

Reddish Vale Nursery School

Teaching and Learning Policy

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Rationale

At Reddish Vale Nursery School we feel very strongly that the best way to find out what a child can do is to observe them and watch them in their natural play. Careful attention has therefore been given not just to the content of the child's learning, but also the way in which that learning is offered to and experienced by the child, and the role of all of those involved in that process. Children are affected by the context in which learning takes place, the people involved and the embedded values and beliefs.

"Development can only take place when children are actively involved, when they are occupied with a high, nonstop, degree of concentration, when they are interested, when they give themselves completely, when they use all their abilities to invent and make new things and when this gives them a high degree of satisfaction and pleasure" – Ferre Laevers

A study with Early Excellence and the Leuven University has helped us to reflect on children's well-being and involvement being paramount to children's ability to engage with the environment for deep level learning to take place.

Curriculum Aims and Principles

The development of the whole child is crucial and provision in the Early Years can underpin future attitudes to learning. With this in mind, the following are key aims and principles that all staff adhere to:

- The child is at the centre of decisions about the curriculum. We are able to inform our planning better when we know where each child is at, what their interests are and how they best learn and prefer to learn.
- Practitioners work in partnership with parents/carers. With sound knowledge of where the child is at and how we are going to plan next steps, we are able to share an accurate picture with parents/carers, the children and other agencies who may be involved in the child's learning.
- Assessment shows us more clearly where children's strengths and weaknesses are and how we can plan for them to develop each child further. It supports us in identifying children who may need additional support (See Reddish Vale Nursery School Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy)
- The curriculum reflects the way that young children learn, through purposeful and well planned play and first hand experiences.
- We take account of children's previous learning and ensure the next steps in achieving his or her potential are appropriate.
- The planning is open ended and child initiated.
- Staff observations of individual children's learning will ensure continuity and progression.
- The environment, both indoors and outdoors, is well planned and well-resourced to promote independence.

- Children's learning is not compartmentalised into subjects, but enables them to make links throughout all areas of learning.

Children's learning should be characterised so as to:

- Enable them to have some first-hand experience and to engage in investigative work.
- Enable them to communicate their finding in a variety of ways.
- Engage in planned opportunities to work individually and as a member of a co-operative group.
- Enable them to make choices and take a role in planning and organising their learning.
- Provide a balanced curriculum of independent and teacher-led activities.
- Practice and apply newly acquired skills and knowledge.
- Value the work of others.
- Select learning materials and tools appropriate to the work at hand.
- Use technology as an aid to learning.

Planning and Organising the Curriculum

Planning follows the same pattern:

Observations

We observe children to find out about their needs, what they are interested in and what they can do. We can see how they respond to circumstances and situations. We then analyse observations and record children's progress or their need for further support. We share this information with parents/carers and involve them in deciding the next steps.

Assessments

We make assessments of children's learning and track the progress of children. This is called formative assessment. We also give a summary of children's achievements to parents/carers at least twice a year and encourage parents/carers to contribute to this process. Information is passed to receiving schools so the transition between settings is made smoother and the new staff know about the child's progress. This is called summative assessment.

Planning

Long-term plans are in place for each workshop area and daily routines. These reflect the principles of the EYFS and show how the 'Prime' and 'Specific' areas of learning are put into practice.

Medium term plans are in place for themes that may occur throughout the year. These may include festivals, seasons or subjects that are of interest to the children.

In the short term plans are made 'in the moment' and follow children's interests. Each key worker and the teachers record their daily activities with the children in a learning journal. Sometime specific activities are considered and sometimes

children's own ideas lead the way. In recording what has happened through the day, the adults can reflect on what has worked and what might happen next to develop play further.

The team meet regularly to discuss the day and the individual children and share the learning experiences and next steps for learning. This helps in the planning of resources for enhancing activities and scaffolding children's learning. Thus helping everyone involved have a wider view of individual children and the learning that has taken place across the nursery.

The sequences of activities and experiences for each child ensure progress towards the Early Learning Goals in both the Prime and Specific areas of the curriculum.

The staff consider the *Characteristics of Learning* when planning and observing the children at play and use this knowledge to support the provision of experiences offered to the children.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment is an integral part of planning and informs us of the individual needs of the children in each cohort.

