

Ramillies Hall Nursery

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Policy



Introduction

At Ramillies Hall Nursery, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, in line with the duty placed on us by Sections 157 and 175 of the Childcare Act, 2006.

We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop rapidly 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. At Ramillies we follow Learning and Development requirements set out as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (DFE 2021)

Commitment

Learning and Development Requirements: Early years providers must guide the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensuring that children in their care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them.

Policy Statement

Ramillies Hall Nursery operates as three distinct departments in separate buildings serving three separate age groups.

- Baby Nursery – children attend this department until they are around 22-24 months.
- Toddlers Department – Children usually attend this department from around 24 months to around 33 months.
- Early Years Department – Children who are over 33 months join our Early Years Department, staying until they leave to attend Infant or Primary Schools.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

We follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021) and aim to provide high quality provision that supports the learning and development of individual children, whatever their ability. It ensures that the children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe.

The Development Matters curriculum has four guiding themes and principles that shape and underpin practice in the early years and through seven areas of learning. Threading through and underpinning all of the areas of learning and development are The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning which illustrate how children learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creating and thinking critically. We have our own Ramillies Curriculum which brings together what we as a nursery feel are the best qualities of the Development Matters and Birth to Five Guidance together with some of the underlying ethos of different approaches such as Montessori, Curiosity Approach, Reggio Emilia and with strong reference to attachment Theory.

The overall aim of the EYFS is to provide:

- Quality and consistency – so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A secure foundation – through the provision of learning and development opportunities which are planned around the individual child
- Partnership working – between parents/ carers and nursery staff
- Equality of opportunity – ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The four guiding themes are:

- A Unique Child – Every child is a unique and competent learner
- Positive Relationships – children learn to be confident and independent through strong and close attachments.
- Enabling Environments – supporting and extending a child’s development through an enriching and responsive learning environment.
- Learning and Development – adapting and recognising that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, supporting the education and care of all children, including children with special needs and disabilities.

The seven areas of learning and development are divided into three prime areas and four specific areas. All the areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Prime areas

These areas ignite children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and build their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. They also underpin future learning in the Specific areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage and learning beyond this phase. The Prime Areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

Specific areas

The prime areas are supported and strengthened by the specific areas. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

These underpin and thread through all areas of learning and development and refer to how children learn most effectively, individual children may prefer or show a preference for one particular characteristic or show a preference for all characteristics at different points in their learning and developmental journey.

Children learn through:

Playing and Exploring: Engagement

Children are encouraged to share and act upon their interests. We recognise that children will engage more if they are involved and curious about the world around them. We allow children to take risks and promote a ‘can do’ attitude through challenging opportunities and experiences.

Active Learning: Motivation

The learning environments motivate children through carefully planned activities and invitations to play that fascinate and inspire learning. Children are highly valued, praised and supported to keep trying which results in children feeling confident to try new things and achieve.

Creating and Thinking Critically: Thinking

Through sustained shared thinking, children are encouraged to have enquiring minds, the questions and ideas that children have are valued and this supports children to extend and collaborate in their learning, testing and making links between these ideas.

Practitioners ensure that these characteristics are catered for through activities, experiences and careful planning of the Learning environment.

Working in Partnership with parents.

The nursery has an open door policy. We welcome parents' involvements in their children's learning, for example through daily discussions and by parents contributing to their child's online learning journals (Family) and providing photographs and information about their home life and we use these to build upon at nursery. Each department focusses on one or more individual children each week, (Focus Week) and at this time, a sheet is sent home to children's parents for them to complete with any current interests and favourite activities their child has currently. There is also an opportunity for parents to ask any questions they may have or request support in a particular area. This helps practitioners engage children in learning by following their interests. Every child will have a focus week once a term. We provide parents with regular assessments following these Focus Weeks in the form of a short report on Family.

In addition to this we provide opportunities for parents to come into the setting to join in with activities, Stay and Plays etc and we hold regular parent's evenings. Parents can also request to meet with their child's Key Person at any time.

The way in which we facilitate the curriculum is reviewed yearly.

