe-at Ravensmead, we ensure that all children are aware of the boundaries, rules and limits and help them understand why these exist. We ensure all children are aware of the 'Golden Rules'. In addition, we share these rules with parents and support them in developing consistent boundaries for behaviour at home.

Health and Well-Being-At Ravensmead, we recognise that parents and grandparents have a huge amount of knowledge about their children and will openly seek this knowledge to offer the best care and learning that matches their individual needs. In addition we ensure the children are given clean clothes if they require it and are encouraged to make healthy food choices. At Ravensmead, we have two members of staff working in the EYFS who have current paediatric first aid certificates, alongside this 2 members of staff hold their Food Hygiene certificates.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Children Policy)

"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 Ravensmead School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare and safeguarding of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Positive Relationships-respecting each other; parents as partners; supporting learning; key person.

Respecting each other-At Ravensmead we ensure that parents have daily contact with the staff to share any factors that may influence their child's sociability. We engage in 'circle time' to discuss any fears, difficulties and worries the children may be experiencing.

Parents as partners-At Ravensmead, we ensure that parents have daily access to the EYFS staff. We provide topic booklets and information sheets so that parents are informed about activities and objectives being set for the following week. We organise open evening, intake meetings, and curriculum workshops/evenings. We encourage parents to work within the setting to help and support the work being done. Home Learning logs are sent home weekly in Reception to encourage participation from parents sharing any "magic moments" or achievements at home. In addition, we aim to ensure all fathers are written to with an annual report if they no longer live with their child.

Supporting learning- At Ravensmead, we ensure daily routines are displayed in pictorial form. We engage in the '3 second' rule to give all children time to respond. We 'look, listen and note' during observations and identify the right moment to intervene to move children's learning on.

Key person-at Ravensmead the classroom teacher has responsibility for all children and is therefore the 'key worker'. However, strong relationships with the teaching assistants/nursery nurses are also built to ensure that there is a familiar and trusted person who knows the children well should the teacher be away.

Enabling Environments-observation, assessment and planning; supporting every child; the learning environment; the wider context.

Observation, assessment and planning-at Ravensmead, all planning starts with observing children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning. We plan to observe as part of the daily routine. We keep individual records to show each child's achievements within the Nursery and Reception learning logs. More detailed observation takes place during Assessment Weeks. Observations link to the ages and stages

of development in the 17 areas of learning in the EYFS.

Supporting every child-At Ravensmead, children are encouraged to bring items into school to 'show'-this provides a starting point for their learning. Work is differentiated according to the needs of the children.

The learning environment- at Ravensmead we plan opportunities for children to experience the indoor and the outdoors on a daily basis. Children are given first hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world. All indoor resources are well labelled, accessible and well maintained. All children at Ravensmead are encouraged to contribute to keeping it tidy. We ensure all children know how to behave both outdoors and indoors by talking about personal safety, risks and safety of others.

The wider context-at Ravensmead, we enlist the help of outside agencies and involve other professionals; local poets; theatre groups; artists; to enrich the children's learning. We ensure parents are well informed about transition changes between Nursery and Reception and on entry into Nursery. The EYFS staff listen to other colleagues from other professional backgrounds during cluster meetings.

Learning and Development-play and exploration; active learning; creativity and critical thinking; areas of learning and development.

Play and exploration-at Ravensmead, we plan appropriately challenging child-initiated tasks and adult led tasks daily. Staff extend and develop children's language and communication in their play through sensitive observation and appropriate intervention.

Active learning-at Ravensmead, we ensure that the learning environment is stimulating, interesting, attractive and interactive so that every child can learn independently. Child-choice activities are rotated so that children have both physical and mental challenges that will engage them for sustained periods.

Creativity and critical thinking-at Ravensmead we ensure that resources are well labelled and easily accessible. Children are encouraged to move equipment around the setting to extend their own play and learning but are also encouraged to put things back where they belong. Children are encouraged to develop the skills required when being creative and not necessarily on the end product.

Areas of learning and development-the 7 areas of learning and development are set out below.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into 3 Prime and 4 Specific Areas of Learning and Development:

Prime areas:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Development
3. Communication and Language

Specific Areas:

4. Literacy - Writing and Reading
5. Mathematics - Numbers and Shape, Space and Measure
6. Understanding of the World

7. Expressive Arts and Design

None of the above Areas of Learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend upon each other to support a rounded approach to child development. All the areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led activities and child-initiated tasks.

Each Area of Learning has an Early Learning Goal, which children should work to achieve by the end of Reception, which is at the end of the EYFS.

