



EARLY YEARS AND FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Introduction

In this policy as in all documents of Rush Common Academy Trust (“RCAT”) any reference to Governors of Rush Common School or Trustees of RCAT is a reference to the Board of Directors of RCAT and any reference to the Headteacher of Rush Common School is a reference to the Chief Executive Officer of RCAT.

Early Years education is the foundation for all future learning. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development. Young children need an environment which is healthy, safe and secure, where they are able to grow in confidence and fulfil their potential. The Foundation Stage at Rush Common School provides a stimulating and enabling environment where pupils can: play, explore, experiment, investigate, develop confidence, be curious, grow and learn. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Rush Common School.

Aims and Recommendations

At Rush Common School the aim of our early years practice is to result in children who:

- have a growing sense of self-esteem and self-worth;
- demonstrate increasing independence and the ability to show initiative;
- show confidence in making choices and in giving reasons for decisions and actions;
- use space, materials and resources both indoors and outdoors with confidence and control;
- co-operate with other children leading to instances of collaborative play as well as working independently;
- are confident to work with adults and to express their ideas and preferences;
- have an increasing span for involvement and perseverance;
- observe, explore and discover for themselves;
- are successfully acquiring the knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes which lead towards and go beyond the early learning goals.

Principles

The following themes and principles outlined in the ‘Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage’ provide the framework for the education of early learners at Rush Common School.

Theme: A Unique Child

Principle: Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured.

Theme: Positive Relationship

Principle: Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Theme: Enabling Environment

Principle: The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

Theme; Learning and Development

Principle: Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of and Development are equally important and interconnected.

1. Learning and Teaching

1.1. The curriculum is based on the seven areas of Learning and Development as outlined in 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (March 2012). The prime areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and run through and support learning in all other areas. The specific areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas and provide important contexts for learning.

The Prime Areas

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

The Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive Arts and design

1.2 It is our aim that most children will have successfully achieved, and some, gone beyond, the early learning goals by the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. However, we recognise that some children will still be working towards the goals. Links and arrangements between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 staff will ensure that these children continue to have access to an appropriate curriculum.

1.3 The school follows the welfare requirements in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'. These relate to children's welfare, staff, premises, environment and equipment, organisation, documentation and reporting.

2. Our Ethos on Learning Through Play

2.1 We recognise that young children learn best when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our Foundation Stage has a strong ethos of learning through play. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the

preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

- 2.2 At Rush Common School, practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities; inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first hand experiences which will support them to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help them to make sense of the world around them as they begin to learn specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding. In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework.

3. Assessment and Record Keeping

- 3.1 On entry to Foundation classes children are assessed to provide a benchmark by which to measure predicted achievement of the individual. Ongoing evidence is stored electronically on School Pupil Tracker Online* (SPTO). Teachers regularly record judgements against objectives, supported by a range of evidence. These records are collated termly and used to profile pupil progress over time.

*School Pupil Tracker Online is a web based tracking system which is used to generate termly reports for internal use and to inform parents of their children's progress.

- 3.2 The EYFS team also carry out observations of the children. A system is in place to ensure all children are observed regularly. Observations are conducted by the Foundation Stage teachers and Teaching Assistants and are recorded, clearly dated and filed in the child's profile. Early Years staff share and discuss these observations and use them to inform future planning. Observations are also shared with parents/carers at Parent/Teacher consultations.
- 3.3 Children's achievements at the end of the Foundation Stage are summarised according to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. A written report covering all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum is given to parents/carers at the end of the academic year.

4. Key workers

Each child in the Foundation Stage is assigned a key person. The role of the key person is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with the parents.

5. Planning

The curriculum is planned in the long, medium and short term, and based on Themes and Topics.

6. Induction

- 6.1 There is a carefully planned introduction to the school for both parents/carers and their children.

- Arrangements are made for all parents/carers and children to visit school, prior to starting, and for children to familiarise themselves gradually with their new environment and routine;
- Foundation Stage teachers hold a meeting for all parents/carers prior to children starting to outline and reinforce curriculum, expectations, home-school links and answer questions;
- Foundation Stage teachers visit pre-school and nurseries prior to visits to consult other practitioners with knowledge of the child as a learner and to receive information about children's prior learning in the Foundation Stage.

6.2 Consultations with parents and other practitioners and conversation with and observations of the children during this settling-in period all contribute to the planning of a balanced curriculum which takes account of children's strengths, interests and needs.

6.3 At Rush Common School

- the curriculum is monitored to ensure each child's development is supported by equality of access and opportunity regardless of gender, ethnicity or disability;
- children's special needs are identified;
- children's special educational needs are met;
- regard is given to the Code of Practice for children with special educational needs;
- stereo-typical behaviour and language are challenged;
- resources reflect a range of positive images including male and female, cultures and languages.

7. Admissions

Please refer to the Admissions Arrangements for Rush Common School.

8. Inclusion and Equal opportunities

Please see the Single Equality Policy for Rush Common School.

9. Safeguarding

Please see Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for Rush Common School.

10. Disability Discrimination Statement

10.1 It is unlawful to discriminate against pupils with disabilities. A person is considered disabled if they have a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

10.2 A school discriminates if:

- It treats a disabled pupil or prospective pupil less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability and without justification.
- It fails, without justification to make reasonable adjustments which require the school to think ahead, anticipate the barriers disabled pupils may face and remove them before a disabled pupil is placed at a substantial disadvantage.

11. Review of this Policy

The Board of Directors of RCAT, through its Pupil Support and Welfare Committee, review this policy every three years. It may however review this policy earlier than this if the government produces new regulations, or if it receives recommendations on how this policy might be improved.

Approved by the Pupil Support and Welfare Committee of the Board of Directors of RCAT on 17 January 2015.

Signed: A Lane (Chair of Board of Directors)

Signed: L Youngman (Acting Headteacher)

Date for Review: December 2017