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Ravenfield Primary Academy

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

2024 - 2025

Statement of Intent

This document outlines the philosophy, aims and principles of early years teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Ravenfield Primary Academy. This document underpins practice in all areas of provision.

Every child in Ravenfield Primary Academy is recognised as a unique individual. 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 constantly provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that childhood should be a happy, investigative and enquiring time in our lives where there are no limits to curiosity and there is a thirst for new experiences and knowledge. Children leave the academy with a sense of belonging to a tightly knit community where they have the confidence and skills to make decisions, self-evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners.

"Teaching should not be taken to imply a 'top down' or formal way of working. It is a broad term that covers the many different ways in which adults help young children learn. It includes their interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities: communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating and setting challenges. It takes account of the equipment adults provide and the attention given to the physical environment, as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations." **Ofsted September 2015**

The Early Years Foundation Stage follows the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework 'Development Matters'. This defines what we teach. This policy details the specifics of our academy.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are important and included into the curriculum taught. There are three prime areas, which are seen to underpin all the basics and support the other more specific areas of the curriculum.

The "Prime" areas of learning and development are:

Communication and language.

- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

Physical development.

- Gross Motor Skills
- Fine Motor Skills

Personal, social and emotional development.

- Building Relationships
- Self-Regulation
- Managing Self

The Prime Areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. Prime Areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas. These are the primary focus within our Nursery.

The “Specific” areas of learning and development are:

Literacy

- Reading
- Writing

Mathematics.

- Numbers
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding of the world.

- Past and Present
- The Natural World
- People, Culture and Communities

Expressive arts and design.

- Creating With Materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive

The Specific Areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the Prime Areas, and provide important contexts for learning for children to participate successfully in society.

The EYFS also contains Characteristics of Effective Learning. All areas of learning are taught in a cross curricular way to ensure that there are balanced opportunities for all. Characteristics of effective learning are the ways in which a child engages with other people and their environment by:

- **Playing and Exploring** – *(children investigate and experience things and events around them and 'have a go')*
- **Active Learning** – *(children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve)*
- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – *(children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences and develop strategies for doing things)*

These underpin learning and development across all areas and support a child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Curriculum Implementation

A topic-based approach is adopted in our Early Years Foundation Stage. Each half-term is focused on a new and exciting topic, relevant to the children's experiences in their surrounding environment. To ensure the teaching and learning within each topic is both challenging and engaging, core texts are used to enhance themes within. The development of a 'love of reading' is at the heart of our topic-based approach and core texts are used to develop both children's vocabulary and their oracy skills.

Phonics:

It is evident that Literacy skills are greatly important in the implementation of the new EYFS Framework in Ravenfield Primary Academy. This is extended to our whole-school focus on developing phonics skills. Children in Nursery participate in listening and attention activities before beginning phonics sessions through Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc. suitable to their age and stage of development. Children are encouraged to take a library book home to promote a lifelong love of books and enhance communication and language opportunities with their parents/carers.

Direct teaching:

Throughout the school day there is a clear balance of adult-led, adult-directed and child-initiated activities to give all children the opportunity to reach their full potential in all areas of learning. During child-initiated activities the adults' role is to engage in high quality interactions with the children to build the children's understanding, and to guide and scaffold new learning. This is done through modelling, demonstrating and questioning what the children are doing, either through participation in the children's activity or by encouraging the children to participate and complete a task with the adult. During adult-directed activities, children engage in areas of the provision that have been prepared by a teacher with enhancements relevant for current themes of learning. These activities will initially be modelled by an adult but then children will be expected to complete these independently to consolidate learning. During adult-led activities, an adult will work with children 1:1 or in a small focus-group to achieve a planned learning intention.

Impact and Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the Early Years for children's learning and development. Practitioners observe children whilst engaging with them in a variety of opportunities to gain an understanding of each child's level of understanding. This happens live throughout any taught session as well as during child-initiated times when children are embedding and extending any previous learning. Observations and assessments will then be used to shape and alter any future learning. Children are monitored throughout the year on their development and progress in relation to Age Related Expectations.

Evidence of children's learning is built up throughout the year in the form of:

- Transition notes from previous settings.
- Photographs and videos.
- Work completed by pupils.
- Summative and formative assessments.
- Anecdotal evidence.
- Comments and evidence provided by parents/carers.

To capture the child's 'learning journey' we use the online learning journal 'Seesaw'. We gather photos and videos and share these with families. Seesaw has enabled us to establish excellent links between school and home.

The cycle for assessment is as follows:

- Reception Baseline Assessment: Within 6 weeks of the child's start date of school.
- Progress data captures: February and June.

Each data capture provides a basis for the conversation during Pupil Progress Meetings with the Principal and class teacher. The focus of this meeting is to look at what is being put in place to support or extend any child's learning within the class to ensure that they have tailored learning opportunities to make individual progress and intervention where necessary. Pupil progress meetings involve triangulating data, evidence in learning journeys and the teacher's knowledge of the child. All assessments are reported to parents during the bi-annual parent meetings and formally in the child's end of year academic 'Record of Achievement'.

During the Summer term, of the academic year that a child turns five, we complete the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). Practitioners assess a child's attainment against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and consider whether a child has reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD).

Judgements are recorded as a child has reached the expected level of child development or is still working towards age related expectations as so is emerging in their development. Following the 2021 EYFS curriculum reforms there is no longer an opportunity for children to 'exceed' the good level of development.

The EYFSP provides a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. Children have differing levels of skills and abilities across the EYFSP, and it is important that there is a full assessment of all areas of their development, to inform plans for future activities and to identify any additional support needs.

All children participate in the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first 6 weeks of starting Reception. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the starting point for a new measure that will help parents understand how well schools support their pupils to progress between Reception and Year 6/ the end of Key Stage 2.

The RBA is a short, interactive and practical assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin school, using materials that most children of your child's age will be familiar with. It is statutory for all schools from September 2021.

The assessment has been designed to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to as many children as possible, including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL). The teacher can pause the assessment at any time if the child needs a break. There are also modified materials available for children with visual and hearing impairments.

The data from the assessment will only be used by the Department for Education when the child has reached the end of Year 6, to provide the baseline to measure the progress of the child's year group from reception to Year 6. The data from the assessment, including numerical scores, is not shared with parents, pupils, teachers, or external bodies, including schools, and there will be no published scores at pupil, school or national level.

The child's teacher will receive a set of statements which provide a narrative description of how the child performed in the assessment; this will be shared with parents when available.

For more details you can also visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-information-for-parents>

Responsibilities

- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Early Years Policy of Ravenfield Primary Academy.
- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the physical Early Years Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Academy's complaints policy.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader will be responsible and accountable for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Early Years Policy at Ravenfield Primary Academy.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for the application of the Early Years Policy.

Parents as Partners

At Ravenfield Primary Academy we have strong relationships with families and provide many opportunities for parents/carers to be involved in their child's educational journey, including:

- Parent Story and Rhyme time – parents are invited into the classroom and the teacher shares a story and rhyme with the class.
- Mystery Reader – a surprise visitor reads a book of their choice to the class (this may be a parent, grandparent, older sibling etc)
- Baking – parents are invited to support us in class with weekly baking activities.
- Forest School – parents are invited to join us in the woodland area to complete activities.
- Stay and Learns – these happen regularly throughout the year linked to special events e.g. Children in Need.

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Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success. At Ravenfield Primary Academy we try to enhance children's cultural capital by providing them with opportunities to experience learning firsthand and expose them to experiences and opportunities which make learning purposeful.

Educational visits and visitors play a vital role in the Early Years at Ravenfield Primary Academy; these are an opportunity to further develop children's views and understanding of their world and community. Each term the children widen their experience through either visits to specific areas (e.g. local woods, farms and wildlife parks) or have visitors invited into the school who are experts in their field. Each of these visits or visitors are carefully planned and tailored to the learning journey the children are actively engaged in.

Safeguarding and Welfare

Children learn best when they are happy, safe and feel secure. We ensure that all children have this in place through the continuous development of positive relationships between children and staff as well as relationships with their peers. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance (2014).

Our Academy has a rigorous safeguarding policy and procedures in place that are used to identify anyone at risk of harm or radicalisation, this sets out a clear procedure for reporting any concerns from minor to major.

All staff are trained in Safeguarding, which is updated regularly, focusing on contextual issues. The school has rigorous checks when employing members of staff, ensuring that they have the relevant qualifications and are DBS checked. All DBS checks are updated in a rolling basis as required.

