

# Early Years

## Foundation Stage Policy

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### Document History

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V1.0	March 2019	EYFS Lead	Policy updated
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# The Hundred Languages of Children

The child is made of one hundred.

The child has  
a hundred languages  
a hundred hands  
a hundred thoughts  
a hundred ways of thinking  
of playing, of speaking.

A hundred.

Always a hundred  
ways of listening  
of marveling, of loving  
a hundred joys  
for singing and understanding  
a hundred worlds  
to discover  
a hundred worlds  
to invent  
a hundred worlds  
to dream.

The child has  
a hundred languages  
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)  
but they steal ninety-nine.

The school and the culture  
separate the head from the body.

They tell the child:  
to think without hands  
to do without head  
to listen and not to speak  
to understand without joy  
to love and to marvel  
only at Easter and at Christmas.

They tell the child:  
to discover the world already there  
and of the hundred  
they steal ninety-nine.

They tell the child:  
that work and play  
reality and fantasy  
science and imagination  
sky and earth  
reason and dream  
are things

that do not belong together.

And thus they tell the child  
that the hundred is not there.

The child says:  
No way. The hundred is there.

-Loris Malaguzzi  
Founder of the Reggio Emilia Approach

## **Introduction**

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation, and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

*“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, 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year.

## **Aims and Purposes of the EYFS**

Here at Sileby Redlands Community Primary School’s Foundation Stage, we aim to provide a nurturing, rich, and stimulating environment to enable each child to fulfil their potential. We provide a happy, safe, and caring space where children feel secure, giving them the firm foundation on which their future learning can be built. We encourage children to become independent and confident learners, to explore and discover things for themselves, whilst supporting them to enable them to make connections in their learning. Through our motivating environment, we provide enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident, happy, and collaborative learners. We provide opportunities for exploration and investigation, space to learn and embed new skills in both indoor and outdoor learning environments that stimulate the children’s imaginations and support their development.

We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

## **Statutory Framework of EYFS**

We adhere to the DfE (2021) ‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- 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 interests and needs as well as having a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice;
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment, and by the children’s own ideas and interests;

- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated, and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

### **A Unique Child**

Fundamental to our approach is the image of each child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured. We want children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. We understand that children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers and at Redlands, we pride ourselves with these partnerships. Redlands also recognise the importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates and our curriculum is highly inclusive for all, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development. In partnership with parents/ carers, the school promotes the learning and development of pupils to ensure they are ready for the next stage of education. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation of igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships, and thriving; these are called the prime areas.

The three **prime areas** of learning that underpin everything in the early years:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

We also support the children through four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These **four specific areas** are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All the areas of learning are connected together. The characteristics of effective teaching and learning weave through them all. That is because children in the early years are becoming more powerful learners and thinkers. These characteristics develop as they learn to do new things, acquire new skills, develop socially and emotionally, and become better communicators.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

1. **Playing and Exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active Learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. **Creating and Thinking Critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively, and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication, and physical development.

We create medium term plans based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. At the beginning of each topic the children are encouraged to share their ideas for learning experiences with us. These ideas are then used to inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations which identify areas to focus on. We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and children's responses. Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily carpet learning sessions.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'*. We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities, and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to move through the indoor stations, and free-flow in the outdoor provision.

### **Observations and Assessment**

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future planning. We record our observations in a variety of ways and everyone in class is encouraged to contribute.

Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal, online 'Tapestry' Learning Journal. Parents and carers are encouraged to add their own comments and also to upload their own observations to show us what their children are able to do at home.

The children's progress is reviewed continually. Throughout their time in Reception, parents and carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally through our 'open door' policy and more formally during parent/teacher consultations. Children's 'next steps in learning' are communicated with parents and carers so they know how to help their children with their learning at home.

At Redlands, we understand that high levels of well-being involvement allow children to experience deep learning. A happy, involved child is one who can experience the world at its fullest. They truly learn from those experiments. A child with low well-being is far more likely to exhibit extreme behaviour which will prevent them to engage with the opportunities at Redland. We use the Leuven scales of well-being and involvement to track this development throughout the year also.

At the end of the year, the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher, who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement.

The children are assessed as achieving a 1 or 2 against each area of the EYFS curriculum:

- 2 = Expected ELG - meeting the expected level
- 1 = Emerging ELG - not yet meeting the expected level

This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

## **Health and Safety**

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at Redlands Community Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety. Redlands Community Primary School has robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

In Reception, we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules, and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development, and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads/tablets are used to photograph children (for Tapestry observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders at Redlands Community Primary School. Backing up this policy, is a dedicated safeguarding team. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns which are recorded using the schools safeguarding system.

## **Inclusion**

We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability, or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the ELGs.

We work closely with the parents and carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met, and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and carers and outside agencies. We have a designated SENDCo in school who supports us with any additional needs a child may have.

## **The Role of Parents and Carers**

We recognise the central importance of parents and carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's

education and care in numerous ways:

- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school;
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns and ask questions;
- Inviting them to parent meetings to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Encouraging parents and carers to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing curriculum planning overviews for each topic;
- Inviting parents and carers into school for parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- Welcoming parents as volunteers into our school;
- Providing parents with an end of year report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- Drawing on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

### **Transitions**

Transitions are carefully planned for, and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Children attend an introductory session with their parents/carers to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners. Our reception staff also visit the local nurseries and preschools in return, to familiarise themselves with the children.

Parents and carers are encouraged to take up the offer of a parent meeting with their child's class teacher when their child starts school. This is a valuable time to talk 1:1 with them and answer any concerns and queries parents and carers may have.

At the end of the EYFS, our reception teachers meet with the Year 1 teachers to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data is sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers can plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend a number of sessions towards the end of the school year in the Year 1 classroom to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'.

### **Monitoring of the EYFS**

We are committed to providing the best possible experiences for our children. All adults in the reception team have a key role in children's learning and development. Therefore, they are required to be knowledgeable and skilled in the EYFS curriculum. Any training needs for existing or new members of staff are identified and addressed as part of performance management targets.