The children in Reddish Vale Nursery School are continually assessed through observation, in the form of:

- Spontaneous written observation
- Extended observations
- Photographs
- Team discussions with teachers and key workers
- The Ferre Laevers scale of well-being and involvement are used and recorded as Red, Amber, Green (RAG)

We feel that it is important to know what a child can do on entry to nursery as this should be the starting point for any child's learning.

Information from parents/carers, previous settings, and observations of the children's initial weeks in nursery informs a 'baseline' assessment of the child. This is recorded and kept in the child's records. The HTLA ensures the child's baseline will be recorded by the end of the child's initial half term within the Nursery setting. We consider it important to identify the need for additional support as early as possible. By doing this children will get the help they need at the right time and in a way that suits the child best. We ensure that we listen to families and take part in a sensitive two-way exchange of information in order to provide the best support for the individual child.

Our timetable ensures that adults are given the opportunity to observe all children over a period of time, and respond appropriately by supporting and

extending learning. Staff plan how they will observe the children. This gives opportunity for incidental observation or targeted observations where they plan to follow specific children and carry out extended observations.

This ongoing assessment informs us of individual needs of all children and supports planning.

The key worker prepares a file for each child to show their progression throughout their time in the Nursery School. It is personal to each child and shows their individual interests. This is shared with parents/carers throughout the year. The observations that are carried out in nursery form the basis of this document. This document also provides the evidence for the children's assessment document (progress tracker) alongside the observations carried out by the team. Each HLTA meets regularly with members of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the assessment of each child in their group and plan next steps for learning.

On entry and on exit data is recorded at each age band in both the Prime and Specific areas. Opportunities are provided for the HLTAs to meet with the parents/carers and discuss their child's progress. In the first term, the discussion is around getting to know the child and family and also how they have settled. In subsequent terms, progress and next steps are discussed and planned. In the child's final term at Nursery, parents/carers and staff discuss transition to their child's reception class and in some cases parents will be invited to attend a transition meeting with the new school. As Reddish Vale Nursery is feeder to a large number of primary schools, each school makes their own individual transition arrangements which the Nursery accommodates.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of planning and assessment includes:

- Monitoring of the children's progress to ensure that they have been able to access a wide range of experiences.
- Daily staff discussions to ensure continuity of provision and information sharing.
- Development plan to ensure that the EYFS principles are met within the Nursery School.
- PPA time is used to record children's progress and reflect on the next steps for each child.
- Observations of teaching and learning.
- Monitoring of progress trackers by assessment co-ordinator, producing a report of information, trends and comparisons with previous years.
- Monitoring of progress of specific groups of children.
- Regular moderation meetings.

Staffing, Equipment and Resources

Making and maintaining professional relationships means that everyone must value the strengths, skills and knowledge of other people working with them and recognising the contribution made by everyone. Open communication means that everyone's views are listened to and considered, always keeping the needs of the children as central to any discussions. We aim to make and maintain good relationships with the people who are an important part of the children's lives.

Most Children play naturally and spontaneously, but adults are always on hand to support children. The environment is set out so that children have a challenging, well resourced environment and children's play can be supported and extended. Staff observe children to find out their interests and preferred play which involves supporting them and, when appropriate, joining in with the children's play. If ever play becomes unsafe then an adult will intervene immediately to resolve it.

All the staff are very aware of the importance of the positive play environment for the child, so they may develop good social skills and an appreciation of all aspects of this country's multi-cultural society. Planning of the learning experience by the staff is further designed to ensure, as far as practical, equality of opportunity between all children and celebration of diversity.

An enabling environment should be organised:

- To provide opportunities for children to develop their ideas through independent enquiry.
- So that available space and learning resources are used to best advantage.
- To ensure that resources for learning are effectively stored and accessible.
- So that learners take increasing responsibility for care of the learning environment and resources.
- To enable children to use ICT as an aid to learning.
- To provide an environment which can challenge the children physically.

