



Robertswood School Foundation Stage Policy

'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.' (Statutory framework for early years foundation stage - September 2021.)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year.

The Early Years Foundation Stage has four guiding principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

This policy explains how our practice is guided by these four principles.

A Unique Child

At Robertswood School we recognise that every child has the potential to be a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Our School Vision

We are committed to providing an outstanding education within a secure and happy environment, where each child is valued and equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to become caring, confident and successful individuals.

AIMS FOR ALL

- To be happy.
- To be safe.
- To be well supported.
- To have a well-resourced environment.
- To develop high levels of respect.
- To develop high rates of self-esteem.
- To develop confidence.
- To develop resilience.
- To develop a love for learning and a passion for discovery.
- To acquire skills and positive attitudes for success in life.
- To use and develop capabilities in order to achieve full potential.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. All children at Robertswood School are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our school we believe that all of our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.' (Statutory framework for early years foundation stage - September 2021.)

At Robertswood School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory framework for early years foundation stage.

At Robertswood School we:

- ❖ Promote the welfare of children.
- ❖ Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- ❖ Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ❖ Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- ❖ Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose.
- ❖ Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- ❖ Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Further information on our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children which is the Statutory Framework relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Positive Relationships

At Robertswood School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from having secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and to foster a sense of belonging. We are sensitive to the child's needs, feelings and interests.

We are supportive of children's own efforts and independence. We are consistent in setting clear boundaries. Positive relationships are stimulating and built on key person relationships.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them. Every effort is made to ensure that all parents are involved in their child's education through:

- ❖ Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school. Children entering our nursery are also offered a home visit.
- ❖ Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- ❖ Teachers are available at the end of each day for queries. The Early Years Leader, Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher are also available to see parents.
- ❖ Sharing the children's learning in school via Tapestry (online Learning journal) and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents.
- ❖ Offering two parent/teacher appointments per year.
- ❖ Sending a report on children's attainment and progress at the end of their time in the Nursery and Reception and additional parent appointments if/when required.
- ❖ Involving other agencies and community services in offering support and advice.
- ❖ Developing a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents/carers, including those parents that, through a variety of circumstances, find it difficult to engage fully with school life - for example:

- Stay and Play sessions in Nursery.
- Mystery Readers in Reception.
- Nursery Library.
- Induction meetings.
- Home visits.
- Variety of parent information sessions.
- Parents coming in to talk to children.
- Weekly newsletters also shared with other carers/ settings.
- Nursery and Reception Sports Fun Day.
- Christmas productions.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

Enabling Environments

At Robertswood School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences. Enabling environments value all people and value learning. They offer stimulating resources relevant to all the children's cultures and communities, rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching. They also provide support for children to take risks and explore.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Early Years Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. Staff are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning.

Our early years curriculum is established based on the needs of the children, their cultural capital and their interests. We consider the progression of skills and use the Development Matters document to support our planning. At Robertswood, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. At the beginning of the year a statutory baseline assessment is undertaken on each child to establish their starting points in:

- Language, communication and literacy, and
- Mathematics.

At the end of their foundation year in school the children's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development, or
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

The profile reflects ongoing observations in school as well as discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers at the end of the year along with a written report of the children's progress and achievements in relation to the seven areas of learning and characteristics of effective learning.

The Learning Environment

The Foundation Stage setting is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet, be creative etc. Nursery and Reception classes have their own outdoor areas. The free flow between the inside and the outside has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Teaching, Learning and Development

Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning, whilst considering the different ways that children learn and develop. The framework covers the education and care of children within early years provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early years settings.

All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Knowledge of the world
- Expressive arts and design

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.' (Statutory framework for early years foundation stage - September 2021.)

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

At Robertswood each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Issued by: Penny Ford - Early Years Leader

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Reviewed by: Penny Ford - Early Years Leader

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Changes: Brought up to date to reflect current practice and procedure and to reflect the current Statutory framework for early years foundation stage.

Next Review: May 2025

Agreed by: _____ Date: _____ On Behalf of The Governing Body