EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

ROOD END
Primary School

This policy refers to Reception Class and Nursery

Updated September 2026

INTENT

At Rood End Primary School, our Early Years curriculum is designed to be **relevant and meaningful to every child**, ensuring that their individual skills, knowledge, and understanding develop progressively from the moment they join us. We aim to open children's eyes to the world around them through **first-hand experiences**, creating memorable moments and knowledge that become life-long building blocks for all pupils, regardless of educational needs or background.

We believe in a **language-rich curriculum** and a **'talk-valued' environment**, enabling pupils to learn a breadth of vocabulary and to communicate confidently for a range of purposes and contexts. A key focus of our approach is **sharing high-quality texts, reading aloud to pupils, singing rhymes and explicitly teaching vocabulary using research-based evidence and techniques**. This ensures our youngest learners are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

Our provision offers a **secure and enabling environment**, indoors and outdoors, where children are encouraged to be **resilient, confident, and self-assured learners**. We value success through independent thinking and problem-solving, while ensuring that learning is **fun, engaging, and enjoyable**.

IMPLEMENTATION

At Rood End Primary we understand that we are legally required to comply with requirements stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)sets the standards for learning, development and care and applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

The EYFS is based upon **four overarching principles**;

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments with teaching and support from adults
4. Learning and Development

The Early Years curriculum is centred on 3 **prime areas** of learning:

1. Communication and Language.
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

And through four **specific areas** of learning which strengthen the prime areas. These are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding of the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

Staff at Rood End Primary work together to offer a curriculum that is progressive for all pupils' right from the early years. We use development matters to guide our knowledge of developmental stages. Leaders understand how the National Curriculum subjects build on the areas of learning within the Foundation Stage.

An Environment for Learning

In the Foundation Stage we acknowledge the potential for learning in every interaction and situation that arises and therefore, our Early Years environment has been thoughtfully planned to provide rich access to all 7 areas of learning across the Early Years curriculum. Our environment includes the interior spaces within classrooms and the outdoor spaces that includes flowering beds & gardening spaces. The characteristics of effective teaching & learning are at the heart of our day and pupils, from an early age, are encouraged to 'have a go', ask questions, make links, make mistakes, solve problems and be individual in their thoughts and ideas. Early Years Practitioners plan a balance between adult directed and child-initiated learning using children's individual needs and interests as starting points.

Through warm, positive staff relationships and care, we help our young children to learn about themselves personally and encourage each child to be resilient and reach their potential. We teach our children how to be healthy and safe and how to be a good friend.

Planning the Curriculum

To enable our children to learn and develop, in all of the 7 areas of learning we have ensured that our planned curriculum has experiences set out in the educational programmes.

Stories, rhymes, music and play are key tools for our curriculum delivery as well as discrete sessions for phonics, maths, reading and writing. Knowledge is built through themes that are explored within texts and through 'real' seasonal experiences that are relevant and meaningful to the pupils. Communication and vocabulary development is given the highest priority and is developed deliberately through every interaction.

Through research, training and good early years pedagogy our planning is responsive to the needs and interests of the children. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meets the needs of all our children and all pupil groups. We plan to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds and children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

How we Learn in the Early Years

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporate what we know about how young children learn. There are **three characteristics** of effective teaching and learning:

- **Playing and exploring** - children will have many opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. Their senses will be active.

- **Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements. They will actively engage with the environment both indoors and out.

- **Creating and thinking critically** - we encourage and support children to use and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for achieving what they wish.

These learning behaviours are shared and celebrated with children through our own school values. Pupils are encouraged to recognise and understand these learning behaviours throughout their day and understand that the process of learning is key to achieving success. The poster below outlines these learning behaviours and school values in child friendly language.