The children work their way through the ages and stages of Development Matters in each area to reach the goals at the end. The teachers assess the children against the statements with the "best fit" in mind. By the end of the EYFS, most children should have achieved expected against the ELG's, with some children exceeding the goals. Other children, depending on their individual needs, will be "emerging", which means working towards some or all of the goals.

(See the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' for further information regarding each area of learning.

Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage team (Nursery and Reception) work together to produce medium term and weekly plans for each topic. The topics that are covered in the Foundation Stage are planned by the Foundation Stage Manager and organised into a 2 year rolling programme. Both Nursery and Reception follow the same long term two-year rolling programme to ensure that the same topics are covered but activities planned show evidence of progression, differentiation, continuity and coverage of the Early Learning Goals.

Planning should clearly address learning objectives, linked to the ages and stages of development and should aim to be diverse and accessible to children with a range of learning styles and abilities.

Plans must be uploaded to the Learning platform each week, with evaluations being completed in journals. Plans are monitored regularly by the Foundation Stage Manager and discussed during PPA time.

All plans must show evidence of child-initiated tasks as well as adult directed tasks and should have a clear recognition of assessment opportunities.

Plans should show evidence of hands-on learning experiences and exploration opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

Play in the Foundation stage

Well-planned play, both indoors and out, is the key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge.

Through play our children;-

- explore and develop learning experiences practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills learn how to control themselves
- understand the need for rules think creatively and imaginatively
- play alone, alongside or with others investigate and solve problems

- express fears or relive anxious experiences in a safe place take risks and make mistakes
- communicate with others

Assessment

Observation is the key to assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The children are observed as they work and play, individually and as part of a group, being assessed on a specific activity, with notes and photographs being taken to support the statements in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile within their Learning logs.

In order to gain an awareness of each child's abilities to play, talk, interact etc, the Nursery staff assess the children during the first three weeks, noting how they have settled initially and begin to identify their strengths, weaknesses, interests and abilities. This forms the baseline assessment into Nursery. The children are then assessed regularly throughout their time in Nursery and notes are kept to show which age and stage of development the children have achieved to inform future planning and assessment.

Information about each child in Nursery is then taken into Reception. This, alongside an initial observation of the children by the Reception staff, forms each child's baseline assessment into Reception. Notes made from observations and the information on the age and stages of development is then entered into the 17 areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage Tracking sheets. After this initial period, all other assessments and observations are entered in to the Children's learning logs to show each child's progression in each Area of Learning and Development, as a holistic view. The assessments are continually updated, but in line with the rest of the school the tracking grids are updated at each Assessment Week during the academic year, where they are discussed at Pupil progress meetings.

During the summer term, the Reception children are assessed more formally during Assessment week with carefully planned activities to help each child move forward with their knowledge and understanding. Information gained from this week is entered in each child's Learning log.

Although Reception children are only formally included in Assessment week during the summer term, the children are still involved in assessment activities planned by the Reception teachers during the autumn and spring term and outcomes recorded in their Learning logs. At each Assessment Week, a copy of the tracking grids is given to the Head and the Assessment Manager.

At the end of the academic year, the parents are provided with a written report on their child's progress against the specific areas of Literacy, Mathematics alongside the Characteristics of learning report, which is a statutory requirement and are invited into school to be given an opportunity to discuss their child's Profile and report.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile includes on-going observation, all relevant records held

by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Staff organisation

The Nursery has two sessions a day, lasting 3 hours, taking 26 children in each and is staffed by two full time practitioners. 1 class teacher and one other member of staff with a level 3 qualification.

The ratio in Nursery is 1 to 13 children.

The Reception can take up to 30 children with a ratio of 1:30 children.

In both areas opportunities are given for students from colleges and schools to gain experience with young children. This includes students from Keele University, Crewe and Alsager college, Newcastle and Stoke colleges and local High Schools.

Staff training

The Foundation Stage staff attend courses on relevant subjects, organised by the Foundation Stage Manager and Deputy Head, both internally and externally.

The Team attends termly Cluster Group meetings, held at the Local authority. These cover a variety of subjects relevant to the teaching of The Early Years Foundation Stage children. The LA Advisor for the Early Years visits Ravensmead at least once a year, dependent on the level of need, to offer support, give advice and guidance and discuss any issues arising.

Admissions Policy

The children are admitted into Nursery and Reception at the beginning of the Autumn Term in September. The criteria for admission is based on the birthday of the child.

For entry into Nursery, the child has to be 4 years old during the year of entry, from 1st September and 31st August inclusive. Priority is given to children from the catchment area and any remaining places filled by children out of the area.

For entry into Reception, the child has to be 5 years old during the year of entry, from 1st September and 31st August inclusive.

If a parent feels there is an urgent reason for a variation of this policy, they should apply to the Governors through the Head teacher. Admission arrangements will only be varied in the most extreme circumstances. There is a legal requirement that all children should be in school at the start of the term following their 5th birthday.

