

# EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE –INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

## INTRODUCTION AND PRINCIPLES

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting as defined by statute applies to children in education from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Read Academy, we only offer facilities for the care and education of Reception-aged children (4 to 5 years).

In partnership with parents and guardians we aim to enable children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

Each of our school policies has taken account of the additional safeguards and issues associated with EYFS children. This document aims to summarise the various policies and procedures we have for our EYFS children in the day to day operation of their lives at the school.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

This document outlines the following:

1. The regulatory environment
2. Our ethos
3. How we apply our ethos within the regulatory environment

## THE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework was introduced in 2008. Following this, all schools and other settings catering for the under 5s were required by law to deliver the EYFS statutory framework. Statutory Guidance after the framework became law, issued in 2009, was revised “**Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage - Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five**”, which was published in March 2014.

## OUR ETHOS

The EYFS ethos at Read Academy is based upon four themes:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and developing

## HOW WE WILL APPLY OUR ETHOS IN 2016-2017

### **A Unique Child**

At Read Academy we recognise that every child is unique and in essence a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

All children and their families are valued at Read Academy. From the moment they arrive, children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all available provision.

We recognise the need for early identification of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and of children with English as an Additional Language (EAL), so as to enable staff to support the development of each child. The EYFS staff follow a cycle of action: assess; plan; do and review - consulting with the SENCO appropriately and outside agencies in order to create an Education, Health and Care or other plan as appropriate. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We encourage and support children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture.

We endeavour to create a safe environment where risks are identified and either eradicated or managed wherever possible.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The Equal Opportunities Policy applies to every staff member, parent, carer and child. Each person is valued as an individual, with differing social, intellectual and cultural backgrounds. Different needs, likes, dislikes, similarities and differences are respected and accounted for.

We endeavour to ensure that no one at Read Academy is subjected to discrimination, racist comments or gender bias. Although the school has a Islamic ethos, cultural or religious diversity is respected. In line with Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of pupils ( 2014) the School will actively promote fundamental British Values, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We sensitively collect relevant information from parents concerning their child's specific needs, for example; emotional, medical, cultural or religious. This information is recorded and shared with other members of staff where appropriate.

Parents for whom English is an additional language will be offered support, either spoken or written if appropriate.

We recognise and raise our children's awareness of a variety of festivals and special events each year from cultures represented within our community and outside.

During play we encourage children to respect and value each other.

We discourage children from making hurtful and unkind remarks. Staff ensure that children are helped towards understanding that it is wrong to judge someone because of their gender, colour, beliefs, disability or social background. We explain why, talk things through and praise positive behaviour.

We challenge and deal with inappropriate practices and attitudes promptly and all staff work together to ensure the safeguarding of children (using as reference the DfE document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) September 2016)

Volunteers, local speakers or personalities who reflect the diversity of the local community are invited to visit the setting.

Our curriculum plan takes into account each child's individual route to learning through observation and EYFS Profile Next Steps.

We give the children equal opportunities and equal access to the full range of activities available, including visits and trips outside the setting. The School will include economic education alongside respect for other people with particular regard to the protected characteristics of: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation. (Economic Education and Equality Act 2010)

We monitor activities on a regular basis to ensure that every child has freedom of choice, time for discovery, and support, when it is necessary.

### **Positive relationships**

At Read Academy the Reception class has a full time EYFS-trained teacher as well as a full time teaching assistant. Smaller class sizes enable children to develop positive relationships and a secure attachment with adults, enabling them to feel safe and have their emotional needs supported.

Staff at Read Academy seek to be warm, approachable and sensitive to a child's needs, feelings and interests. Consistency in setting clear boundaries is paramount to ensuring that the children are aware of the behavioural expectations both in the classroom and when moving round the school.

### **Parents**

We recognise that parents are the child's first and foremost educators and we wish to develop strong links with each child's family right from the start. We do this by:

Providing parents with information regarding our provision through communication books, newsletters, learning portfolios, handbooks, the New Model School website and subject information evenings.

Reading Record (Homework Diary): Every child is given a Reading Record from the time that he or she joins the school. This is the main method for communications between parents and the school. We note everything that your child has done that day, and ask you to write down anything relevant, that might affect his or her performance, such as a late evening.

We may also use the Reading Record to suggest activities that reinforce areas of classroom work. Each week's achievements are briefly noted.

Holding parent evenings during the year.

Having an open door policy which allows parents and carers to share information with staff.

Inviting parents to come and look at the classroom and the child's achievements

Encouraging parents to share knowledge and expertise, for example by giving a talk about a religious festival, or running a group activity as a parent helper.

### **Enabling environments**

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged and which values all people and learning. We ensure that the resources available are stimulating and relevant to the children's cultures and communities. We value learning through play and provide rich opportunities through play and playful teaching. We model correct management of risk and support children to take and manage risk through exploration where appropriate.