Provision

- The nursery and school has a dedicated and professional team who work together to provide a high quality curriculum for all the children. The team includes practitioners with Early Education Degrees as well as qualified early years practitioners who are supported by Level 2 and 3 apprentices and Nursery Assistants.
- We constantly strive and reflect upon our practice to ensure the needs of the individual children are met, helping to develop their confidence and independence.
- Each child is assigned a key person; this helps to promote a healthy emotional attachment and provides an important link from home to nursery. The key person provides a familiar, trusting, safe and secure relationship and acts as an advocate for each individual child within their group.
- Planning is centred on the needs and experiences of each individual child, so that true potential can be nurtured and realised. Children are valued as active participants in their own learning and are consulted; their suggestions and thoughts acknowledged and reflected both within the planning and learning environments.
- We provide a rich variety of experiences including academic, musical, physical and creative.
- We have child friendly and stimulating indoor and outdoor areas which support and reflect the varying ages and stages of development.
- Routines are established so that children feel safe and secure within a predictable environment and begin to anticipate and feel confident to make the next step. Daily routines are managed carefully to ensure that key people can carry out the main care aspects of individual children in their groups.
- Resources are clearly labelled and accessible for the children, children are encouraged to have ownership in their environment, displaying their own work and being active in their decisions and choices.

Cultural Capital

- We recognise that children who are offered a wide range of experiences, activities and exposure to a wide range of vocabulary are likely to have better outcomes later in their lives. To support this, our curriculum is planned to include opportunities for children to see new places, hear a range of stories, rhymes, songs and styles of music, view a wide range of art and creativity and meet new people. We use a good range of vocabulary with children, introducing them to correct terminology and new words which are in the context of their learning. We also strongly value that learning happens not just at nursery but in the experiences that children have at home and beyond and we celebrate that learning by encouraging parents and children to share their news, talk about their experiences, and reflect on them through their play.

Planning and assessment

Planning –

- Practitioners follow the learning requirements of the EYFS but through our own Ramillies Curriculum which takes into account the four guiding principles, the seven areas of learning and the characteristics of effective learning laid out in the EYFS.
- Long term plans are created at the beginning of each academic year. These set out key dates and possible learning experiences as well as the intended core provision in terms of what areas of learning and equipment will be provided and what our daily routines will be together with information about how these will contribute to children's learning and development.
- As Practitioners observe children at play, they collect information about children's interests and possible lines of development. This information is used to plan enhancements to the learning environment and a range of activities to encourage children to take the 'next steps' in their learning whilst doing things they enjoy and are interested in.
- The key person is responsible for the planning for their own individual key children, taking into account current interests, age and stage of development and any additional needs.
- Practitioners also plan weekly for adult led activities such as Key Group times, mathematics and Letters and Sounds activities.
- We use the Letters and Sounds programme, concentrating mainly on Phase 1, to support children's communication and language development, working towards the learning of systematic phonics for those children who are ready to progress to phase 2.

Assessment -

We hold the individual children at the centre of our planning. This is achieved through ongoing observations and assessments.

The staff achieve this by

- Observing the children as they interact in their play and everyday activities, child initiated activities and planned activities and learning from and sharing with parents about their home life.
- Observing what children can do, and identifying possible lines of development.
- Considering ways to support the children to strengthen and promote their current learning and development.
- Considering the individual child's needs, interest and stage of development including any schemas they display.

- Termly assessments are shared with parents/carers to strengthen partnerships and promote home learning.
- A two year progress development check will be carried out for children between the ages of 24 months and 36 months.
- For children joining the nursery, a baseline assessment is carried out in the first few weeks which takes into account information shared by parents on the “All About Me” form and the assessment is shared on Family.
- A full written transition report is provided for all children when they are to leave the nursery whether this is to go to school or to go to another provider.

Equal opportunities, inclusion and specials needs

The EYFS is taught in accordance with the current policy for Inclusion and equality. Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures and beliefs, valuing that everyone is unique in their own right and act upon it. Through everyday experiences, opportunities and interactions children learn aspects of tolerance, dignity, respect, liberty, equality and diversity, i.e. core British Values.

It is the Nursery’s responsibility to ensure that we identify and help those children in our care with additional educational needs including gifted children. We have a named SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities co-ordinator), Rachael Pope, whose responsibility it is to coordinate a targeted response to any additional need a child may present with either before joining the nursery or identified by the nursery. The SENDCO will work closely with Key Persons and with parents and other agencies as necessary to ensure children’s needs are fully met. The Sendco is also supported in delivering targeted interventions by other practitioners.

Because we understand that good levels of Speech, Communication and language development are key factors in successful outcomes for children, this is an area on which we focus much attention. All children undergo Welcomm screening, which provides some indication of which children need more targeted support. We also use the Every Child a Talker (ECAT) monitoring tool to screen children’s language and communication development which provides a more detailed assessment and thus enables a more purposeful way of targeting support.

Further information regarding the EYFS

DFE website – www.education.gov.uk

Parents’ guide to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework – www.foundationyears.org.uk

What to expect when – www.4children.org.uk

Other related policies: Safeguarding, e-Safety, SEND, Equipment, Equal Opportunities

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Signed by Nursery Manager	
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