We promote the relevant frameworks and curriculum set by the DFE (Early Years Foundation Stage) to support and enhance children's learning and development holistically through play-based activities. We view all aspects of learning and development as equally important and ensure a flexible approach is maintained which responds quickly to children's learning and developmental needs. We develop tailor-made activities according to each child's individual needs, based on observations which inform future planning and draws on children's needs and interests. This is promoted through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

Staff ensure that appropriate resources are provided that inspire children and support the curriculum. These resources are monitored and updated throughout the year as appropriate. Staff have responsibility for the upkeep and organisation of the areas of the nursery so that children have access to resources that allow high quality experiences for the children.

Higher level teaching assistants, working together with the SENDCO, Deputy Headteacher and teaching assistants support the children to access all aspects of nursery life. All of these staff are highly skilled and continue to develop their professional knowledge and skills. Staff discuss how the learning can be enhanced to provide the children with high quality learning experiences on a regular basis.

In order to promote high quality learning and care Reddish Vale Nursery School will:

- Provide play equipment and resources which are safe.
- Provide sufficient quantity of equipment and resources for the number of children attending.
- Provide resources which promote all areas of children's learning and development.
- Select books, equipment and resources which promote positive images of people of all races, cultures, ages and abilities, are non-discriminatory and avoid racial and gender stereotyping.
- Provide play equipment and resources which promote continuity and progression, provide sufficient challenges and meet the interests of all children.
- Whenever possible store and display resources and equipment where children can independently choose and select them.
- Check all resources and equipment regularly as they are set out at the beginning of each session and put away at the end of each session.
- Repair and clean, or replace any unsafe, worn out, dirty or damaged equipment whenever required.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the resources including the children's opinions.

Being healthy and staying safe

Helping young people to look after their health and safety is becoming an increasingly important priority for schools. With young people's lives revolving around school, it is clear that schools have an important part to play in addressing these issues.

Children need to learn:

- The importance of eating sensibly, staying physically active and getting enough rest
- How to make positive choices and take sensible actions
- How to protect their emotional, social and mental wellbeing
- The long-term consequences of the lifestyle choices they make now.

The 'stay safe' outcome of Every Child Matters is about much more than simply keeping learners safe while they are at school. Its main focus is helping young people to learn how to stay safe in their life beyond the school gates. It means preparing them to understand risk, make sound choices, speak up for themselves and cope in a real-life environment.

Children need to learn:

- How to identify and minimise risk
- How to make informed and safe choices
- How to stand up for their own opinions and resist unhelpful peer pressure.

Links with the Community and Other Agencies

We maintain good links with other people who work with the children in the setting. These include SALT, Social Care, health visitors and educational psychologists. The Nursery has half termly TAEY (Team Around the Early Years) meetings with our link Health Visitor, Social Worker and Startwell Coordinator.

The Nursery maintains links with previous or shared settings that the children may have attended/be attending and systems are in place to ensure smooth transition.

The Nursery is linked to the Stockport Consortium of Nursery Schools and staff have opportunities to meet with other colleagues.

At the point of transition, opportunities are offered to meet with other EYFS staff to share knowledge of the children.

Involving Parents/carers

Research has shown that children benefit more from the educational system when their parents/carers are given the opportunity to become more involved.

We believe that parents/carers are the first and most enduring educators of young children. We aim to work together with parents/carers to ensure a positive impact on their child's development and learning. Without this partnership the Nursery School is limited in what it can accomplish.

Aims:

1. To foster the partnership between home and Nursery, including the recognition of the importance of the home as the initial and crucial

- educative influence, and to help the parent/carer understand the work of the Nursery.
2. To encourage staff to develop an atmosphere in which the Nursery welcomes parents/carers, and to encourage parents/carers to support the Nursery School's work.
 3. To encourage parents/carers to participate actively in Nursery activities, whilst appreciating that not all parents/carers will wish to have the same degree of involvement or are unable to.
 4. To keep all parents/carers fully informed of the Nursery philosophy, projects, developments and ongoing activities.

