



Early Years Policy

Reviewed Sept 2024



All quotations included in this document are taken from the Revised Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2023 (DfE)

'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.' (pg. 5)

At Redhill Primary School, we aim to 'ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.' (pg 5)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Redhill Primary, we support children ages 2- 5 years in our EYFS department.

The EYFS is based upon four guiding principles:



Every child is a unique and is constantly exploring and learning. They learn to be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. Practitioners work in partnership with parents, other settings and agencies to ensure all children achieve and develop.

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, parents and carers.

Children develop and learn in different ways and have different starting points and interests. The Early Years Foundation Stage supports the education and care of all children in Early Years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

A Unique Child

At Redhill Primary School, we recognise that every child has the potential to be a competent learner, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Thus, children will be monitored using daily 'in the moment' assessment for learning. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others, we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and some rewards, to encourage children to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of differences or additional needs. All children at Redhill Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, gender or abilities. All children and their families are welcome and valued within our school community. At Redhill, we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences, interests and starting points, when planning for their next steps in learning.

Planning

In order to ensure that all children learn and progress, we use careful observation and accurate assessment data to create clear baselines of children's starting points. We think carefully about the skills, knowledge and vocabulary children will need to access the curriculum. We then plan activities, enhance our learning environment and provide experiences to support the development of individual pupils and groups of pupils.

In the EYFS, we set achievable but challenging expectations, that meet the needs of our children. We aim to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils through high quality experiences, interactions providing targeted intervention. We monitor the progress of pupil groups such as boys and girls, children with additional needs, children in care and children with English as an Additional Language.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge & experience of the world.
- engaging with personal interests, helping children to develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and interests.
- providing a wide range of opportunities and experiences 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 exciting 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.
- monitoring children's progress and taking rapid action to provide support as necessary.

Safeguarding – Please read in conjunction the Redhill Safeguarding & Child Protection 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.” (pg.21)

At Redhill Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with Certain safeguarding and welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 (Dfe)

We understand that we are required to:

- take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well.
- promote the welfare 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 all staff are trained in identifying the signs of abuse.
- ensure all staff and volunteers know the child protection procedures for sharing concerns about a child or adult within the setting.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and 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. For further information please refer to:

- **Redhill Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.**
- **Redhill Health and Safety Policy.**
- **Redhill Behaviour Policy & EYFS Promoting Positive Behaviour.**
- **Redhill SEND & Inclusion Policy.**
- **Early Years Intimate Care and Toileting policy.**
- **Early Years Imaging and Mobile Phone policy.**

Online Safety:

Redhill Primary School recognises that technology and the internet are fantastic tools for learning and communication. This technology can be used in school and at home to enhance the curriculum, challenge students, and support creativity and independence. Using ICT to interact socially and share ideas can benefit everyone in the school community, but it is important that the appropriate use of the internet is seen as a responsibility of all. Pupils, staff and parents must use the internet and technology appropriately and practice good Online Safety.

It is important that all members of the school community (including parents & carers) are aware of the dangers of using the internet and how they should conduct themselves appropriately online. Therefore, we provide regular information to families. We also actively teach Online Safety in school to help children to navigate the internet and use devices safely.

Online safety covers the use of the internet but it also the use of mobile phones and other electronic communications technologies.

We are aware that there is the potential, that some adults and / or young people may misuse these technologies to harm children and /or adults. This harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations or actions online, webcam filming, photography or face-to-face meetings.

There is a 'duty of care' for any persons working with children that they use the internet and technology appropriately. As a setting, we will aim to educate all members of the school community on the risks and responsibilities of online safety.

It is important that there is a balance between controlling access to the internet and technology and allowing freedom to explore and use these tools to their full potential. Please see the Redhill Online Safety policy for further information on how we aim to aid regulating computing activity in school, and provide a good understanding of appropriate ICT use that members of the school community can use as a reference for their conduct online outside of school hours. Online-Safety is a whole-school issue and responsibility.

Cyber-bullying by pupils or parents will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying (child on child abuse) and will be managed through our anti-bullying procedures, which are outlined in our Safeguarding and Behaviour Policy.

For further information please refer to:

- **Early Years Mobile Phone, Image Recording and Practitioner Conduct Policies and Procedures.**
- **Redhill Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**
- **Redhill Online Safety Policy.**

Positive Relationships

At Redhill Primary School, we recognise that children learn to be strong and independent by forming secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families, other settings and wider agencies.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents / carers are their children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents/ carers have played, and their future role, in educating their children.

