

## **THE REDWAY SCHOOL**

**Name of Policy:** Early Years Foundation Stage

**Original Policy Date:** October 2005

**Review date:** February 2018 (revised in Sept 2018)

**Next Review Date:** February 2019

**Member of Staff responsible for the policy:** Louise O'Dell

### **Introduction to the Policy:**

The Redway School is a school for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties, and / or complex medical conditions, severe learning difficulties and autism, for pupils aged between 2 and 19 years. All the children have either statement of special educational needs or and EHC Plan.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a fundamental part of that provision, being the place that most of our children begin their education. At the Redway School we recognise how important starting school can be at such an early age and have a department dedicated to making that transition as easy as possible for the children and their families. We also recognise how difficult some parents can find parting from their children at such an early age and encourage a close relationship with families through joint assessments, planning and very careful preparation before the children arrive at the school.

## **AIMS OF THE EYFS CURRICULUM**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum aims to:

- Provide a play experience that is emotionally, intellectually, physically and socially challenging.
- Enable children to learn at a pace that is appropriate and to build on what they already know and can do.
- Include all children, ensuring that no child is disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, medical need, disability or gender.
- Provide well planned, purposeful and enjoyable activities and appropriate intervention by practitioners.
- Provide high quality care and education.
- Address developmentally delayed cognitive and communication needs
- Address physical and medical needs
- To set the foundation for close and lasting partnerships with parents.

## ORGANISATION OF THE EYFS CURRICULUM

The Redway School Early Years Curriculum follows the well-defined Characteristics of Effective Learning and the seven areas of the learning as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters (DfE 2012) and Early Years Outcomes (DfE 2013) through careful adaptations which cater for the needs of the population of the school.

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

<b>Playing and Exploring</b> (engagement)	<b>Active Learning</b> (motivation)	<b>Creating and Thinking Critically</b> (thinking)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• finding out and exploring</li> <li>• playing with what they know</li> <li>• being willing to 'have a go'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being involved and concentrating</li> <li>• keeping trying</li> <li>• enjoying achieving what they set out to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• having their own ideas</li> <li>• making links</li> <li>• choosing ways to do things</li> </ul>

Areas of Learning:

Prime Areas: these areas are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas

<b>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</b>	<b>Physical Development</b>	<b>Communication &amp; Language</b>
Making relationships	Moving and handling	Listening and attention
Self-confidence and self-awareness	Health and self-care	Understanding
Managing feelings and behaviour		Speaking

Specific Areas: these include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society

<b>Literacy</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Understanding the World</b>	<b>Expressive Arts and Design</b>
Reading	Numbers	People and Communities	Exploring and using Media and Materials
Writing	Shape, Space and Measures	The World	Being Imaginative
		Technology	

In accordance with The Redway School Policy the P Scales are simplified into developmental bands, which also correlate with the EYFS developmental stages.

<b>Developmental Bands</b>	<b>P Scales</b>	<b>EYFS Developmental Stages</b>
Band 1 Pre-Intentional	P1-2	Birth to 11 months
Band 1 Intentional	P3	Birth to 11 months
Band 2	P4	8 to 20 months
Band 3	P5	16 to 26 months
Band 3	P6	22 to 36 months
Band 4	P7-8	30 to 50 months & 40 to 60 months +

### **THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE**

There are currently 4 classes led under the Early Years Foundation Stage department.

- 2 pre-school classes who cater for children aged from 2 to 3 years old. Parents are offered full time placements although morning and afternoon only places are also available.
- The main nursery caters for children from the age of 4 although this is dependent on the ability levels of children that join the department so children can sometimes be younger.
- 1 Transition class for children that have left the Reception year and are transitioning to the Redway Curriculum and the Primary Department.

Each class has a teacher leading, supported by a team of Specialist Teaching Assistants. Classes come together for shared experiences and activities. The 4 classes are overseen by a Senior Teacher leading the department.

