



Rossmore School

Rossmore School's EYFS policy

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up'

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from Birth to the end of the Reception year. At Rossmore School children can be accepted for a place after their third birthday in our Pre-school provision and are admitted to the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives, not just in preparation for the next stage but as a vitally important stage itself. Learning for children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, create, rehearse, revise and consolidate their developing attitudes, understanding, knowledge and skills. During the EYFS, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Aims/Objectives

Throughout our Pre-school and Reception class, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all children, giving them a firm foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with challenging and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work closely with parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

Intent

In EYFS at Rossmore School, the curriculum is designed to recognise children's prior learning from previous settings and their experiences at home, provide first hand learning experiences, whilst allowing the children to build resilience, ambition and integrity. Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that children's first experiences of school should be happy and positive, enabling us to develop a lifelong love of learning.

We ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. We promote teaching and learning to ensure children's readiness for the next stage of their education and give children a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

We seek to provide:

- **Quality and consistency**, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between practitioners and parents.

- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.
- **Smooth Transition** from EYFS to KS1 by providing children with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to succeed throughout their education

Implementation

Within EYFS at Rossmore School, we follow the Early Years Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, updated January 2024, by the DfE. This framework specifies the requirement for learning and development in the Early Years and provides prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum. We also ensure we promote the development of the characteristics of effective learning; playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically.

Our curriculum has been designed to enable children to succeed through cooperative and collaborative learning principles. As such, there is a strong emphasis on the Prime Areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language, including Oracy. At Rossmore School, we recognise that oracy not only improves academic outcomes, but is a life skill to ensure success beyond school, in life and future employment. Oracy develops children's thinking and understanding, which in turn promotes self-confidence, resilience and empathy which support the child's well-being. Our enabling environments and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration right from the start.

Each half term, EYFS staff introduce a new theme to provide inspiration for learning, whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Children learn through a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities across the foundation stage. The timetable is carefully planned that children have directed teaching in specific areas such as English and Mathematics. We also ensure regular Circle Time/ PSHE sessions to focus on C&L and PSED and Topic sessions to focus UW and EAD. These sessions are followed by group work where children work with a member of staff to develop their individual targets. This focused group time enables the teacher to systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning.

Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. We greatly value outdoor learning and provide free-flow opportunities so learning experiences and explorations can happen inside and outside.

English / Literacy

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading right from the start. In EYFS we have 'Our Favourite 5' each half term. The aim is to expose children to a range of books that not only develop a love of reading, but have been chosen specifically to develop their oracy, vocabulary and comprehension. These five books will be embedded in our provision through activities, story sessions and on display for children to access independently. Through this, children begin to internalise new vocabulary, language patterns and begin to retell stories.

Phonics

At Rossmore we teach from a systematic, synthetic phonics programme using principles from Letters and Sounds across the EYFS and KS1. This is supported by a set of consistent resources throughout the school to support the effective delivery of phonics lesson. Phonics begins in pre-school teaching Phase 1 and this progresses through to Reception. Reception Phonics starts early in Autumn term to provide all children with good starting points on their individual reading journey. Children are given books that match their phonic knowledge in order for them to apply their learning with the aim of becoming successful, confident and fluent readers.

Maths

In Pre-school we begin to teach early number skills to support transition through to Reception. In Reception, we follow the NCETM Mastering Number programme. High quality learning environments and meaningful interactions with adults, support children in developing mathematical thinking and discussion. Pupils learn through games and tasks using concrete manipulatives and pictorial structures and representations which are then rehearsed, applied and recorded within their own child-led exploration and within adult directed maths groups.

Impact

The impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in having well rounded, happy and confident children transitioning into Year 1. Our children are often amazing role models for others in school.

We measure progress and children's learning across the year through formative and summative assessments which are based on the teacher's knowledge of the child, their online Tapestry learning journeys which is filled with observations, photographs and video recordings. We aim to exceed the National and Local Authority data for children achieving a Good Level of Development. Most of our children make more than the expected progress from their starting points.

The teaching and pedagogy are reviewed and evaluated regularly through termly team meetings with EYFS staff. These have an agenda and actions which are then reviewed in the following meeting. We ensure that the areas we discuss and develop are reflected in changes and developments in our classroom practice linked to our action plan.

The Early Years provision features in all areas of the School Development Plan and has a rigorous plan for development each year. This is monitored and evaluated by the EYFS Lead, Senior Leadership Team and Head Teacher.

Assessment

Baseline:

Prior to children starting, staff spend time speaking to the child's parents, previous settings and read previous learning journeys to gain an understanding of the whole child and where they are at. During the first half term in Pre-school or Reception, all staff use ongoing assessments, observations and conversations with the child to develop a baseline assessment. This identifies each individual's starting points in all areas so we can plan experiences to ensure progress. We also carry out the RBA (Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment). This assessment focuses on 'Language, Communication and Literacy,' and 'Mathematics.' The purpose of this is to show the progress children make from Reception until the end of KS2.

Ongoing Observation: All ongoing observations are used to inform weekly planning and identify children's next steps. This formative assessment does not involve prolonged periods of time away from the children and excessive paperwork. Practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgements through discussions with other practitioners, photographs and physical examples such as a child's drawing / making. Observations are uploaded using Tapestry and shared with the supporting parents and carers.

Phonic assessments are carried out half termly to quickly identify pupils that are not making expected progress. Our aim is for children to 'keep up' rather than 'catch up' where possible. Termly assessments are completed by the Class Teacher to update the progress children have made and to track if they are on-track to meeting their ELG's. In Summer Term 2, the EYFSP is completed where the teacher judges whether the child has met each of the 17 ELG's. They will be assessed as either 'emerging' or 'expected.' Whilst there is no judgement to state if a child is exceeding beyond an ELG, teachers have a duty to provide a narrative for both parents and the Year 1 teacher.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Our inclusive approach means that all children learn together, however we also use a range of additional interventions to support, enhance and scaffold children who may not be reaching their potential or to help move on children who are having difficulties making progress. Some examples of this include our nurture group aimed at supporting some of our vulnerable children and additional '1-1 intervention' provision in Maths, Phonics and Physical Development to promote fine motor skills.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (January 2024) which sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five seeks to provide:

“Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.”

At Rossmore we have a responsibility to ensure we develop positive attitudes to diversity and difference. Not only so that every child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that they learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.

Written by: A. Edwards September 2024

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