

Redhill Primary School - Early Year's Foundation Stage

Reviewed Sept 2024

INTENT:

In the Early Years, we have devised a curriculum based around our knowledge of child development and the knowledge of our school community. We have created a curriculum overview, which can be used as a long-term plan, exploring broad and wide arching termly themes. We use these themes to guide the learning but also allow our curriculum to be reactive and led by the children's interests.

To ensure we provide a broad and balanced curriculum, we plot in essential knowledge and events using our knowledge & events calendar. However, staff are empowered to be led by children's interests or make effective use of unexpected and unforeseen opportunities for children's learning that arise from everyday events, routines or moments of "awe and wonder".

Our curriculum follows a spiral model. First covering "top layer" basic concepts, knowledge, skills and vocabulary that children need, so they can access a wider curriculum. The curriculum is then designed to review, revisit and build on prior knowledge so that children can "dig deeper" embedding their knowledge and understanding and helping them to master a range of skills. An example of this is children's knowledge of road safety. In Pre-school & Nursery we cover 'top layer' basic knowledge such as car seat safety and crossing the road with an adult. This is then revisited in later year groups so that we can 'dig deeper' into the subject and look at wider hazards and clothing we can wear to help us keep safe.

At Redhill, we have used the Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters documents as a guide. We have created a progression map for all areas of learning based on our knowledge of child development. This plan sets out clear but ambitious milestones for children, ensuring that they make good progress from individual starting points and remain on track for their next steps in education. It provides a sequenced set of skills, knowledge and vocabulary and that can be used as a resource for staff to use when planning purposeful, challenging and personalised provision, ensuring it meets the needs and interests of all children. An example of how we have followed children's interests previously can be seen when, we provided the opportunity for Nursery class to build on their love of music and dance, by inviting a dance tutor into school to teach a choreographed dance. This experience helped us to extend and enhance that particular group's interest.

We aim to create a safe and challenging learning environment. We use interesting resources and purposeful experiences, to help children to experiment, explore and discover the world around them. We plan carefully from children's starting points, progressively introducing new skills and building on prior knowledge.

Our curriculum ethos is centred around the four principles of the EYFS Statutory Framework:



Unique Child: We want our children to know about their strengths, understand what makes them special and effectively communicate their ideas and feelings. We want them to be happy and healthy and acquire transferrable skills that will help them in later life. As practitioners, we appreciate that all children are unique and have varying life experiences, learning needs and interests.

Positive Relationships: We want our children to have healthy, trusting relationships with adults and peers. We want children to work collaboratively and feel like members of our school community. As practitioners, we focus on building trusting relationships with children and families in order to support children's development in school and at home.

Enabling Environments: We want our children to feel safe and enjoy learning across all areas of learning. We want children to make links with prior learning, experience new things and keep on trying when they experience difficulties. As practitioners, we aim to provide purposeful experiences for children to expand and extend their knowledge of the world.

Learning and Development: We want all of our children to progress from their starting points and reach their potential. We want to ensure all children have a wide range of transferable skills which they can use to play, learn and problem solve independently. We want our children to enjoy learning and challenge themselves. As practitioners, we act as role models, supporting children to ensure that they are ready for their next steps in education.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The learning experiences within the Early Years are linked to the seven areas of learning from the Development Matters.

Prime Areas	Personal Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self- Regulation • Managing Self • Building Relationships
	Communication and Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening, Attention & Understanding • Speaking
	Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gross Motor Skills • Fine Motor Skills

The Prime Areas of learning are those which children should develop first. They are considered the most essential for the healthy development and future learning of our children. In our Pre-school, our 2 & 3 Year olds focus on embedding and mastering these skills, building a strong foundation for wider learning.

Specific Areas	Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension • Word Reading • Writing
	Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number • Numerical Pattern

	Understanding of the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past and Present • People, Culture & Communities • The Natural World
	Expressive Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating with and Materials • Being Imaginative & Expressive

Our curriculum is largely play based and is led by children's needs and interests. We aim to provide a balance of child-led and age appropriate focussed teaching, securing prior learning and embedding basic skills. Historically on entry, pupil's prior learning and life experiences have been extremely varied and often limited. Therefore, key skills are identified and essential knowledge is planned into the curriculum so that they can be introduced sequentially and revisited. An example of this is, the exploration of the different aspects of online safety, which are taught a number of times throughout the Early Years in order to review and extend knowledge age appropriately.

Professional knowledge and 'in the moment' observation and assessment are used to plan a curriculum that promotes the acquisition of transferable skills. Practitioners use their deepening knowledge of curriculum progression and child development to support children's individual needs and make decisions about how best to teach them. Staff have a good understanding of the interconnectivity of each area of learning. For example, they are aware of the importance of embedding gross motor skills and developing core strength to ensure that children become successful writers as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and beyond. Similarly, children need good communication skills and personal and social skills in order to explore the knowledge within People, Culture & Communities aspect of learning. Children need to be able to confidently talk about themselves and their own lives and families before they can compare and contrast their way of life with others. All of these skills are being acquired simultaneously and will need different levels of support at different points along a child's learning journey. This relies on responsive and knowledgeable adults to know when to offer support, provide challenge or when to step back.