We 'R' RICH in Early Years

Our School Values and How We Learn aligned with EYFS characteristics

	Adult Version	Child Friendly Version
	***Linked to:*** *Being involved and concentrating* • *Children show respect by listening to others, taking turns, and valuing different ideas during play and learning.* • *They concentrate on tasks and show consideration for shared resources and spaces.*	Respect **We listen, take turns, and care for our things and each other.** • We listen carefully • We share and take turns • We are kind to our friends • We look after toys and spaces
	***Linked to:*** *Keeping on trying* • *Children demonstrate resilience when they persist with challenges, bounce back from setbacks, and show determination in problem-solving.* • *They learn to manage emotions and stay motivated even when things are difficult.*	Resilience **We keep trying, even when things are tricky.** • We don't give up • We try again • We stay calm when things go wrong • We feel proud when we keep going
	**Linked to:** *Creating and thinking critically* • Inclusive environments encourage children to explore different perspectives and express themselves in diverse ways. • Children learn to value others' ideas and adapt their thinking to include everyone in play and learning.	Inclusion **We welcome everyone and learn from each other.** • We play with all our friends • We share our ideas • We listen to different thoughts • We make sure everyone can join in
	**Linked to:** *Active learning – enjoying achieving what they set out to do* • Collaboration is seen when children work together, share ideas, and celebrate joint achievements. • They learn from each other and build on shared experiences, fostering teamwork and mutual support.	Collaboration **We work together and help each other.** • We build and play together • We share what we know • We cheer each other on • We learn as a team
	**Linked to:** *Playing and exploring – finding out and having a go* • Honesty supports a safe space where children feel confident to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them. • They explore with integrity, showing genuine curiosity and openness in their learning journey.	Honesty **We tell the truth and learn from our mistakes.** • We say how we feel • We are honest • We try new things • We learn when things don't go right

Teaching in the Early Years

Teaching in the Early Years is a broad term that covers the many ways in which all adults help young children learn. At Rood End Primary all the staff within the environment can be seen supporting learning by:

- communicating and modelling language,
- showing,
- explaining,
- demonstrating,
- exploring ideas,
- encouraging,
- questioning,
- recalling,
- providing a narrative for what they are doing,
- thinking out loud,
- facilitating and setting challenges.

Observing, watching and listening to children is an integral part of all our teaching in the early years. The above interactions with children occur during planned opportunities and child-initiated play. We believe that every interaction counts and helps children to develop and learn something new. Where pupils need extra support or help with their learning the adults plan for interventions to take place within a learning moment as well as providing opportunities for repetition and practise so that new learning becomes secure. Our interventions and interactions are consistent with effective research methods and strategies.

Key worker Groups

All children have a designated member of staff who is their key worker. The key worker spends time during the routine of the day ensuring that children's personal, social and emotional needs are developing positively. The key worker builds information about the pupils and creates a learning profile (recorded and orally) that can be shared with parents and other professionals where necessary.

Learning Outside the Classroom

We believe that children can learn so much from the local surroundings and therefore take children offsite to explore the community that they are part of. * Spontaneous Walk and Talk sessions take place in small groups to provide opportunities for staff & pupils to chat about and sense the world around them and learn how to stay safe.
Our Early Years pupils also have daily experiences outdoors in the garden and the school grounds. This allows them to use their senses to gain a deep understanding of seasonal changes, the weather and the effects of this.
Educational visits and visitors are planned to further enhance our learning and aim to excite, extend and build knowledge. (* please note this happens with parental consent)

IMPACT

Assessment in Early Years

Ongoing assessment is an essential part of the Early Years practice at Rood End Primary School. All staff working in the Early years are part of the continual assessment cycle. Assessment takes place in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child-initiated play. Staff use observations and interactions to support their developing knowledge of individual children. Recognising and understanding children's attainment, needs, interests and learning styles enables staff to identify children's learning needs and developmental next steps. These take place in the moment of play.
Other valuable methods of assessing children include information shared from the child's home. All our parents are encouraged to attend parents' meetings, workshop sessions and to join a school app called Dojo, and this is used as a platform for parents to share a child's lived home experiences. This includes special occasions that a family may have celebrated, a child demonstrating their reading or a child continuing their learning at home.

We have adopted the guidance from the new framework (2025) and reduced burdensome assessments.

The monitoring and assessment of each child's development is continuous and takes place both informally and formally. Formal assessment is recorded termly using an online assessment system. We use this to track progress of individuals, pupil groups across all areas of development. At the end of the year a written summary of every child's development and learning achievements is shared with parents. At the end of the reception year parents are presented with a written report that clearly states whether a child has met the Early Learning Goals and whether they have achieved a Good Level of Development.
A National Baseline Assessment is carried out during the children's first half-term in reception class.

At Rood End Primary we use evidence of children's knowledge, interactions, & behaviour, that is observed independently and consistently together with *development matters* to guide us in making judgements about how well a child is meeting the expected levels within each area of learning. We will use the terms 'on track' to achieve age related expectations or 'not on track' for pupils not yet meeting the expected level. Where pupils are significantly below parents are informed and may be offered additional support through the support of the school SENDCo or other outside professional agencies.