### **Resources**

At Read Academy we provide the children with furniture, equipment, toys and resources that meet the teaching and learning needs appropriate to their age, as well as their social, physical, emotional, educational, spiritual and cultural needs and development.

We make resources accessible to the children, wherever possible, so that they can choose their activities independently.

We label all resources so that children can find and return resources and equipment safely and easily.

We ensure the safe use and storage of resources by the children, but we also support their independence and problem-solving abilities.

We purchase, organise and monitor equipment, toys, books and resources to reflect diversity in the immediate and wider society. We display positive images of differing races, cultures, religious, social groups, physical abilities and disabilities and gender in and around the setting.

## **The Learning Environment**

At Read Academy we make sure that the learning environment is attractive, stimulating, well organised and clean and tidy. We ensure that displays support child's learning and reflect the process of learning as well as the end result. We endeavour to make displays interactive where possible. Key targets and learning intentions are regularly displayed as well as resources to support the development of ongoing skills such as word walls. As far as possible the environment supports child's independence and choice in their own learning.

The Reception teachers regularly complete an EYFS Learning Environment Review.

## **Outdoor Play**

All of the children are encouraged to play in their dedicated, secure outdoor space during morning and afternoon breaks, except in the worst weather. We also use the outdoor space for supervised activities, involving playing with water, sand and some ball games. Reception children are encouraged to plant and grow their own seeds.

## **The Organisation of our Setting**

In our setting we are committed to organising the staff, resources and setting to ensure that we provide high quality care that meets the needs of the children.

We ensure that:

The required adult: child ratios are met.

The health, safety and security requirements as outlined in the school health and safety policy are maintained.

Drinking water is available throughout the day, as we fully recognise the importance of proper hydration.

All new members of staff receive a copy of all policies and they are all discussed with them at induction and they are then involved in their implementation.

There is a system to timetable the hours and responsibilities of staff.

We use the playground to offer a wide range of learning opportunities.

All records are kept securely and separately and all items of confidentiality are respected.

The children are organised into class groups each with their own teacher, who is their key worker, to ensure consistency of care for individual children.

A register of children present is taken at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.

The procedures for child's arrival and collection will ensure their safety. (The parent or carer is required to notify the school if a child is to be collected by an adult other than the person or persons that usually collect.)

As additional protection parents are asked to provide the school with a family password so in the event of an unknown person coming to collect a child we can ask for the family password to satisfy ourselves that the person collecting the child is sent by the parent.

If a child is not collected at the correct time and no information regarding collection has been received, then a member of staff will telephone the contact numbers in the child's record file to ascertain who is to collect the child. If there is no response from the telephone numbers then the Head Teacher will be alerted.

### **Learning and developing**

At Read Academy we recognise that children develop and learn in different ways. Effective learning and teaching is supported through:

Staff who have the knowledge of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching.

A range of approaches that provide first hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the child's play, talk or other means of communication.

A carefully planned curriculum that helps children to reach their full potential towards achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the EYFS year.

Provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellect, physical, social and emotional abilities.

The encouragement of children to communicate and talk about their learning and to develop independence and self-management.

Supporting learning with appropriate accessible space, facilities and equipment both indoors and outdoors, including the effective use of ICT and development of computing skills.

The identification, through observations of child's progress and future learning needs, which are shared with parents.

## Visits

We organise excursions to the local park and other amenities. These are designed to help the children to acquire a basic understanding of our traditions, of the natural world and of the importance of other cultures. We require your signed permission each time our visits go outside the local area. We will inform you well in advance, telling you about every visit and whether it involves an extension to the normal length of the school day.

## Areas of Learning and Development

Under the statutory framework of 2014, the EYFS curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning.

Children usually develop what we consider to be the three Prime Areas first. These are: Communication and Language  
Physical Development; and  
Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

These prime areas are those most essential for child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow in our schools, the Prime Areas help our children to develop skills in the following four **Additional Areas**. These are:

Literacy

Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy

Knowledge and Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design.

These 7 areas are used to plan each child's learning and activities at Read Academy School. We will strive to ensure that the activities and environment are enabling for each child. Our planning is designed to be flexible so that we can follow each child's unique needs and interests.

## Learning through play

At Read Academy we understand the value of providing opportunities for children to learn, explore and develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through a range of play based activities. We have developed a programme which presents a careful balance between adult led and adult guided activities as well as child initiated activities. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. The staff work together to ensure that all seven areas of learning are covered through first hand, practical learning experiences. Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors is one of the key ways in which children learn. It is the process through which children can explore, investigate, recreate and come to

understand their world. It is not just imaginative play and role play but includes spontaneous, self-initiated lines of inquiry and exploration. Play is a vital component of child's lives. It is an important way in which skills are developed and practised. Play is essential for physical, intellectual, linguistic, emotional, and behavioural and social development.