### **TEACHING**

Children access the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum at their appropriate developmental level known as 'phases' within The Redway School. These are linked to age phases in the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters (DfE 2012) and Early Years Outcomes (DfE 2013) The Curriculum is delivered through integrated activities and independent (child initiated where able) play.

The classroom environment is carefully designed to facilitate independent play for all the early developmental levels. This is a core part of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum in use at the Redway School.

Planned activities are offered to the full ability range and are inclusive of all disabilities as often as possible through:

- Adapting the activities
- Different expectations/outcomes
- Skilled practitioner interactions (scaffolding children's thinking and understanding according to their current developmental level).

Children's learning is based on the following principles:

- Young children are individuals and progress at different rates and not necessarily on a typical route.
- The Redway School Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum should meet the current developmental needs of the children. Therefore, activities and experiences should be the direct result of careful and thorough assessment.
- Learning is a social and interactive process between the child and their environment. Children learn through doing things for themselves, exploring, experimenting, communicating, watching, listening and having time to repeat and practice skills. Planning and management of the learning environment must ensure equality of access to appropriate learning experiences.
- The process of learning and the development of skills and attitudes is an important component of the Redway School Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.
- The basis of planning for learning is the identification of what a child can already do competently.
- A child's intrinsic motivation is important in the learning process and is recognised and supported by practitioners to enhance development.
- Learning will be more effective if reinforced by attentive and supportive adults.
- Children are encouraged to make their own choices and develop their own ideas.
- Children have opportunities to learn from adults and other children and to experience structured and non-structured learning environments.
- Children enjoy their learning experiences.
- Children learn through structured and unstructured play experiences and everyday routines and activities.
- Children need to be successful. Skills that need to be taught are broken down into structured and more manageable steps. These sub-skills can then be encouraged through play-based approaches and where appropriate, skills will be taught/encouraged through meaningful contexts, e.g. feeding, dressing etc.

## ICT

ICT is an integral part of teaching and learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are encouraged to use ICT equipment such as cameras, iPads, iPods, computers as well as more specialist equipment such as eye gaze technology to support their learning as well as support their sometimes-limited communication skills. Within the Early Years we allow children to have independent use where possible as well as using the ICT resources to support teaching, such as planning and recording assessments. We also use lower tech communication devices such as BigMacks and iTalk2s to enable children to join in with group activities, draw attention to themselves and talk to their friends.

We have access to specialist sensory rooms which are motivating and encourage the children to explore and find out more about their World.

ICT is strongly linked to the Understanding the World area of the Curriculum.

## STA SUPPORT

All of the Early Years Foundation Stage Classes are supported heavily by Specialist Teaching Assistants, who as well as supporting the children throughout the day with their learning, self help activities and physiotherapy, help the class teacher with assessments through collecting evidence of the children's achievements. They also are the driving force behind developing strong bonds with the parents and carers by having a Key Person role. The key person is a named member of staff per child who has a responsibility for helping children in their group feel safe and cared for. This is an important role as it involves them responding sensitively to children's feelings and behaviours and meeting emotional needs by giving reassurance, such as when children first arrive and join the department. The key person will also support physical needs such as dressing and personal care as well as liaising with the nursing team and therapists. The key person will become a familiar figure who is available as a support for parents as well as being a point of contact alongside the teacher.

Within some classes, STAs will also be trained in more specialist medical areas such as oral or tracheostomy care and suctioning.

## ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

The recording, assessment and reporting cycle aims to ensure that children are always offered activities and experiences that are developmentally appropriate. This involves adapting practitioners teaching styles, inclusive play environments, toys, materials, adult led activities and child led learning.

### ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

Teachers assessments are mainly recorded through the **Evidence for Learning** programme (formative assessment) and through **Connecting Steps – B Squared** (summative assessment).

