



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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<b>Review Date</b>	November 2025
<b>Chair's Name</b>	Steph Green
<b>Chair's Signature</b>	

### **Core Values**

Respect  
Enjoyment  
Care  
Confidence  
Challenge



“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly 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. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”<sup>1</sup>

At Rodings we understand that the early years are critical to a child’s development and build the foundations for their learning in later life. The foundation stage is about developing key learning skills such as listening, speaking, understanding, making relationships, self-confidence and self-awareness. The provision in early years should be appropriate for young children, being broad, balanced and differentiated. The curriculum should encourage children to develop as individuals, and take part in society respecting others and their belongings.

### Aims

Our aim in Reception is to give your child the best possible start to their school life. Alongside supporting them to feel settled and comfortable in school, we equip children with the learning and development skills they need to reach their full potential.

By following the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we can provide quality and consistency, a secure foundation for future learning, partnership between school and home and equality of opportunity.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

1. That every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
3. Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**
4. Children’s **learning and development** occurs in different ways and at different rates.

### A Unique Child

At Rodings we embrace the fact that each child is unique and that all children are competent learners who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We appreciate that children learn and develop in different ways and tailor our learning environment and teaching strategies in response to children’s individualities.

### Inclusion

Childrens pre-school experiences and development can vary considerably, necessitating careful monitoring of basic skills when they arrive at school in order to identify children with special educational needs. We are assisted in this task by information from parents, play group leaders, nursery practitioners and health

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.



visitors who help us identify a child with special educational needs as early as possible. If a child has a special educational need identified then we follow the procedure outlined in the school [Special Educational Needs Policy](#).

We believe that every child matters, so we give all of our children every opportunity to achieve their potential, regardless of race, religion, gender, and ability or previous experiences of education. As a school we adhere to our Equal Opportunities Policy. We pride ourselves on our Core Values, one being 'respect' which should always be mutual.

### **Medicines**

Please see our whole school policy with regards to [medicines in school](#).

### **Accidents and injuries**

We have various members of staff in school with first aid qualification. If your child has an accident during break or lunchtime, they will be escorted to the office where a member of staff will look after them. At least one member of staff in the classroom holds a paediatric first aid certificate so they are well placed to treat any accidents which may occur during class time. Again, please refer to our whole school [first aid policy](#) for more information on this.

### **Healthy Eating**

In Reception we encourage the children to be as independent as possible, therefore water is available at all times for children to pour themselves a cup, if they are thirsty. Fruit is also available if they are hungry. We also insist on the children having a drink of water with their mid-morning snack. We have 'tuck' in Reception, which enables us to stop mid-morning and have a snack together, practising our social and communication skills whilst we eat something healthy.

## **Positive Relationships**

### **Parents as partners**

We believe that parents' contribution to their child's education is invaluable and we welcome input from home, mainly through our Special Week carousel, Tapestry, Class Dojo and Parent Consultation Meetings. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress, as well as any concerns they may have, during three Parent Consultation Meetings throughout the year. In addition to this, Parents are always welcome to ring the school office or use Class Dojo to arrange a meeting/phone call with the class teacher, if they have concerns.

### **Special Friends**

For many years at Rodings we have seen the positive impact a 'Special Friend' can have when children arrive at school and throughout their time with us. When the children arrive in Reception they are introduced to a 'Special Friend' from Year 6 who they can go to during playtimes and lunchtimes if they need comfort or support. Our Year 6 children take this responsibility very seriously and are fantastic role models to our younger pupils, showing care and respect. In addition to being available during less structured playtimes, 'Special Friends' have opportunities to take part in activities together, working collaboratively and



sharing learning experiences. We are proud that this tradition continues every year at our school.

### **Induction**

Usually the first time parents will meet us will be briefly on our Open Morning, where they will have the opportunity to have a tour of the school, visiting different classes to see the school in action. We then invite parents along to an induction evening during the summer term prior to their child starting school where we share information and the parents have a chance to meet their child's new teacher. In addition to parents visiting the school, teachers will liaise with nurseries and pre-schools, arranging visits in some cases. If a visit to the child's current provision cannot be arranged, a conversation with their key worker may happen over the phone. As mentioned earlier, we appreciate that every child is unique and we begin learning as much as we can about individuals before they start with us in September. Children are then invited to come and visit the school for induction sessions, where they can meet their new classmates and get used to the classroom environment and teachers.

In September, the Reception children will start their term a few days after the rest of the school which allows us time for Home Visits. These are optional, but we find them to be extremely valuable and have had very positive feedback from parents in the past. The Home Visit is a chance for the child to meet their teachers again, in the comfort of their own home, and for parents to ask any questions they may have thought about in preparation for their child starting school. These are relaxed, informal meetings which are intended to make your child feel comfortable about coming to school on their first day.

