



**Rossmere  
Academy**  
ENRICHING EDUCATION

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Policy**

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## 1. Our Vision

At Rossmere Academy the Early Years is viewed as a distinctive phase of education which integrates the care and education of our youngest children. We value parents as children's first educators and ensure that they are active partners in their child's school education.

*"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."* Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, Department for Education 2021.

## 2. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning.
- To develop warm and strong relationships between staff, children and parents.
- To provide a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Framework that builds firm foundations that can be developed in KS1 and beyond.
- To value the cultural diversity within our school, families and community irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, family background, disabilities or gender.
- To ensure planning and assessment systems are organised to ensure every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences.
- To ensure policies and procedures always focus on the process of learning rather than the product.
- To encourage all children to be excited and motivated to learn, to have high standards in their own learning and use communication to extend knowledge.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do.
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment.
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

## 3. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025.

#### 4. Structure of EYFS

Our Early Years learning environment is made up of a 78 place Nursery and a 55 place Reception. We also have a large shared outdoor area and provision for up to 30 two year olds – see information below. Rossmere Academy offers Flexible Nursery to support families that are eligible to receive 30 hours free childcare.

2 Year Old Provision	Nursery Class	Rascals	Reception Class
Total Number of Places = 30	Total Number of Places = 78	Total Number of Places = 26	Total Number of Places = 55
15 hours per week AM/PM places	15 hours per week AM/PM places	30 hours per week. 15 hours AM/PM in nursery. Additional 15hrs in Rascals	Full time pupils

#### 5. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children’s capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

##### Areas of Learning

There are seven statutory areas of learning:

##### Prime Areas

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Self-regulation, Managing Self & Building Relationships.
- **Communication and Language** – Listening, Attention and Understanding & Speaking
- **Physical Development** – Fine Motor & Gross Motor.

##### Specific Areas

- **Literacy** – Comprehension, Word Reading & Writing.
- **Maths** – Numbers & Numerical patterns.
- **Understanding the World** – Past and present, People & Culture and Communities.
- **Expressive Art and Design** – Creating with materials & Being imaginative and expressive.

##### Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics of effective learning prompt practitioners to focus upon the knowledge they have about an individual child and the way they learn. We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning.

## **Playing and exploring**

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to have a go

## **Active learning**

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping on trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

## **Creating and thinking critically**

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

## **6. Planning**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning in our two year old setting, Nursery, Rascals (working together with nursery) and Reception classes. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are supported by the Development Matters Statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage document. Our planning is based upon projects/themes with discrete lessons in phonics, reading, pre writing/writing and maths.

Practitioners select themes according to children's interests, experiences and prior learning. Progress and curriculum coverage are monitored half-termly. Each learning area in the classrooms and outdoor areas have provision plans, which identify learning opportunities and suggested enhancements. Staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. They also respond to children's social and emotional needs as well as their academic achievement.

Our setting is organised in such a way that the children can access all areas, which are suitably staffed to ensure the safety and well-being of the children. Children are taught by 'Key People' during group learning; however, the class teacher is the overall named key person for the children in their class. Children are grouped to work in appropriate areas for their social, emotional and academic needs.

The environment is regularly reviewed and changed in light of the children's requirements. 'Corners to learn' (enhanced provision) take on a new focus every half term linked to project themes. Links to the wider world are fostered through imaginary play, encouraging our children to recognise differences in cultures and beliefs.

Every opportunity is given for children to make their own choices for learning to develop their independence.

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate, the aim is to ensure needs are met using an adaptive/amended curriculum as necessary. We also have an ISSU to ensure those children with a high level of need can be educated accordingly. This is led by a teacher and we have clear links to a Special School within our trust who we liaise with regularly.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

## Teaching

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

We ensure there is a balance of child-initiated learning through continuous provision, enhanced provision and adult-led activities, across the school day. Although a lot of the time is spent with children self-selecting tasks, the interaction between the adult and child is essential. The adults respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing. In some cases, the adult will ask a child to complete a task with them; at other times they will participate in the child's play, extending it where possible. We see our Early Years staff as "co-adventurers".