Practitioners use the **Evidence for Learning** app to quickly capture, assess and document an individual event or achievement which is then stored to be shared with other teachers, practitioners and parents. It is also a useful tool for creating Learning Journeys which stay with the pupil for their whole school life. It is used for real-time planning and can identify gaps in learning and attainment

**Connecting Steps** is used for a more in-depth analysis by showing comparable data for example showing progress over a month or year as a percentage. It is used for statistical information although is also a good tool for showing gaps in pupil development.

**Communication Assessments** are also completed on a yearly basis in a joint effort between teachers and the school Speech and Language Therapists. This assessment identifies a current level of communication including details on suggested approaches to learning, appropriate teaching techniques and specific targets.

A **Baseline Assessment** of the all areas within the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum which must be completed within 6 weeks of each child starting school. This is completed on the **Connecting Steps** programme.

## REPORTING

In the EYFS department, the **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile** is completed electronically for all children in their Reception Year. It is a mandatory assessment which shows the level pupils have achieved against each Early Learning Goal (ELG) at the end of their Reception year. This is in the format of 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeded'. This is completed in the summer and sent to the local authority.

At the end of every academic year, parents will receive an end of year report detailing the individual achievements made by their child over the year.

Parents are regularly informed of what is happening with their own child as well as the wider school through different methods.

- A home-school Diary is sent home each day. Messages written in this book are occasionally followed up by a telephone call if necessary. This ensures good communication is continued in a situation where children are transported by taxi or bus and face-to-face communication with parents is limited.
- Parents can telephone or email class teachers at any time. If they wish to discuss matters face to face then an appointment can be made for a suitable time. Classroom staff will log calls to and from parents and carers.
- Parent consultation evenings are held at intervals during the school year.
- At the end of the school year parents receive an End of Year Report on the main curriculum areas and a photographic DVD.
- Parents receive a half termly newsletter showing a class overview of activities and a weekly newsletter with a whole school overview.
- Parents are invited to visit for mandatory reviews on their own child's progress through initial and annual EHC reviews. During these meetings, the child's EHC is thoroughly reviewed using assessment information collected over the past year.

## MODERATION

The Early Years Foundation Stage achievement is predominantly moderated through our Work Evidence Files. For those children completing the Reception Year, the relevant teachers are invited to a moderation meeting with other local special schools to discuss assessments made before completing the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile for each child. The Local Authority Early Years Team also arranges visits and moderates the department on a regular basis.

## **PLANNING**

Effective planning ensures that all children gain relevant and meaningful experiences and are offered equal opportunities therefore enabling them to hopefully reach their full potential. Planning will ensure that the children have access to a broad curriculum that meets their individual developmental needs and that they have equal access to adult time and support. It will ensure that adults understand the potential learning opportunities of all indoor and outdoor experiences and are also aware of ways of extending children's learning. Planning will enable all practitioners to observe purposefully and work consistently as a member of the team. At the Redway School, a multi-disciplinary team is involved, making joint planning essential.

The Early Years Foundation Stage department uses a thematic approach, with a range of topics which enables learning to take place across all seven Areas of Learning. Some activities will not use this thematic approach such as swimming or soft play. Some learning cannot be planned as some situations arise spontaneously in children's general play and it is the role of the adult to be able to select an appropriate moment to intervene and build on the immediate interests of the child.

Long and medium term planning is informed by knowledge of child development and also the school development plan, policy statements, daily routines and topics. Termly topic plans form broad areas of interest and variety. Daily plans, lesson activity plans and weekly plans should be informed primarily by specific learning intentions for each child which are also relevant to an activity or learning environment.

Planning consists of:

- Long term plans showing the themes and activities. This is a three year plan.
- Medium term plans covering activities for each half term. The focus is on topic based activities but they also covers general activities offered to the children.
- Daily plans which act as a practitioner guide for each day
- Activity plans which show the learning intentions and differentiation for classroom activities.

Classroom planning involves ensuring that the learning intentions for each play environment or activity meet the levels of the children who will use it. Activity plans and play environments are planned to help children meet the learning intentions.