### **Admissions**

When children start school in September, the intake is staggered and they attend for a shorter day. This enables children to feel comfortable and settled, and gives them the opportunity to get to know us better in smaller groups.

## **Enabling Environments**

### **'In the moment planning'**

The Early Years Foundation Stage has considerable differences to the National Curriculum, and therefore supports learning through play.

*"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults."*<sup>2</sup>

At Rodings we follow the 'in the moment planning' approach to our teaching and learning in Reception. The central principle of this is that the children follow their interests, within a stimulating environment that is managed and organised by the adults. We believe that children have a natural desire to explore, communicate,

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2012.



create and learn and it is our job to create an environment to enable them to do just that.<sup>3</sup>

When planning for our continuous provision in Reception (by continuous provision we mean the areas and resources available for children to use independently during their child-initiated learning time) we also consider three characteristics of effective teaching and learning, outlined in the Statutory Framework;

1. Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’.
2. Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
3. Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

As practitioners, we use our knowledge of the EYFS and the individual child to look for ‘teachable moments’ in their play in order to plan and assess. Children learn and develop when they are closely observed by adults, and these observations are used to support their ‘next steps’ within that interaction. Whilst children are leading their learning, our practice is informed by Ofsted’s guidance:

*‘Teaching should not be taken to imply a ‘top down’ or formal way of working. It is a broad term which 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 they provide and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations. Integral to teaching is how practitioners assess what children know, understand and can do as well as take account of their interests and dispositions to learning (characteristics of effective learning), and use this information to plan children’s next steps in learning and monitor their progress.’<sup>4</sup>*

Each week we select focus children. During their ‘Special Week’ we invite the focus children to bring in special items and photos to share from home. We also use information from their parents to inform our ‘in the moment planning’ for that week. We then spend time observing those focus children which informs our content for a parent-teacher consultation the following week.

In Early Years our children’s learning is recorded on ‘Tapestry’ (a link to Tapestry can be found in the ‘useful documents’ section of this policy). The Tapestry app enables us to take photos of children and record the learning experience that they are having, with the additional facility of identifying an area of learning before publishing it to the child’s online learning journey. A fantastic feature of Tapestry is that it is a collaborative platform for teachers and parents. All parents of Reception children are invited to view their child’s Tapestry account online and they can add experiences from home to their journal. At the end of the Reception

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<sup>3</sup> Taken from ‘The Reception Year in Action’ by Anna Ephgrave.

<sup>4</sup> Taken from ‘Teaching and play in the early years - a balancing act?’ Ofsted, 2015



year practitioners will assess children according to whether they are working towards, have achieved or are exceeding the Early Learning Goals (these can be found on our school website in the 'curriculum information' section). This information will be reported to parents, Year 1 teachers, and local and national assessment boards.

### Outdoor Learning

We are very pleased that we can offer children an engaging outdoor learning space here at Rodings. Our Outdoor Classroom has gone from strength to strength over the years and has provided an environment with rich learning experiences for all our children. We are lucky that there is a section of our Outdoor Classroom which is under cover, meaning children can use the space in all weathers. As the Statutory Framework states,

*"Providers must provide access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken on a daily basis (unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example unsafe weather conditions)".*

Areas of our Outdoor Classroom enhance experiences for all areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It also supports children's well-being and opportunities for children to engage in appropriate risk-taking.

### Forest School

We are so proud that at Rodings we have Forest School provision for our children in Reception and Key Stage One. In Reception, children go to Forest School every Wednesday morning (except in dangerous weather conditions). More information about Forest School can be found on our school website and parents are provided with a 'Parents Guide to Forest School' before their child's first session.

## Learning and Development

### Areas of learning and development

Children's experiences of learning and development provide the foundation for their future learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage states that provision should be underpinned by these three prime areas and four specific areas of learning and development;

#### Prime Areas

- **Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and



learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

### Specific Areas

- **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

### Read Write Inc

At Rodings we are a Read, Write, Inc school. After their first half term, children in Reception will have daily phonics sessions (except on Wednesdays when we go to the Forest) to equip them with the skills needed to learn to read and write. Parents are invited to attend an information session about Read Write Inc during the autumn term. (A link to more Read, Write, Inc information is in the 'Useful links' section of this policy).

### Visits and visitors

We strongly believe at Rodings that out of school visits benefit children's learning experiences. Our visits in Reception are planned in response to children's interests and usually take place during the spring and summer terms, when the children are settled into school life.



## Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

<b>Term/Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
DfE	Department for Education
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
RWI	Read, Write Inc