

# Rainow Primary School

*Caring, Learning, Achieving.*

## Early Years Policy

**Member of staff responsible:**  
**Governor Committee:**  
**Date approved by the governors:**  
**Date to be reviewed:**

**Nicola Daley**  
**Teaching and Learning**  
**Spring term 2017**  
**Spring term 2020**



We aim to support children in their learning through teaching and experiences that gives children the broad range of skills that provide the right foundation for good progress through school and in life.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2014 (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Rainow we base the Early Years on guidance from this document.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

### A Unique Child

At Rainow Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, to encourage children to develop a 'Growth mind set' using our school values.

#### *Inclusion*

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Rainow Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. Planning for children with special needs is done using an 'Action for Inclusion Plan' that has been developed by the school.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs,

children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds where necessary.

We 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.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

### *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)

**At Rainow we believe that 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 Rainow 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 2014. 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**

At Rainow Primary School we recognise that children learn to be confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

### *Parents as Partners*

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make.

We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher, in the classroom with their parents before starting at school during a mornings visit to the classroom. This also includes a full tour of the school and a visit to the dining hall.
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our reception class and allowing free access to the children's observation books.
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns. There is a formal meeting for parents in the first two terms at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress in private with the teacher. Parents receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: maths mornings, nativity plays and singing concerts, Sports Day etc.
- Encouraging parents to contribute observations and 'wow moments' in the children's online learning journeys. We currently use an online service called 'TAPESTRY'.
- Encouraging parents to make comments in their child's reading diary.

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, supported by the Teaching Assistant and any other staff as appropriate.

We have good links with Rainow Preschool. Regular visits are undertaken by the EYFS teacher. The EYFS teacher regularly meets with staff to discuss new intake children.

All children in the Reception class are matched up with a Year 6 'buddy'. The Year 6 buddy acts as a mentor to the younger child throughout their time in the EYFS at Rainow. The Year 6 buddies accompany Reception on some trips; have lunch with them and from time to time join them for lessons or nature walks.

## Enabling Environments

At Rainow Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

### *Observation, Assessment and Planning*

The Planning within the EYFS starts with the Long Term Provision Plan. Medium Term Plans are based on the children's interest and are child led. Regular planning meetings are held with the children to ask them what they would like to learn and a topic web is made with the children. The teacher and classroom assistant then add in ideas depending on the skills the children need to learn. The medium term plan is then added to by children and staff as the need arises. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for daily 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 in children's

individual online learning journeys which are looked at each term to ascertain progress against the Early Learning Goals. They also contain information provided by parents and other settings.

At Rainow Primary School, we use the 'eProfile' software to record judgements against the EYFS Profile each half term. **Each child's level of development is recorded against 17 assessment statements. (Early Learning Goals).**

The teacher will judge each child's achievement at the end of the year to ascertain a child's level of development in each area of learning:

**Emerging** which indicates that the child is working towards a goal;  
**Expected** which indicates attainment largely matching the goal;  
**Exceeding** which indicates that the pupil has attained beyond the goal.

Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's, as well as an individual report that comments on each child's 'characteristics of learning' (see below). We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

### *The Learning Environment*

The EYFS classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

The EYFS class has its own outdoor area and is given access to the whole main playground wherever possible. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunities to explore; use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all areas of learning. We also make full use of our outstanding physical environment to support the teaching and learning. We make sure we have at least one nature walk every week which is linked to the 'Rainow Early Years Nature Scheme of Work'.

## Learning and Development

At Rainow Primary School we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

### *Play*

The Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2014 states that "play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. There is an ongoing judgement to be made by practitioners about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults. Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning in Year 1." The ethos of the Early Years at Rainow truly reflects this and in addition puts play at the forefront of learning.

At Rainow we encourage the three characteristics of effective learning given in the Statutory Framework 2014. These are:

- **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

### *Areas of Learning*

**The EYFS is made up of seven areas of learning:**

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal Social and Emotional Development**
- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding of the World**
- **Expressive Art and Design**

Religious Education is also taught in the reception class in accordance with Cheshire East guidelines.

We also believe in offering our pupils opportunities to experience contrasting environments. Every year we plan a trip to Manchester. In addition we always teach children about other cultures and countries, ensuring that they realise they are part of a wider world.

The Reception class is also included in most school 'special days'.

These include wellbeing week, woodland days, theatre trips etc.

### *Teaching and Learning Style*

Our policy on teaching and learning defines the features of effective teaching and learning in our school. Features that relate to the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our school;

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teacher to follow the principles stated in this policy.

There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor will discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners regularly and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion.

The Head teacher and subject co-ordinators will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.