

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum Policy

Responsible for review of policy	Head of Nursery School
Sub Committee to review	Not Applicable
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Approved by Board of Governors	Not Applicable
Next review due	September 2026
Related policies	

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum Policy

Curriculum Coordinators Vicky Greig & Claire Baker

At RMS our aim is to provide a safe, secure environment that is rich and stimulating where all children can develop to become curious, independent learners. We strive to be a beacon of excellence in early year's provision, prioritising three key ingredients, highly trained staff, an enabling well-resourced environment, and a progressive balance of child and teacher-led learning through each stage of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

'The EYFS is a distinct and important phase in education. It places equal priority on supporting children's social and emotional development, and their learning. The early years are a crucial time for developing children's enjoyment of learning, their engagement and motivation. It's an important time for children to develop their ability to persist and show gritty determination.'

Julien Grenier Working with the Early Years Foundation Stage 2025

Children develop more rapidly during the first five years of their lives than at any other time. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets out the learning and development stages as they grow from birth to five years, and outlines what we need to do to support your child. At the heart of our curriculum are the children. We ask them what they want, what they enjoy and what they want to learn and we encourage parents to be part of this process. We use children's interests to plan practical experiences which provide the richest learning opportunities, with quality resources and sensitive teaching that is responsive to the children's needs, encouraging them to become motivated independent learners. Equal value is placed on learning both indoors and outdoors. We provide a mix of whole group, small group and individual teaching adapted through each stage to ensure girls are prepared for the more formal learning in Year 1.

There are seven areas of learning EYFS that underpin our educational programmes. They are as follows:

Prime Areas

The Prime areas of development and learning lay vital foundations in the early years. They are time-sensitive because of biological factors that enable rapid connections, particularly in the first three years of life but continuing through early childhood. It is through these aspects that children access the world around them and relationships with other people, which in turn opens the doors to learning in all areas.

Personal Social and Emotional

Who we are (personal), how we get along with others (social) and how we feel (emotional) are foundations that form the bedrock of our lives. As we move through life, we are continually developing our sense of self weaving a web of relationships with self, others and with the world. Some aspects to this crucial area of development are as follows:

- Self-regulation and executive functioning are essential skills for children's learning and healthy development. We support children to develop these skills by scaffolding tasks, recognising and labelling children's feelings. Teachers model problem solving and a growth mindset approach.
- We encourage children to try new things, take risks in their learning, and be resilient, persevering in the face of challenge. We explain the reasons for rules and support children in making good choices.
- We encourage children to demonstrate independence and manage their personal needs. This includes dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices, keeping clean and oral health.
- We also help our children build relationships. We model attentive listening, sharing, taking turns and conflict resolution. We support the children to develop empathy by helping to understand the viewpoint of others.

Physical Development

We nurture children's strong need and desire to be physically active, which builds the foundations for all other areas of development. We will provide an environment and supportive adults that will:

- Build children's core strength, stamina, balance, co-ordination and physical development including independence with both fine and gross motor skills.
- Enable children to develop a range of large and small movements they can control
- Improve and refine children's control and manipulation of a variety of tools
- Instil a confidence in their own physical abilities
- Promote independence by teaching them to make decisions and choices that will keep them healthy and safe
- Fostering a culture of sportsmanship being willing to have a go
- Transferring skills into all other areas of learning

Specialist teaching starts in our nursery where children can join swimming and RMS GO outdoor education. This offer progresses for our Reception children who will also take part in games and gym sessions.

Communication and Language

The acquisition of language is the single most important and complex skill a child learns in their first five years and is one of the biggest predictors of success for children as they move on to school and later in life. We develop communication and language through role modelling and the provision of irresistible provocations, engaging conversation and providing children with genuine reasons to talk, building their vocabulary bank through high quality interaction and storytelling. Equally crucial is the ability to listen and maintain attention. Exemplary communicators immerse children in a rich environment of words, sounds and rhythm valuing the different ways and means children use to communicate. When children join us we use visuals and signs to support their understanding, particularly of the nursery routine. We use WellCom, a speech and language toolkit to assess and support children with their language development.

Specific Areas

Once the prime areas are securely in place children have the skills to access the specific areas which become of equal importance.

Literacy

When children start at Ruspini we place emphasis on developing enthusiastic emerging readers who delight in a love of stories, a passion which is carried through to Reception. Every day we model the joy that books provide and use a range of strategies, including Letters and Sounds, to develop language comprehension as well as the sound discrimination and auditory memory needed for reading and writing. Mark making opportunities are provided and modelled throughout our indoor and outdoor space. All our teachers receive regular training in Read Write Inc., the programme we use to teach skilled word reading and writing. We teach children the sounds of letters through mnemonics, how to blend the sounds into words and when they are ready to read simple 'blending books'. This gives children a flying start before moving into Reception. In Reception children have a daily RWI phonic lesson developing their skills to blend to read and segment to write.