We support building positive relationships by:

- talking to parents/ carers about their child before they start in our school, using information to form baseline information & assessments.
- providing information to families, ensuring their children have an effective transition into the Redhill Early Years Foundation Stage.
- ensuring parents / carers are informed about the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and learning throughout the year.
- ensuring parents / carers and families are regularly updated about their child's development.
- encouraging parents / carers to talk to the child's teacher / key person if there are any concerns.
- encouraging parents / carers to input into their child's learning journey.
- providing practical advice, activities and resources to influence the home learning environment.

There are opportunities parents / carers to meet (in person or via telephone) in the Autumn, Spring & Summer terms. Here, the teacher (key person) & parent/ carer discuss the child's progress. Parents / carers receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the Foundation Stage. Parents / Carers of 2 year olds will also take part in a statutory progress check.

All staff who work in the EYFS, aim to develop good relationships with all children and families. We value talk and prioritise positive interactions, taking time to listen. At our school, each child is assigned a 'key person' to work closely with children and families, supporting them to settle in and keeping families updated about their child's progress.

Where children attend other settings, we aim to ensure continuity and coherence by sharing information about the children.

Effective Transitions and School Readiness

It is vital that we support children as they transfer through different stages in their life; especially when entering into our pre-school, nursery class, reception class and year 1.

At Redhill, transition is a whole year process and not just an event that happens during the Summer Term. We aim to gradually prepare children and parents for their next stage in development by helping them to be 'school ready'.

As a school community, we have defined school readiness as, **working in partnership with parents and other agencies to make sure that children possess the skills, knowledge and attitudes and vocabulary necessary for success in later learning and life.**

Throughout the year, we have events, provide information, and facilitate learning discussions and workshops to help parents to be informed about their child's next steps in learning and how to support them at home. We aim to build relationships with children, families, other settings and agencies to get to know about children's interests, preferred styles of learning and any additional needs to ensure they have a smooth transition during different transfer points.

We are working with other settings within our cluster to ensure that robust observations and assessments are completed to improve the consistency and accuracy of baseline starting points of children arriving into school.

Enabling Environments

At Redhill Primary School, we recognise that the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development. Through observation, we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences within the environment to support and extend the children's learning and knowledge. We think carefully about the progressive skills children need to acquire and how the environment can be used to promote independence and develop resilience.

Health and Safety

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and expectations of the setting and to help them understand why these rules exist within society. We promote our school rule of "Ready, Respectful & Safe" to teach children to take care of themselves, their belongings, their peers and their own behaviour.

We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We provide children with opportunities to learn about our emotions and how to manage them appropriately and safely.

We feel that children should be allowed to take risks and work independently but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. Indoor and outdoor learning environments are risk assessed along with any special activities (i.e. cooking, local community walks) or education visits.

For Further information please see:

- **Redhill Health and Safety Policy**
- **EYFS Internal & External Risk Assessments**
- **Redhill Safeguarding Policy**
- **Redhill Behaviour Policy**

Outdoor Learning:

Redhill Early Years Foundation Stage is organised to allow children daily access to outdoor spaces in order to explore and learn securely and safely.

Each learning space in the Early Years Foundation Stage, has its own enclosed outdoor area. In our outdoor areas, there are spaces where the children can be active, creative or be quiet and rest. The outdoor area is organised clearly so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

We plan daily activities both indoors and outdoors, enabling children to develop in all the areas of learning. This daily access to outdoor learning, has a positive effect on the children's physical, mental and social well-being. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active using gross motor skills.

Learning and Development

At Redhill Primary School, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often linked.

Teaching and Learning Style

At Redhill, high quality Early Years teaching and learning is defined by the following features of effective practise:

- Building effective partnership between teachers and parents/ carers, ensuring our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- Ensuring practitioner have a good level of understanding about how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching or pedagogical approaches.
- Providing a range of quality teaching approaches & interactions, providing first-hand experiences, giving clear explanations, making appropriate interventions, extending and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- Providing a carefully planned curriculum that helps children develop the knowledge, skills, vocabulary & attitudes needed to reach age related expectations at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and move on to Year 1.
- Providing provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.
- Encouraging children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence, resilience and problem-solving skills.
- Providing appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space with access to suitable facilities and equipment.
- Providing high quality care, focussing on the positive experience of all children and being responsive to children's needs.
- Monitoring progress and identifying future learning needs of children through observation and accurate assessment.
- Building good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school.
- Building good relationships between our school and other professionals to support children's health, pastoral and learning needs.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

When planning and assessing, practitioners are encouraged to reflect on and consider the different ways that children learn and reflect this in their practice, observing not only what children are learning but how they learn and the skills that they use that enable them to do so.