Induction policy

At least a term before entry into Nursery, parents who have registered their child are contacted to see if a place is still required and at which session. They then attend a 2 play and stay sessions in the Nursery, to meet the practitioners, ask questions, look around, and for their child to meet other children and play with the toys. The parents are given a Home visit by the Nursery practitioner to discuss their child in more detail, in their own home.

At the beginning of the term, three children are welcomed at each session, at different times, so that each practitioner can give them individual attention. Times and dates are organised by the Nursery staff and communicated to parents at the Nursery Meeting.

If a child finds it hard to settle, alternative arrangements can be made.

Transition into Reception

The Nursery children first become familiar with the Reception children and practitioners at outside play times.

After the May Half Term holiday, before entry into school, the Nursery children visit Reception twice a week to look around, to play, draw, talk, listen and to engage in role play etc. The Nursery children are invited to one 'busy time' and one 'quiet/carpet time' each week for approximately 5 weeks.

Following this, parents are invited to attend a Reception meeting to discuss school life, to see the Reception area and meet the teachers and to discuss any worries they might have.

Any children who have not attended our Nursery, but are eligible for school, may attend this meeting and arrangements can be made for their child to visit at other times. The parents are also invited into school with their child to have a school dinner in the latter part of the summer term.

Starting school

The Reception children start school in a staggered way. Entry into Reception takes place over 3 consecutive days allowing the Reception staff to integrate the children more slowly. 10 minute intervals are allocated so that parents and children have individual time with the class teacher before the next child arrives.

Resources

Resources are stored in a variety of ways including classroom storage (draws and boxes are clearly labelled and accessible to the children); outdoor storage -2 outdoor sheds used by Nursery and Reception (although the outdoor resources are divided into 2 sheds, one shed belonging to Nursery and one to Reception, the equipment and resources are used equally and shared across the whole of the Early Years Foundation Stage although it is recognised that some resources are unsuitable for sharing due to the age specific resources.

Other resources that are used by the whole school are stored in main storage areas and are locked up with keys stored in the main office.

Damage to Foundation Stage resources should be reported to the Foundation Stage Manager as well as requests for new resources and replacement items.

Equal Opportunities/Special Educational Needs & Disability

In the Early Years Foundation Stage all children have the opportunity to experience all aspects of learning regardless of race, gender, religion or disability. Children with specific learning needs such as English as a second language, emotional, behavioural or intellectual difficulties are assessed, recorded and addressed through Learning passports and their progress carefully tracked by the teacher and SENCo. Early identification of their needs is important to avoid frustration and lack of motivation.

In line with the school's commitment to Dyslexia Friendly Status, children in the Early Years Foundation stage are offered many opportunities to take part in multi-sensory activities, which will benefit all children, including any who will be subsequently identified with Specific Learning Difficulties.

Please refer to the SEND policy and Equal Opportunities Policy for further information of this aspect of Ravensmead.

The Role of the Foundation Stage Manager

The role of the Manager includes

- Producing a rolling programme that takes into account Early Learning Goal requirements, progression of learning, topics, facilities and resources at Ravensmead and differing abilities.
- Supporting colleagues in all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage by promoting good practice and ensuring standards of teaching and learning remain high.
- To ensure the Early Years Foundation Stage is working to address the five outcomes of Every Child Matters.
- Maintaining and replacing equipment to ensure that the curriculum can run effectively.
- Attend meetings and courses, which will inform future developments of the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensure other staff are aware of current relevant issues.
- Ensure effective links are maintained with the link governor by keeping him/her informed of current Early Years Foundation Stage issues and to demonstrate how these are implemented at Ravensmead Primary School.
- To support colleagues with challenging activities for pupils identified as 'Gifted and Talented' and who are on the SEND provision map.
- Develop strong links with the LA Early Years advisor to support the Manager with current issues, and to answer queries and concerns shown by the staff at Ravensmead.
- Be responsible to the Head teacher for the successful organisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Develop effective home/school links and a successful parental partnership.
- Support the Nursery Staff with the Nursery admissions for the following academic year.
- Work alongside the Admissions Staff and Nursery Staff to organise the new cohort of children entering Reception and any relevant meetings to be held with the parents.
- Ensure a smooth transition for the Reception children entering Key Stage 1.
- To support staff using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

- To promote learning in the indoor environment as well as in the outdoor environment.
- To ensure the welfare requirements are adhered to.

Agreed by the Personnel/Curriculum Sub Committee at its meeting on

Signed (Chair of Personnel/Curriculum Sub Committee) T. Wilde

Date

Signed (Headteacher) D. Bell

Date

Review Date: September, 2017