Mathematics

Mathematical understanding is developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play. Through the use of manipulatives children can explore counting and cardinality, comparison and conservation of number, shape pattern and measure. We provide opportunities for children to practise, rehearse and apply mathematical knowledge and skills. We encourage children to think logically, to question, so that they can make connections and solve problems and use mathematical vocabulary to justify and explain their ideas. Maths is taught daily through fun and engaging adult led activities which children can then rehearse in their environment as they secure and deepen their understanding.

Understanding the World

We encourage children to explore and question the world around them, to observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. We have interactive class boards, iPads and programmable toys for children to explore and support their learning. We cultivate children's curiosity about people and events

within and beyond their living memory, capitalising on their innate desire to make sense of their own place in history. We aim to foster a sense of awe and wonder about the world through practical experiences, such as exploring the woodland in our very own Tranquillity Garden area, providing the children with rich first hand experiences of nature and the seasons. We develop an understanding and appreciation of different traditions and communities. We provide children with the freedom to explore, investigate and experiment using all their senses, cultivating curiosity in how and why things work and change. We encourage questioning, testing out ideas and drawing conclusions.

Expressive Art and Design

Children are provided with many opportunities to modify, manipulate and experiment with media and materials. We explore sounds, patterns, movement and different tools and techniques. We provide opportunities to be imaginative, enhancing children's explorations into the world of pretence, building on their experiences of the real world and transforming them into something new and personal to them. We allow children to use their own imagination, to be uninhibited artists, working individually and collaboratively on a variety of projects throughout the year.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

While children can learn many facts and figures during their early education, we believe the greatest skill is 'how to learn'. We think carefully about how we can facilitate and encourage children to explore and engage with the world, to develop their self-motivation to be creative and to think critically. We plan opportunities for children to develop concepts, constructs and beliefs about the world around them and how it works. We believe that getting this right will set up our children as successful learners of the future.

Adult Interactions

We know that every interaction with children is a teachable moment and we take full advantage of this, using children's interests to provide the language that they need. The balance of child led and adult initiated teaching is differentiated at each stage of the EYFS journey. Sensitive scaffolding from teachers during child initiated learning is imperative to extend children's learning. Children are encouraged to listen, to interpret, question and demonstrate understanding and thinking through their expressive language.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

Being part of a whole school we have access to a wide range of opportunities from specialist teachers. For example, our senior school science department support children with pond dipping and a variety of other experiments throughout the year, including a magical visit to our on-site planetarium. In partnership with the senior school sports department, we provide physical skills sessions which become part of the curriculum as they move into Reception. We also have weekly music lessons from our Cadogan House music teacher, weekly library sessions and weekly Spanish lessons. We also provide many enrichment experiences such as hatching ducklings, Ark farm visit, outdoor classroom day and visits to RMS Tranquillity Garden for our RMS GO sessions.

Parents as Partners

Parents are 'children's first and most enduring educators' (Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage, QCA 2004), making partnership with parents and carers in the learning process is essential for us to plan effectively for a child's learning. Parents know their child best, and unless there is a sharing of information between practitioners and parents, a child's learning needs will be neither fully understood nor, ultimately, met.

As much as possible we share information through informal discussions and promote an open door policy. Children's learning milestones, current interests or recent experiences both at home and at school are shared through our online Learning Journey, Tapestry. We equip parents with information to support their child's learning and development, we believe the best progress is made through this consistent approach. We welcome parents into the classroom to share their expertise and experience, culture and celebrations.

Our Curriculum Ambitions

We have designed our own bespoke progressive curriculum ambitions guided by Development Matters (2021) and Birth to 5 Matters (2021) and considering the particular strengths and needs of our children. It is imperative that children have access to an exciting broad and balanced curriculum that considers their interests and experiences. Our ambitions are aspirational checkpoints used to track children's progress as they move through each stage of the EYFS.

Pre-school Ambitions

Communication and Language	• I can listen to teachers and friends • I can respond to 'who' 'when' 'why' questions • I can use vocabulary that reflects the breadth of my experiences.
Personal Social and Emotional	• I can seek comfort from a familiar adult when needed • I can understand and follow classroom expectations with support • I can take risks, try new things and ask adults for help when I need it • I can choose and play with resources alongside others
Physical Development	• I can climb confidently and catch a ball • I can create lines and circles pivoting from my shoulder and my elbow • I can use a range of tools with increasing control such as hammering and mark making • I can pull up my pants and wash my hands