We have an E-safety policy which stipulates and advises how to keep children safe when online, which is available on our school's website:

<https://www.ravenfieldprimaryacademy.com/>

Staff are regularly made aware of how to keep safe online and have training around this. This is also regularly promoted throughout the school during e-safety weeks and monthly newsletters. The school has a filtering system that blocks any unknown or suspect websites. However, professional judgement is always advised and promoted throughout the school.

Specific staff are trained in Team Teach, which trains staff in ways to handle children that are at risk of harming themselves or others, and again this training is regularly updated and refreshed.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety is paramount to the children at Ravenfield Primary Academy. We ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff and children in our care are not exposed to unnecessary risks. We complete both an indoor and outdoor risk assessment which is reviewed annually. Children learn when they feel happy and secure. To meet these needs the following is in place:

Healthy school meals – Children in Reception are entitled to a free school meal and are provided with this. The school meals are carefully catered and follow a healthy food model.

Healthy snack – Fruit and milk are provided and are available throughout Nursery and Reception for children to eat. We also encourage children to bring a water bottle into school which they can access throughout the school day. Milk is free of charge but becomes payable following the child's 5th birthday.

Accidents and First aid – All EYFS Teaching Staff are Paediatric First aiders. First aid cupboards are clearly labelled and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed of any accidents. If a more serious accident occurs (e.g. head bump, significant scrape or graze) parents will have a phone call home to inform them of anything that has happened before the end of the session.

Intimate Care – We encourage all parents to ensure that their children are toilet trained before they start in Nursery, but if this is not possible, we will put into place a care plan which will ensure that the child is well looked after and regularly changed. We have an intimate care policy which is available on the school website.

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Depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and staff will work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child.

Fire alarms – A fire alarm practice is organised at least once per half term, and all of these are timed and recorded. We have set fire doors throughout the setting and the caretaker carries out regular safety checks.

Lockdown procedure – In order to ensure that all of our children and staff are prepared for extreme circumstances beyond our control a lockdown drill will be scheduled annually.

Child Protection and Safeguarding – We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy, which is available on our website:

<https://www.ravenfieldprimaryacademy.com/attachments/download.asp?file=608&type=pdf>

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Miss Jepson (Principal) and our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Miss Hanby. If you have any concerns about safeguarding please speak to our safeguarding leads who will assist you.

Further details can be found in the whole school policies:

- Child Protection policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions policy

Transition

There are several transition opportunities available. Children starting their school journey by joining Nursery can visit both with and without their Parents/Carers the term prior to them enrolling. Vital information is shared during these initial visits and parents/carers will be given the opportunity to have any questions answered. Transition into Nursery from private settings are made seamless by liaising about children's interests, abilities and individual needs and organised by the Reception teacher.

The second transition that occurs during the Early Years is from Nursery to Reception. Children's needs when moving from part time to full time is managed successfully by clear communication within the EYFS team and is overseen by the EYFS Leader. Parents new to school are invited to visit prior to their child attending to meet staff informally and discuss key information including the school ethos, the curriculum, expectations and learning journeys.

There are internal transition meetings during the summer term between the Nursery Teacher and the new class teacher in Reception, allowing information about each child's development to be shared and have the opportunity to pass on any other important information about each child (e.g. medical, SEND, EAL, etc.)

The third and final transition is between Reception and Year 1. During this transition the children attend planned transition sessions in which the children are hooked into their new project and have an opportunity to spend more time with their new class teacher. We also ensure that Reception teachers and Year 1 teachers meet to inform the child's new teacher about each child's level of development, ELG achievement and any other information about each child (e.g. medical, SEND, EAL, etc.)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Ravenfield Primary Academy is an inclusive school which offers a broad, balanced and creative curriculum which aims to encourage all children to achieve their full potential, including children with SEND.

- A member of our Senior Leadership Team is the designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) (Mrs Wildin).
- Ravenfield Primary Academy gives consideration to whether a child may have a special educational need (SEN) or disability which requires specialist support.
- If a child's progress in any prime or specific area of learning gives cause for concern, we will discuss this with the SENDCO and the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.
- Further details can be found in the following whole school policies:
 - Special Education Needs and Disability Policy and Information Report
 - The Accessibility Plan
 - Equality Policy.



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