Children have access to both indoor and outdoor learning environments to support their learning. Ongoing assessment and knowledge of the children drives our continuous provision, focussing on children's strengths as a vehicle to develop areas of need. Children are provided with the time and space to develop physically and socially and have a safe place to test out ideas and take risks.

Using our skills progression map as a guide, all staff have aspirational expectations of all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils with Special Educational Needs and pupils with English as an additional language. Interventions are highly focussed and reactive to children's individual needs. They are quickly implemented to ensure that pupils continue to keep up rather than catch up. Staff are reflective about their own practise and adjust plans accordingly.

We work tirelessly to help families support children when acquiring life skills such as managing clothing, developing vocabulary and improving fine motor skills. In particular, we have supported a large number of families with toilet training and accessing early support from other professionals such as Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) and Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS). Families have regular updates on children's progress and staff aim to create a coaching culture when supporting individual families, providing resources, advice or activities to influence the

home learning environment. A good example of this is during our Bedtime Story Challenge, practitioners recorded storytelling sessions and provided book recommendations for children.

As a school, we are dedicated to promoting children's health and well-being. We want our children to be healthy, safe and love to learn, so that they continue to develop and grow. Being healthy in body and mind is threaded throughout the curriculum and is regularly discussed in circle times and story times. Staff have taken a particular interest in self-regulation, supporting pupils to identify and manage their emotions but also to acquire learning behaviours that help them to think critically and learn through trial and error. By providing open ended resources and allowing children to manage risks, we actively promote independence and encourage resilience in all areas of learning.

In the Early Years, we place particular importance on speech and language development and early reading. We create a language rich environment, filled with high quality stories, rhymes and talk. Across the phase, we support individual children with speech and language development by prioritising quality interaction and conversation. We place particular importance on teaching vocabulary, using the Word Aware programme, which is a universal approach to speech and language development as part of first quality teaching. It encourages staff to focus and prioritise on the introducing appropriately levelled vocabulary when exploring stories and topics. This approach helps children to create topic word webs, embedding essential knowledge and expanding on prior understanding. It also provides opportunities to directly teach specific basic concepts in a multi-sensory way, ensuring children experience, know and remember more words. We help children to learn and use new words based around the 7 areas of learning covered. Practitioners also promote and facilitate social interactions between children.

At Redhill, we follow the comprehensive synthetic phonics programme Read Write Inc. (RWI) to teach early reading and writing. In the Early Years, we are dedicated to ensuring all children have the appropriate learning behaviours and phonological awareness needed to become successful readers. Our youngest children begin to develop their attention and listening skills, prior to embarking on the structured phonics programme in Nursery and Reception. Through monitoring and coaching we ensure all Early Years Practitioners are skilled in teaching phonics so they can be responsive to children's needs. Alongside daily story times and story-telling sessions, we promote reading by having a weekly story and rhyme focus. By focusing on key texts children are able to dig deeper into the stories and create a bank of familiar stories that they know well and are able to speak confidently about. We also celebrate our love of reading by holding events such as our Bedtime Story Challenge, Nursery Rhyme Week and World Book Day.

Learning in mathematics is highly focused on developing understanding of mathematical concepts through the use of concrete resources. In Nursery and Reception, we use White Rose Maths as a guide for teaching early number, shape and measure. Children learn about the 5 principles of counting and deepen their number sense using numbers 0-10. Practitioners support children to develop age appropriate language through modelling and questioning. Children engage in a range of real-life purposeful mathematical experiences such as baking or supermarket role play, to make sense of this new knowledge. Knowledge Harvests are used effectively in Reception to establish a baseline of children's prior knowledge of mathematic concepts such as money, time and measure, so that practitioners can challenge misconceptions and plan focussed and challenging provision. Practitioners work with children across the Early Years concentrating on key maths skills such as counting, number recognition and number sense, to ensure quick recall and knowledge retention over time.

IMPACT

An integral aspect of the Early Years curriculum is that children acquire essential life skills which prepare them for their future. We hope that during their time in the school, children become life-long learners and role models. We hope they feel that their individual identity is valued and they continue to aspire to be the best that they can be, in whatever area they choose to pursue.

We believe that every child has the potential to achieve; and our broad, varied curriculum allows every child to excel, now and in the future based upon their own personal strengths, interests and core values.

We aim for all children to leave the Early Years displaying the following attributes of our School Values - ANTLERS

Ambition - They will take pride in all that they do, always striving to do their best. From their different starting points, all children will make good progress academically, emotionally, creatively, socially and physically.

Never Give Up - They will demonstrate emotional resilience and the ability to persevere when they encounter challenge.

Teamwork- They will work collaboratively with others and manage positive relationships.

Love of Learning - They will develop a sense of self-awareness and become confident in their own abilities. They have a wide range of transferable skills to use in real life situations. They will have wider knowledge of the world and are curious. They will enjoy learning new things.

Equality and Fairness - They will be kind, respectful and demonstrate inclusive attitudes.

Respect - They will be effective communicators and listen respectfully, demonstrating tolerance of the views of others. They will have a sense of what is right and wrong.

Service - They will have a sense of their role in our school community and wider society.

Written by Claire Freeman (EYFS Lead): Sept 2024