



**Runwell Community**  
**Primary School**

# **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

*March 2017 (Review March 2019)*

## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

### 1. Introduction

*“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”*

“Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”, **Department for Education, 2012**

### 2. Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. It is based upon four guiding principles:

- Every child is a **unique** child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.** The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

#### Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of the following areas of learning:

- **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Literacy development** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

### 3. Preparing for School

In our school, all children entering the Reception class have a number of school visits in the summer term both with their parents and on their own. There is also a parent meeting in the summer term that is held in the evening to explain important aspects of school life. Staff also visit the local pre-schools to find out as much as possible about each child before s/he starts school.

At the start of the autumn term every child has a home visit where members of staff learn about each individual child and they can discuss any concerns that parents have. After these visits the children come in for a week on a part-time basis and then full-time after that.

### 4. EYFS at Runwell

In the EYFS, all children are treated as unique individuals and we personalise learning for the children as much as we can. We do this in a number of ways:

- Staff has a deep understanding of child development and of how children learn. This is used to enhance learning and teaching within the setting and ensures all children are adequately challenged and engaged in learning.
- Children are an integral part of planning the curriculum. Their interests are identified and children participate in planning through communicating what they would like to find out in the next theme.
- We aim to create awe and wonder and develop experiences that will make learning exciting and memorable, creating an autonomous learning environment in which children question and explore.
- Children have a carefully planned curriculum that helps them work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS. We use ongoing assessment to inform this planning. Staff are constantly assessing children as they work, then team discussions and the use of Target Tracker are used to identify next steps and to ensure all children are suitably challenged. Intervention is identified and planned for where individuals are recognised as not making enough progress.

We further meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children’s knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children’s learning needs;
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- encouraging children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management.
- Monitoring children’s progress and taking action to provide support as necessary and sharing these observations with parents and carers.

### **Positive Encouragement**

At Runwell Community Primary School, we strive to support children to develop into successful learners who are resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Praise and encouragement are central to the ethos of our approach as we know children learn best, and are more willing to take risks in their learning, when they are within a safe, supportive environment.

We are specific in our praise and communicate this to children through using phrases such as: ‘Well done to (name) for (desired behavior).’ We follow the whole school behavior policy and this is explained to the children so they are aware of what happens with regard to both good and poor behavior. Positive reward schemes are used in class and shared with parents.

Worker of the Week, is chosen weekly, these children receive a certificate in the whole school Achievers assembly and a photo is taken and put in their Superstar books.

### **Welfare**

“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 Runwell Community Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014. We are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, prevent the spread of infection and take 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.

We endeavour to meet all these requirements at all times.

### **Safety**

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 considered risks in order to explore the next steps in learning, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

### **Inclusion**

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Runwell Community Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

### **Positive Relationships**

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school, the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS and is the person parents and carers speak to about concerns or as part of discussion about assessment, though we encourage parents to speak to support staff as well so that parents understand and value the team approach to teaching their child.

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### **Parents and Carers as Partners**

The positive partnership between teachers and parents and carers enhances our ability to help our children feel secure at school and have a sense of well-being and achievement. We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most enduring educators. We value the contribution they make now and in the future and promote the importance of it at every opportunity. We do this through:

- talking to parents and carers about their child before s/he starts in our school;
- offering to visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school;
- providing children with the opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during preschool sessions;
- inviting all parents and carers to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- encouraging parents and carers to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;

- providing a formal meeting for parents and carers each term to discuss their child's progress with the teacher;
- providing parents and carers with a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- arranging a variety of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents and carers, such as: Whole school celebration assemblies, Sports Day, opportunities to share cultural diversity including beliefs during the year.
- offering parents and carers regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class and encouraging multi-way communication between parents and carers, teachers and other care-givers in the child's Home School Diary, together with Class Dojo. This communication is a key part of on-going assessment.
- providing workshops that support parents and carers in helping their children with key areas of learning at home, such as: reading (introducing our phonics scheme), writing, maths and ICT;
- providing parents and carers with access to children's assessments and photographic on-line learning journeys.

## 5. The EYFS Learning Environment at Runwell

At Runwell Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. The EYFS indoor and outdoor classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is set up to enable children to find and locate equipment and resources independently and also return this equipment independently.

Children are encouraged to use all areas of the classroom for all areas of learning.

A significant amount of learning happens outside. Working outside offers children opportunities for learning using natural resources as well as large equipment which encourages children to be physically active. This approach ensures children can choose to learn in environments suited to their individual learning styles. Alongside the child-initiated learning that takes place inside and out, we plan adult-led activities in both environments.

In EYFS children learn in a range of ways.

### **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."

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They 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. It is also an opportunity for them to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations which is very important for them to develop their emotional resilience.

### **Active Learning**

“Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.”

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

### **Creativity and Critical Thinking**

“When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.”

Children should be given opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

### **Observation, Assessment and Planning**

Planning within the EYFS follows the schools’ Long Term Plan and Medium Term Plans (MTP’s), which are based around half termly themes. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for weekly planning; however the teacher may alter these MTP’s in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

We make regular assessments of children’s learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves the teacher and other adults as appropriate. These observations are recorded on Target Tracker. They also contain information provided by parents and carers and other settings.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents and carers, reporting their progress against the ELG’s and assessment scales. We give parents and carers opportunities to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and monitor this policy and to evaluate EYFS provision by ensuring that the EYFS teachers and other staff follow the principles stated in this policy. The policy is reviewed every 2 years by the governors.