The Early Years Leader is responsible for the continuous monitoring of teaching and learning within the Foundation Stage. The measured impact is shared with Senior leaders on a half-termly basis.

BRITISH VALUES in the EARLY YEARS

British values are embedded and included in everything we do through the early years routines and daily curriculum.

Democracy: making decisions together understanding everyone has a voice and is listened to

· Staff encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging children to know their voice counts, we value each other's views and opinions and talk about personal feelings. We demonstrate democracy in a number of ways, for example, children voting for a favourite story or children sharing views on what props we could add to a play area. We also capture interests and ask children what they would like us to add to the environment

· Staff support the decisions that children make through their independence and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children are given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued and answers are listened to.

Rule of law: understanding rules matter is emphasised continually

· Staff ensure that children understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and learn to distinguish right from wrong. With children, staff create the rules and agreed codes of behaviour and discuss why these are important to us, for example, to agree the rules about tidying up, listening to peers and ensuring that all children understand rules apply to everyone. Imaginative play enables children to explore the rules that govern the wider world – for example policing the behaviour in class, bikes traveling safely on the playground when dressed up as an officer

Individual liberty: freedom for all is promoted through the daily routine

· Children develop a positive sense of themselves and learn about their personal identity. Opportunities are planned for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, we allow children to take risks in a safe environment.

· A range of experiences allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, we reflect on pupil differences and understand we are free to have different opinions. Children are encouraged to share likes and dislikes and express themselves respectfully.

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated

· Staff encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing, being patient and respecting other's opinions.

· Staff create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures, gender and races are valued. Children engage with the wider community through visitors, story and listening to experiences of others.

· Children are encouraged to acquire tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.

· We promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

Safeguarding

We follow whole school procedures for Safeguarding children (see separate safeguarding policies).
And adhere fully with the Statutory Requirements of the EYFS.
Mrs Leanne Hyde is the school's named Designated Safeguarding Lead.

At Rood End Primary School, we are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children in our Early Years provision by adhering to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory guidance. Our staff team includes members who are trained in paediatric first aid, ensuring that immediate and appropriate care is available in the event of an accident or medical concern. Children are closely supervised at all times, particularly during snack times & mealtimes, where staff remain vigilant to support safe eating practices.

Outdoor learning and play are vital parts of our curriculum, and we ensure children's safety in these environments through regular and thorough risk assessments. We maintain a secure and nurturing environment where safeguarding is embedded in daily routines, and all staff are aware of their responsibilities to protect children from harm.

In line with School Safeguarding Policy; members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and all staff are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. Members of staff use school iPads and cameras to take photographs, and these are used to share information with parents, and capture learning to display in the classroom. Photos/ images may be used on the school website and for other purposes *only* with consent from parents.

At times the Foundation Stage may have visiting student teachers and students working in the setting alongside the staff. Other professionals may also work within the setting throughout the year. All parties will have appropriate assurance checks and follow the induction procedures that comply with school policy.

Safer Eating

At our setting, we promote safe eating and drinking practices to reduce the risk of choking and to support children's health, wellbeing and independence.
Children are supervised at all times when eating or drinking. Food is prepared in age-appropriate portions and potential choking hazards are identified and managed in line with current safer eating guidance. Appendix 1

Children are encouraged to sit appropriately, eat slowly, chew thoroughly and avoid moving around whilst eating. Staff are aware of children's allergies, dietary requirements and medical needs and follow agreed procedures to minimise risks. Suitable drinking water is available throughout the day, and staff maintain a safe, calm eating environment. Early Years present during eating times hold paediatric first aid training and are able to respond appropriately in the event of a choking incident.

Safe Sleeping

At Rood End we do not operate a planned sleep or nap time for children in school. However, if a child aged 3-4 or 5 years falls asleep or appears excessively tired, staff will respond sensitively to their individual needs.
The child will be allowed to rest in a quiet, comfortable, and appropriately supervised area away from active play. They will be positioned safely, with their airway kept clear and without the use of pillows, blankets, or items that could obstruct breathing.
Staff will undertake regular checks to ensure the child's comfort and wellbeing, maintain a clear sleeping space free from hazards
Parents/carers will be informed if a child has slept during the school day, particularly if this is unusual for the child or there are concerns about their health or wellbeing. Children will never be left unsupervised while sleeping and will be encouraged to return to normal activities once they have naturally woken and are ready to participate.