Characteristics of Effective Teaching & Learning	
Playing and exploring - engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finding out and exploring• Playing with what they know• Being willing to 'have a go'
Active learning - motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being involved and concentrating• Keeping trying• Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
Creating and thinking critically - thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having their own ideas• Making links• Choosing ways to do things and review how it is going.

Playing and Exploring

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems.' (pg.16)

Whilst learning through play, our children explore the environment and develop skills, which help them to make sense of the world. They use their prior knowledge and experiences to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. Children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express worries or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. Practitioners support this play and through quality interactions, help to teach the skills necessary for children to develop.

Active Learning

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 as they learn to make decisions. Active Learning promotes resilience and perseverance. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning and goal setting.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

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 ended questions. Children can

access to a range of open-ended resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning. Children are encouraged to have their own ideas for solving problems, testing out their ideas and reviewing their progress.

Areas of Learning

The learning experiences within the Redhill Early Years curriculum are based around the seven areas of learning from the Revised Development Matters 2021.

Prime Areas	Personal Social and Emotional Development <i>Society Curriculum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self- Regulation • Managing Self • Building Relationships
	Communication and Language Development <i>Word Aware / Concept Cat</i>	<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 - <i>White Rose Maths (N / R)</i>	<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

None of these areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. Each area is interconnected and supports the development of a range of transferable skills and knowledge. All areas of learning 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.

Our Curriculum

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 and routines.

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 designed to review, revisit and build on prior knowledge so that children "dig deeper" embedding their knowledge and understanding and master a range of skills. An example of this is Road safety. In Pre-school & Nursery we cover 'top layer' basic knowledge such as car seat safety and crossing the road with an adult. As this is revisited in later year groups we can 'dig deeper' into the subject and look at wider hazards and clothing we can wear to help us keep safe.

Assessment for Learning

Why do we assess children?

- To provide the most effective and relevant learning support for individual needs both in the moment and over time.
- To identify children who need extra support.
- To plan for targeted interventions for individual children or groups of children.
- To monitor progress over time, ensuring we diminish difference between our most vulnerable learners.



We make regular 'in the moment' and summative assessments of children's learning. We use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS is mainly through observation and practitioner discussion and judgement. These observations can be evidenced in children's individual learning journeys in a variety of ways (i.e. photographs, examples of work, formal skills assessment, practitioner knowledge, pupil, parent voice) and this information is used to inform any future planning or interventions.

Statutory Assessment

2 Year Progress Checks

Between the ages of 2 and 3 years old a child's key worker will work with families to review child's progress.

- Keyworkers will report on children's development in the Prime Areas of Learning:
 - Personal, Social and Emotional Development
 - Physical Development
 - Communication and Language.
- Key workers will identify areas of strength and any areas of concern.
- Key workers will create support plans to help your child in the setting at home.
- Key workers will support families to access any support from wider agencies such as School Nurse, Speech and Language Therapy or Special Educational Needs support.

Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)

Within the first 6 weeks of starting Reception, all children will take part in a Baseline assessment to assess starting points in speaking & listening, early literacy and number. Activities completed one to one with a familiar member of staff. Information from the Baseline will be used to measure progress from on entry into Reception to the end of Key Stage 2.

Early Year's Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)

Within the final term of the EYFS, school will provide a written summary to parents / carers, reporting on their attainment against all 7 areas of learning. Practitioners will use the Early Learning Goals to make a best fit judgement, assessing if children have met Age Related Expectations. Judgements are based on practitioner knowledge and evidence gathered during the Early Year's phase and will be moderated to ensure they are accurate. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with their teacher / key worker.

Monitoring and Review of practice.

It is the responsibility of all Foundation Stage Practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy.

- There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This Governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.
- The Shaw Education Trust, Headteacher, EYFS Lead and Subject Leaders carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.
- The Early Years Foundation stage is also supported by Shaw Education Trust, Staffordshire County Council, Entrust services and other external EYFS consultants

Policy written by Claire Freeman (Early Years Lead) Sept 2021

**All quotations included in this document are taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage
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Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)