## **DIFFERENTIATION**

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is play-based which gives many flexible opportunities to intervene with individual children at all developmental levels. Activity plans also outline specific differentiation of each play activity for individual children or groups of children at similar developmental levels. Practitioners are skilled at selecting the right opportunity to intervene with an individual to help them access and activity without taking away their independence. Learning intentions for each play environment

or activity meet the levels of the children who will use it. Activity plans and play environments are planned to help children meet the learning intentions.

## **RESOURCES**

Each Early Years Foundation Stage class is equipped with a range of age-appropriate equipment and toys. The resources reflect the developmental level of the children within the department. The equipment and materials provided should facilitate the delivery of activities based on active learning and first-hand experiences. All equipment should be kept in a good clean condition and labelled clearly, and safety tested on a regular basis if appropriate. Attention must be paid to health and safety at all times.

## **MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION**

The teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage are responsible for:

- The planning and day to day running of each class including directing the work of the Specialist Teaching Assistants.
- Liaison across the department. Teachers must meet on a regular basis to discuss future planning, new developments and admission of new pupils.
- Liaising with Year 1 teachers when a child transfers at the end of the Reception year.
- Developing partnerships with parents and keeping the Senior Management Team informed.
- Liaison with health professionals, including speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and specialist nurses as well as specialist teachers such as the teacher for multisensory impairment.
- Preparing reports and assessments
- Planning their classroom environment appropriately and keeping it well resourced.

## **PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES**

The fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs are already implicitly embedded in the Early Years Foundation Stage as the examples below show.

Democracy – Making decisions together.

- Children are encouraged to see the bigger picture, and to know that their views count and to value everyone else's.
- Children are encouraged to talk about or demonstrate their feelings in the most appropriate way to them.
- Children are given opportunities to help make decisions on what will happen in a particular activities and given choices.

- Staff also support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration.
- Children are given the opportunity to access activities that will allow them to become inquisitive and allow their questions to be valued.

#### Rule of Law – understanding rules matter

- Covered through the Personal, Social and Emotional Development Area of Learning
- Staff support children to try to understand their own and others behaviour and consequences and learn to distinguish right from wrong.
- Staff collaborate with children where possible to create class rules and code of behaviour.

#### Individual Liberty – freedom for all

- Covered through Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World Areas of Development.
- Staff support children develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their self knowledge, self esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities motivating them to strive to improve where they can.
- Staff provide a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility.

#### Mutual respect and tolerance – treat others as you want to be treated

- Covered through Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World Areas of Development.
- The school and staff create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures, races are all valued.
- Opportunities are given for all children to access the wider community.
- Staff share stories that reflect and value the diversity of children’s experiences.

### **SMSCE WITHIN THE EYFS CURRICULUM**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education helps children develop personal qualities, which are valued in a civilised society; for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, and self-respect. Every day we seek to teach these qualities across the EYFS curriculum and throughout school life. Development in SMSC will take place across all areas of learning, within activities that encourage pupils to recognise the spiritual dimension of their learning, reflect on the significance of what they are learning, and to recognise any challenges that there may be to their own attitude and lifestyle. Cultural differences are celebrated so that children have a sense of belonging in their own family as well as in wider social groups.

Children will be given opportunities to:

Spiritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use their own imagination, curiosity and creativity in their learning</li> <li>• Gain an understanding of feelings and emotions</li> <li>• Explore beliefs, religious or otherwise and respect for different people's beliefs and values</li> <li>• Experience moments of stillness and reflection</li> <li>• Have opportunities where possible to reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life</li> <li>• Foster an enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world</li> </ul>
Moral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the unique value of their peers and other individuals</li> <li>• Listen and respond appropriately to the views of others</li> <li>• Make appropriate decisions and choices</li> <li>• Show respect for the environment in which they live</li> <li>• Attempt to manage their own behaviour</li> <li>• Try to develop an understanding of right and wrong</li> <li>• Experience and try to understand the of consequence of their actions</li> </ul>
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a positive self-image</li> <li>• Learn to be effective communicators using a method that is appropriate for them</li> <li>• Try to help others in school and the wider community</li> <li>• Show their personal qualities and be valued</li> <li>• Take some responsibility for their own actions</li> <li>• Form and maintain lasting relationships</li> <li>• Attempt to work cooperatively and collaboratively</li> </ul>
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience the value and richness of cultural diversity in Britain</li> <li>• Extend their cultural awareness through assemblies and trips out</li> <li>• Respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities within school</li> <li>• Experience the differences between cultures other than their own</li> </ul>

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum follows the school policy for Equal Opportunities.