Attendance

We recognise the vital role that regular attendance plays in a child's early development and lifelong learning journey. Good attendance habits begin in the Early Years, and we are committed to promoting consistent attendance from the very first point of entry into our school, including our Nursery provision. We believe that every day in school counts, especially in the Early Years where children build the foundations for future learning through play, exploration, and social interaction. Regular attendance supports children's emotional wellbeing, social development, and progress across all areas of learning.

Our procedures for monitoring and supporting attendance in the Early Years are aligned with the whole school attendance policy. We work in partnership with families to encourage and maintain high levels of attendance, offering support where needed and celebrating positive attendance patterns.

By embedding a culture of good attendance early on, we aim to foster resilience, inclusion, and a strong sense of belonging — values that underpin our whole school ethos: **We 'R' RICH**.

Parents as Partners

We value the involvement of parents in school. Parental involvement with school begins even before children start Nursery or Reception with an invitation to visit the school and meet their child's teacher/key worker.

We understand that an effective partnership between school and home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So daily contact is an important part of our routine. All parents drop their child off and collect from the nursery and reception classes each day so that they have the opportunity to speak to the class teacher. Through home visits made at the start of the year and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day and messaging through dojo; practitioners encourage parents to share their knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests. Parents are also encouraged to share significant milestones/ magic moments with us using class dojo.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through weekly information that is shared on class dojo. Newsletters, and home learning activities are also sent out. Parents' sessions run by the Early Years Lead also provide valuable information of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been taught in the setting.

Parents consultation meetings are held in the Autumn, Spring and Summer Term at which parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. A report is sent out at the end of the academic school year and parents are invited into school to discuss this report. It is important to note that if parents are concerned in any way about their child they should telephone or call into the school to make an appointment to discuss their concerns with the class teacher or with the Early Years Leader.

Parents are invited to get involved with school life and attend our inspire workshops including, various celebration events throughout the year.

APPENDIX 1 – Safer Eating





Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

Early years choking hazards food safety advice

For babies and young children, food can be a choking hazard, especially when they do not chew their food well or they try to swallow it whole.

Choking can happen with any foods, but 'firm foods', bones and small round foods that can easily get stuck in the throat present a higher risk. Therefore, care givers should follow these five essential steps:

1. Make sure food is **suitably prepared and served** for babies and children under 5 years old. For suitable foods, see https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/ Introduce babies to solid foods from around 6 months of age.
2. **Think about size, shape and texture of food.** Cut food into narrow batons, avoid round shapes and firm foods. Firm fruit & vegetables can be softened by cooking.
3. Ensure that babies and young children are **alert and seated safely upright** in a highchair or appropriately sized low chair whilst eating.
4. **Babies and young children should be supervised at all times** while eating. You will be able to identify the early signs of choking and prevent harm.
5. **Encourage babies and young children to chew food well.** Teach children how to chew and swallow food properly, and ensure they take their time during meals. This will reduce their risk of choking.

Care givers and parents should be familiar with how to respond to a choking incident in line with guidance on first aid for children:

How to stop a child from choking: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/

How to resuscitate a child: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/

Early years food choking hazards

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

Vegetable and fruits	Advice
Pips or stones in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit.
Small fruits	Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters).
Large fruits and firm fruits	Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Vegetables	Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Skin on fruit and vegetables	Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily.
Cooking fruit and vegetables	Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons.
Meat and fish	**Advice**
Sausages and hot dogs	Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily.
Meat or fish	Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat.
Cheese	**Advice**
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Nuts and seeds	**Advice**
Chop or flake whole nuts	Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.
Bread	**Advice**
White bread and other breads	White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.
Snacks and other foods	**Advice**
Popcorn	Do not give babies and young children popcorn.
Chewing gum and marshmallows	Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows.
Peanut butter	Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread.
Jelly cubes	Do not give babies and young children raw jelly cubes.
Boiled sweets and ice cubes	Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gooey, sticky or cough sweets, or ice cubes.
Raisins and other dried fruits	Do not give babies under the age of 1 whole raisins or dried fruits. Cut them into small pieces.

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/

It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/

and How to resuscitate a child: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/