There are set routines that we follow each day. There are designated times when the children come together to be taught and focus on pre-phonics, phonics, maths, stories and project/theme exploration. These times provide the opportunity for children to develop their ability to work as a group to listen, to take turns, to answer and concentrate.

Whole class reading and story time are important parts of the day. We want our children to develop a lifelong love of reading. Children are exposed to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary. We also have rhymes and poems of the week in our setting.

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.

## Assessment

At Rossmere Academy, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, our staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development – On track
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging') – Not on track

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other trust schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to our trust and the local authority.

We formally report to parents three times a year, Autumn and Spring in the form of a parents evening then a written report in July. This contains information about how each child learns and the progress in relation to meeting expected levels of development.

## **7. Two year old provision**

Within our Early Years we cater for 30 children who are part of the two year old scheme, this includes supporting working families who qualify for a place. This is a morning or an afternoon provision running three hours per session daily. Our two year olds are fully integrated within our nursery life however have their own separate learning space as required both indoors and outdoors. We have a two year old lead practitioner and two full time support practitioners, who are highly qualified and have a wealth of experience working with this age group. Getting to know some of our most vulnerable children while they access our two year old provision supports our understanding of their needs and aids a smooth transition into our school nursery.

When a child is aged between 2 and 3, practitioners review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed. We work in partnership with Health Visitors sharing relevant information as required with parental permission.

## **8. 30 hrs Provision in Nursery (Rascals)**

We offer a 30 hour provision within nursery to support working parents/carers. We have places for 26 children, 13 on a morning and 13 on an afternoon. Children with a 30 hr place access our nursery provision for 15 hours daily and then move into our adjoining Rascals provision for their remaining time. This provision is fully managed by our school and works in unison with our nursery. Rascals has a lead practitioner who is managed and supported by the nursery teacher and the Assistant Headteacher. Children attending are able to have school lunch or the option of a packed lunch.

## **9. Working with parents**

Parent and/or carers are a crucial part of their child's development at every stage in our Early Years.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. They are welcomed daily and are encouraged to communicate with their child's key person. Parents/carers can communicate daily either face to face or via class dojo. We provide ongoing support to ensure children can be supported in their educational journey while in the home setting.

## 10. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general in the early years by demonstrating and talking to children about:

- Visits from our school nurse to discuss e.g. healthy practices, hand hygiene etc.
- Talking to the children about the effects of eating too many sweet things.
- The importance of brushing your teeth and modelling how this should be done.

## 11. Transition

A smooth and successful transition for the children when initially entering our Early Years and later when they move to full time school is accomplished through:

- Visits to nursery and to school as appropriate.
- Mini' play sessions for children accompanied by parents, presenting opportunities for staff to make observations to identify any specific requirements for individual children.
- New Starters meeting/individual parent consultation prior to the children entering nursery and Reception.
- Home visits by nursery teacher and parent support key worker (PSA) prior to a child starting Early Years.
- Parents are encouraged to take an active role in helping their child to settle, if necessary, this usually involves parents staying with their child or an adaptive timetable for a short period of time if required.
- Staff are encouraged to be patient, nurturing and understanding at all times, sometimes during transition periods more support needs giving to individuals, both children and parents.

## 12. Role of The Early Years Lead

It is the role of the Early Years Lead, under the guidance of the Head Teacher:

- To organise the delivery of Early Years Curriculum and to ensure progression and development.
- To monitor planning and quality of delivery within the curriculum – **Intent, Implementation & Impact.**
- To attend training events to ensure up to date guidance and legislation is adhered to in Early Years setting.
- To monitor and update resources and draw up a budget working alongside the head teacher and the trust
- To liaise with outside agencies, trust colleagues, neighbouring schools, LA representatives, parents etc.
- To attend leadership meetings ensuring the school's senior management team are fully informed of developments within the Foundation Stage.
- To contribute to the school's securing improvement plan.

### **13. Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Mrs Karen Anderson every 2 of years. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## Appendix 1 – List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

This checklist lists the policies and procedures that we must have according to the EYFS statutory framework.

<b>Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS</b>	<b>Where can it be found?</b>
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See administration of medication policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy