



L.E.A.D. Academy Trust

Lead • Empower • Achieve • Drive

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Rainbow Forge Primary Academy

Aims

In all Rainbow Forge Primary Academy Foundation Stage we aim to give each child a positive and meaningful start to their school life, in which they can establish solid foundations on which to develop into independent and fearless lifelong learners.

We will encourage children to develop independence within a secure and friendly atmosphere; to support children in building relationships through the development of social skills such as cooperation and sharing; to help each child to recognise their own strengths and achievements through experiencing success and by developing the confidence to work towards personal goals.

Our high expectations will enable each child to develop socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally and to achieve their full potential. We will offer a structure for learning that has a range of starting points and unlimited availability for development through a wide range of new and exciting first-hand experiences that will give children the opportunity to consolidate, explore and test their skills, knowledge and understanding alongside existing experiences. We will ensure that children are kept healthy and safe and that they achieve the knowledge and skills they need to start school

Inclusion - We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at Rainbow Forge Primary Academy are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning. At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations keyed to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources that reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to speech therapy) as necessary.

- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met and we enable them to access the curriculum and make good progress.
- Teaching children to manage their own behaviour through our nature approach and ethos of the school

The Curriculum

The Nursery and FS 2 follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2016 Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document, which is available on the school website or to download at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

Additional DfE helpful guidance can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564249/2017_EYFSP_handbook_v1.1.pdf

This clearly defines what we teach. The following policy details the specifics of our setting.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

We recognise that every child is 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/ sharing assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Positive relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships and aim to develop caring, respectful and professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise that parents/carers are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open afternoons and induction meetings.
- Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their home setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school.
- Providing a handbook of information about commencing FS 2 at the new parents meeting in the summer term prior to children joining the school.

- Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time in FS 2 Class for induction visits before starting school.
- Providing an induction meeting for FS 2 parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Holding a parents evening early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Communication through – monthly newsletters, curriculum news, class dojo
- Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- Sharing regularly the children’s ‘Learning Journey’ with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child’s progress is discussed.
- Behaviour and self-management tracker and targets (vulnerable pupils including pupil premium) send home half termly.
- Sending a written report on their child’s attainment and progress at the end of their time in FS 2.
- Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting, photographs etc.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as assemblies, workshops, Christmas productions and sports day etc.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children’s learning e.g. hearing readers.
- Asking parents to share their ‘magic moments’ of children’s achievements at home
- Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, to encourage specific collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. Dads and Lads reading event, topic outcome events.

Enabling environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children’s development. Through observations, we assess the children’s interests and stages of development and learning needs before planning challenging and achievable activities and experiences to extend their learning.

Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff. We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual’s interests, passions and abilities. We use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world. We encourage the children to

make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

Learning and development

Our EYFS has three nursery classrooms (Pre Nursery, N1 and N2) and two FS2 classroom all sharing the outdoor space but use the space at different times. All our learning environments are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The seven areas of learning are defined so that children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently.

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 interconnected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. 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. The three Prime areas are:

- 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
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child, as well as conversations with the schools SENCO, phase leader and specialists. All children participate in a daily phonics sessions starting in Pre Nursery with Phase 1, from the letters and sounds program alongside early years classroom activities for phase 1.

Play

Learning through play underpins our approach to teaching and learning in the foundation stage. We embrace the fact that young children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them to learn. In doing so we can provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning, which enables them to make sense of the world. Children have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, inspire those around them and consolidate their understanding and skills. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. Our adults take an active role in child-initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating, teaching and extending play, skills and language.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning and the nursery and FS 2 teachers plan activities with these in mind. The characteristics highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas; make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

Throughout our EYFS, knowledge, understanding, skills and achievements are assessed and tracked using the developmental stages set out in the document 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)'.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end, we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers and through talking to the children. We keep written and photographic evidence to help us build up a picture of each children's strengths and achievements and to help to plan for their next steps in learning. Every child in EYFS has a 'Learning Journal' in which observations are recorded. Children have an evidence book where samples of the children's work are kept. Children In FS2 will record more formally in a Writing and Maths book, some children may reach this point in FS1.

On entry to EYFS, all children will be assessed during the first 2/3 weeks of school against learning statements in all areas of the EYFS to determine a baseline, or starting point, for their future learning. Judgements are based on the adults' observations of children during activities and play. There will not be any form of testing and parent's views on their child as a learner are taken into account as well as conversations with previous settings where appropriate. Within the under three provision, a two year check will take place and contact with the health visitor will be made.

Observational evidence and samples of children's work throughout the school year will be used to assess children as 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' based on their understanding and achievement of the Early Learning Goals set out in the EYFS curriculum.

Throughout the year the children's knowledge, skills and understanding will continue to be tracked throughout the foundation stage and assessed against the ELG's at the end of FS 2 to establish an end of foundation stage achievement and learning profile for each child in preparedness for their transition to key stage one.

Transitions

At Rainbow Forge Primary Academy we recognise that starting school and moving up classes has the potential to be a stressful time for both children and parents. To this end we have established a strong procedure for transitions to ensure that our children and parents are as confident and secure as they can be when facing the challenges of each year group.

New starters into EYFS are invited to visit their classroom before they start. Anyone entering the under three provision N1 or N2 will be phoned and transition arrangements will be organised to suit the parent/carer. Any child offered a place in FS2 will be invited to a meeting in the summer term before the children starts school to provide parents with key information, school expectations, knowledge on our curriculum and assessment and advice on how they can help their child.

All parents are offered a home visit prior to their child starting at Rainbow with the Phase leader and the Family liaison officer. EYFS staff will visit previous settings, giving the children the security of meeting with their teachers in a safe, familiar environment and parent's time to ask questions and share knowledge or any concerns they have about their child.

A transition evening is set up through the LEAD academy schools in Sheffield with the private nurseries to share relevant information about children. During the summer term, FS2 children have the opportunity to meet with their teachers during the whole school transition fortnight.

Children entering FS1 and the under three provision are offered play and stay sessions with their parent/carer before starting.

At the end of the school year, teachers share their knowledge of each child's knowledge, understanding and achievements, including end of year assessment data, with their next class teacher to ensure that all teachers have a well-rounded picture of the children prior to the new school year. Data and provision maps are shared and intervention plans are drawn up for the following academic year.

Community Links

At Rainbow Forge, the foundation stage classes enrich learning and encourage strong links with the local area and by inviting in members of the local community during our annual topic on people who help us.

Partnership with Parents

We believe that parents and carers are a child's first educator and therefore work very closely to ensure they are involved in what their child does at school. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting.

During the year we offer parents a variety of learning workshops to provide advice and information on how they can support their child's learning. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to share information about their child, to ask questions and to discuss their child's learning with the teachers. We believe that all parents have an important role to play in the education of their child. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children

Parents are encouraged to join in with their child's education from the very start of their school journey. They all have access to the school's class dojo where work is shared and parents can comment. A messaging service for parents to communicate with staff is also available. Parents are encouraged to support children's learning through regular reading on bug club, simple homework activities and by attending time to shine assemblies. Parents are also encouraged to join in with Boromi in FS2 a learning resource to share and take home with parents and in FS1 completed activities on the Easy Peasy app.

Assessment

At Rainbow Forge, we value the importance of the three-way relationship between children, parents and staff, as it enables children to make good progress and to maximise their potential. 'Learning Journeys' are short written reports that are completed for each child throughout the school year. We record each child's level of development against the 17 early Learning goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding.

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities.

Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement. The teacher keeps progress records and learning journals and records examples of each child's work. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting. Tracking grids are updated at the end of each half term or when necessary within the half term.

Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting FS2 – Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the FS 2 curriculum.

This is an opportunity for staff to

- To go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit, book bags and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1) - Throughout the FS 2 year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies. Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend a fortnight in their new class during the summer term.

Safeguarding & Welfare

At Rainbow Forge, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2016.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Keeping Safe - 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. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See the L.E.AD Safeguarding Policy).

Good Health - All children are provided with a healthy snack each day, as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

Intimate Care - "Intimate" care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, 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. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practice for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care, or those who are finding toilet training difficult. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. Intimate care plans are written for all children who require nappies changing. These are signed and discussed with parents prior to starting the setting.