Every child in the Early Years Foundation Stage has equality of opportunity to access a curriculum that is designed to meet his or her individual needs, regardless of the degree

of learning difficulty, medical requirements, gender, race or religion. This involves ensuring that books and toys reflect the diverse identity of the children in the class.

## **WORKING WITH PARENTS**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we aim to set the foundations for a close and lasting relationship with parents, even before their child starts school. We hope that this will engage and empower them, in turn benefiting their child's education. We share daily information with parents, either face to face, in the home-school diary or via email. Parents can telephone class or make appointments if they wish to discuss anything.

Throughout the year, we hold parental consultations in the evening. Also, each term we hold review meetings, which consist of an EHC review with a report and a communication assessment which is usually initially written in conjunction with parents.

We encourage parents to join in with their children's learning, sometimes through helping with swimming activities or attending stay and play afternoons so that they can get to know staff and have a better understanding of what the school can do for their child.

Specifically, for parents of children with Autistic Spectrum Conditions under 5 years old, the Earlybirds Intervention Programme helps and supports parents to understand Autism and develop communication and play strategies at home.

There is also a Parent Support Group, which meet on a regular basis. Other professionals are often invited to give talks and offer support to parents. This is also a good opportunity for parents to meet and get to know each other on a personal basis.

## **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage monitor and evaluate what happens in their class on a daily, weekly and termly basis. They share and discuss issues about individual children and the general running of the department with the whole team, gleaning and valuing opinions and observations from all members of the team.

This policy is reviewed annually, in conjunction with any ongoing issues within the Early Years Foundation Stage Action Plan.

## **DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

(Please refer to the development plan)

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

All practitioners within the Early Years Foundation Stage Department are encouraged to go on relevant training courses, both in-house and externally. The Leadership team keep up to date with any changes in guidelines and statutory requirements that are released by the Department for Education and these are cascaded throughout the school to make sure that all staff are aware. Teachers meet with their Team Leader throughout the year to discuss targets and any training that may be required. STA's meet with their class teacher at the beginning of the year to discuss any training requirements and goals they might have with regards to increasing their skills. All information regarding Professional Development should be recorded using BlueSky.

## **CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS**

The thematic approach in the Early Years Foundation Stage offers a broad curriculum, addressing all seven Areas of Learning,

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

All practitioners have a responsibility to ensure that the school, its equipment and resources are safe and that they are used and stored appropriately. Practitioners should all be aware of the school's Health and Safety Policy and take note of it especially when planning off-site visits. Teachers will produce risk assessments for general classroom activities and off-site visits. These are readily available in each class. Teachers have all had off-site visit training (Autumn 2012).

## **SAFEGUARDING**

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. The Redway School is a high-quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. Everyone employed by the school who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding. Therefore it is necessary to ensure that their approach to their role is child-centred and they must consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

All staff must ensure that they follow the guidelines as outlined in the most up to date Redway School Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance.

**OTHER POLICIES TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS ONE**

**OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THIS POLICY:**

- Off-site visit Policy
- Equal opportunities Policy
- RE Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Whole school curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

**OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS/EVIDENCE FILES TO REFER TO:**

- Class Work Evidence Files
- Early Years Audit 2015
- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile moderation evidence file
- Risk Assessment File
- Ofsted Report 2010
- Ofsted Report 2014
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework – Effective from April 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance – Effective from September 2018