Strategies to be employed:

1. Robust induction process which includes meetings for parents/carers where the Nursery philosophy, general organisation and curriculum are outlined. Parents/carers are also given a personal invitation for an optional home visit by their child's Key Worker.
2. Nursery booklet is given to parents/carers. Induction Visits to the nursery, with their child, before the children start.
3. Supporting parents/carers to stay on site during their child's first session.
4. Baseline Profiling – discussion between parent/carers and family group leader to establish a baseline profile of their child.
5. Parents/carers consultation meetings held at regular intervals or when appropriate to discuss aspects of their child's development e.g. behaviour, learning progress. If required families may be supported through the TAC process, (Team Around the Child), SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) process or through CAF (Common Assessment Framework) and support from other services e.g. Children's Centre staff, health professionals.
6. Assessment Files – a development profile and celebration of child's achievements.
7. Parents/carers have access to the Nursery at any time, and staff are available to discuss matters of concern and share information at the beginning and end of sessions.
8. Parents/carers invited to special activities, e.g. Christmas Sing - a - Long
9. Parents/carers help with fund-raising activities.
10. Newsletter to all Nursery parents/carers.
11. A series of opportunities throughout the year to inform and work with parents/carers on how young children learn
12. An up to date website that can be accessed using smart devices
13. A Teacher2Parent text service to remind parents/carers about upcoming events.
14. News from home using 'WOW' leaves which are displayed in the Nursery.
15. Consideration is given to how to meet the needs of parents/carers who cannot or do not wish to participate in Nursery-based activities. This may be through written and verbal communication e.g. home/nursery books.
16. Parent Governors represent parents/carers 'voice'/views through their role on the Governing Board.

Timing of the Nursery Day

The Nursery School is required to provide Nursery sessions which comply with the requirements for meeting the Flexible Free Entitlement for children aged 3 – 4 years. However, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places responsibility on the Governing Board to determine the beginning and end of school sessions. If circumstances arise when the Governing Board wishes to change the timing of day they will follow the procedures detailed below.

- The Governing Board will discuss and agree the draft proposals following an agenda item at a full Governing Board meeting, Governors will give consideration to the possible impact on other aspects such as crossing patrols, Special Needs transport arrangements and hours of all staff.
- The Governors will consult staff and the LA for their views and comments and will then incorporate amendments.
- The Governors will then seek the views of parents/carers, giving reasons for the proposed changes and the timescales involved.
- Governors will then make a final decision based on the consultation and views acquired and will notify both the LA and the parents/carers of their decision giving a term's notice, prior to implementation at the beginning of the school year.

Due to the admission procedure which sees children being admitted to Nursery at three different times of the academic year, flexibility is required. The variety of places offered will impact on the choices available for different intakes. For organisational reasons it may not be possible to allocate first preferences. Children admitted at times other than September may therefore request or be required to change their attendance pattern part way through their placement with us. For these reasons it may not be always possible to give a term's notice of required changes, however parents/carers are made aware of the potential for this to happen when we send out our initial letter offering a place at Nursery.

Nursery Sessions from September 2019 for 3-4 year olds

Beginning of week:

Monday 08.45 – 14.50/15.00
Tuesday 08.45 – 14.50/15.00
Wednesday 08.45 - 11.15

End of week:

Wednesday 12.30 – 14.50/15.00
Thursday 08.45 – 14.50/15.00
Friday 08.45 – 14.50/15.00

Parents/carers are also given the option to use their 30 hour entitlement within the school hours outlined above.

Nursery Sessions from September 2019 for 2 year olds

Morning sessions:

Monday	8.30-11.30
Tuesday	8.30-11.30
Wednesday	8.30-11.30
Thursday	8.30-11.30
Friday	8.30-11.30

Afternoon sessions:

Monday	12.30-3.30
Tuesday	12.30-3.30
Wednesday	12.30-3.30
Thursday	12.30-3.30
Friday	12.30-3.30

School Days

The Nursery School will follow suggested term dates agreed by the Teacher's Panel and the LA, with the exception of INSET days. Governors will be informed of / and agree the year's pattern of INSET days.

The Governing Board must be informed of and approve:

- Any changes to the nursery sessions.
- Proposals for early closure at the end of school terms or for special events.
- Closure due to hazardous weather or critical incident.

Links to other Policies Procedures and Guidance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SEND• Positive Behaviour Policy• Gifted and Talented Policy• Vision and Values	
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