	after the toilet I can have a go at putting on and taking off my own shoes and coat
Literacy	Reading - Joins in repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories - I can recognise logos - I can recognise when words have the same initial sound as my name Writing: - I can make marks on my picture that stands for my name
Mathematics	Number: - I can subitise up to 3 - I can count objects, claps and steps Compare quantities: - I can use describing words like 'big', 'little', 'high' 'low' and 'tall' 'heavy' Shape and space: - I can complete 9 piece puzzle Number patterns: - I can join in and anticipate repeated sound and action patterns Measure: - Recognising specific attributes e.g. that a stick is long
Understanding the World	- I am curious about the world around us exploring puddles, mud, grass and animals - I notice the differences and similarities between me and my friends - I show an interest in different celebrations - I can plant a seed and care for it
Expressive Arts and Design	- I can draw a face with details - I can sing a range of nursery rhymes - I can move and dance to different types of music - I can play alongside my friends in pretend play

Nursery Ambitions

Communication and Language	- I can listen to and ask relevant questions of friends and teachers - I can understand instructions with 2 or more
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	elements • I can express my ideas and feelings with confidence in a small group • I can introduce a storyline or narrative into my play
Personal Social and Emotional	• I can express my feelings using words like 'happy', 'sad, and 'angry' • I can show resilience in the face of challenge • I have developed some early friendships • I can take turns playing a game
Physical Development	• I can pull myself up using my arms by Ruspini trim trail • I can use a pencil effectively using a four finger grip • I can run confidently changing my speed or direction to avoid obstacles • I can use a knife and fork • I can use the toilet independently, wipe myself effectively after a bowel movement • I can confidently put my own shoes and coat on independently
Literacy	Reading • I can answer questions from stories I have heard • I can make up stories with characters with support • I can hear and say most initial sounds Writing: • I can write some or all of my name
Mathematics	Number: • I can subitise up to 5 • I can solve real world mathematical problems with numbers up to 5 Compare quantities: • I can compare length, weight and capacity Shape and space: • I can design and create structures using different materials Number patterns: • I can talk about the sequence of events such as 'before' 'after', 'in a minute' 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow' Measure: • I can order 3 units of weight length and

	capacity • I can show understanding about the sequences of events using before and after
Understanding the World	• I can talk about differences and similarities between me and my friends • I know there are different religions & cultures both here and around the world • I know how to care for living things • I notice the differences between materials and changes and changes in the environment
Expressive Arts and Design	• I notice the difference in colour and know how to create some new colours • I can confidently perform a song or dance • I can play instruments for a purpose • I can create and follow rules in pretend play

Reception Ambitions

Communication and Language	• I can listen and then continue a conversation with adults and peers • I can retell a story using a story map or story mountain confidently • I can express my ideas in a well-formed sentence using verbs, connectives and new vocabulary
Personal Social and Emotional	• I can attend to my peer's needs and be pleased for them • I can approach new experiences with confidence in our reception setting • I show perseverance during activities. I have a go and keep trying • I can self select resources, follow the stop sign and change without help. I know when to ask an adult for help • I can play with variety of children and include everyone in my play • I can manage own basic hygiene and personal needs • I can change my clothes and organise my belongings within an appropriate time frame

Physical Development	• I can move around the Adventure Playground trim trail with confidence. • I can hold my pencil using a relaxed tripod grip to draw and write carefully, at times with support • I can use a knife and fork effectively to cut my food
Literacy	Reading • I can answer deductive questions • I can retell a story using my own words and storytelling vocabulary • I can read RWinc green level books with confidence Writing: • I can write short sentences with words with known sound-letter correspondences and some non decodable words • I can re-read what I have written to check that it makes sense with support at times
Mathematics	Number: • I can link the number label (numeral) with its cardinal value to 20. • I can correctly use and explain the symbols + - and = to represent and retell number stories • I can explain the composition of numbers to 10 in a variety of ways • I can recall number facts like double numbers and number bonds to 10, with rapid recall of numbers to 5 Compare quantities: • I can explain and predict one more and one less in number sequences Shape and space: • I can talk about some properties of shape and I can talk about some relationships between different shapes. Number patterns • I can explain the unit of repeat in a pattern and correct the errors in ABB patterns Measures • I can explain different aspects of measurement such as length, weight and volume using non standard units of measurement

Understanding the World	• I can independently talk about historical figures and events I have learned about in books and stories • I can talk about the differences and similarities of my beliefs and other peoples • I can discuss some similarities and differences between life in this country and other countries • I can independently talk about things that are the same and different between now and the past • I can explain why it is important to respect and care for the natural environment and all living things.
Expressive Arts and Design	• I can explore, use and begin to refine a variety of artistic effects to express my ideas and feelings independently • I can use movement and music to express my ideas • I can perform rhymes, poems and stories with others • I can use my knowledge of stories and making props to develop my role play in simple ways