### **Principles of High Quality Play**

Play is an intrinsic part of child's learning and development.

Play has many possible but no prescriptive outcomes.

Play challenges children and offers them the chance to learn in breadth and depth.

Play draws on what children already know and can do and enables them to master what is new.

Play enables children to apply existing knowledge and to practise their skills

Play encourages children to communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.

Play offers children opportunities to explore feelings and relationships, ideas, and materials, connections and consequences.

Play empowers children to make choices, to solve problems and to be independent in their learning.

Play enables children to express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Play encourages children to struggle, to take risks and to become resilient as learners.

Play can be supported and extended but not interfered with by adults.

Play presents no barriers to children because of their language, cultures, abilities or gender.

### **The role of the adult during play is:**

To observe child-initiated play to get to know the children better so that they can understand her/him and provide resources that develop child's interests and meet their needs.

To evaluate the effect of provision and to plan and resource a challenging indoor and outdoor environment.

To support child's learning through planned play activity.

To extend and support child's spontaneous/self-initiated play.

To extend and develop child's language and communication in their play.

### **How the curriculum is organised at Read Academy:**

We offer the children a broad and balanced curriculum which follows The (statutory) Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We offer a variety of activities, both planned and free choice, which provide opportunities to learn through play.

We run a carefully-planned programme of themes/topics throughout the year to ensure that the children are given a wide range of active, real-life and everyday experiences to enhance their learning about their world. These themes/topics are chosen to reflect the child's interests and include visits in and around the locality.

We offer a mixture of active and quiet times throughout the day, and the children have opportunities to participate in both indoor and outdoor activities.

We take every opportunity to develop child's communication skills in speaking and listening.

We encourage children to look at books and we seek opportunities to read stories to, and with, them.

We aim to ensure that each child has an opportunity to read 1:1 with an adult every day.

We develop early mathematical skills and promote economic understanding through everyday routines, as well as through planned experiences and games.

We provide activities which engage the children in problem solving and investigation.

We stimulate the child's imaginative and creative development through a range of activities, including: role play; a variety of painting, modelling and drawing experiences, both planned and free-choice; singing and dancing to music, as well as listening to music and playing instruments.

We encourage children to make choices and decisions during free play. We also expect them, supported by adults, to take appropriate responsibility for the care and maintenance of resources.

## **Planning and Record-Keeping**

Medium-term plans outline each topic/theme. This ensures breadth and balance of the curriculum, and run alongside a variety of planned and free choice activities.

The EYFS staff meet weekly to assess and evaluate the previous weeks teaching and learning, as well as the child's progress and development.

Detailed weekly plans are made while maintaining a level of flexibility to ensure that new skills, knowledge and concepts have been fully appreciated by the children.

Planning includes differentiation and details of various activities available for children with different levels of ability. Weekly plans are made available for support staff to view and use.

All staff make observations on progress and achievements and record these in the child's own learning journey which is online and shared with parents who are actively encouraged to add their own observations about the development of their child. This information is used to plan appropriate activities that will aid the child's development, and is shared with other staff to ensure continuity of learning and care. It is also used to assess the effect of provision.

Child's learning is marked or assessed regularly in accordance with the schools marking policy. Every effort is made to ensure that children are aware of what was positive about their previous learning, as well as how to improve next time.

Class teachers are responsible for making sure that these records are updated regularly, and that the information is shared with parents and carers on a regular basis e.g. books, reading records, parent/teacher meetings and daily contact with parents/carers.

Central Storage of Records: we store all of our records on pupils in locked cabinets. Parents may arrange to see the records of their children. Parents have the right to make written comments on their child's records, which will then be treated as part of that record.

The School is registered under the Data Protection Act and complies with its provisions, for example, about the disclosure of information relating to third parties.

At the end of a child's year of EYFS education, we complete a detailed "EYFS Profile" on him or her which summarises his or her learning and development against 13 assessment scales and 69 learning goals, which have been determined by the Government. Parents receive their own copy, which we will discuss with parents at the time that it is completed alongside a fuller school report.

We ensure a handover of records between teachers as a child progresses to the next stage after EYFS.

## **Behaviour**

Children need to learn how to cope with strong feelings and what is, or is not, acceptable behaviour. We support children in managing their feelings and coping with difficult situations. (Please also see the School's **Behaviour Policy**)

We encourage and praise children for behaving appropriately.

We always treat children with respect and model appropriate ways to behave with others.

We acknowledge that children have strong feelings that they may not know how to express. We help them to talk about what these feelings are and how to deal with any situations that arise.

We support children in resolving conflict by talking through the effects of their behaviour on others and helping them to work out appropriate behaviour.

When inappropriate behaviour occurs, we ensure that the child knows that it is the behaviour that is unwelcome, not the child.

We plan activities which allow children to explore right and wrong in a non-threatening context.

Negative behaviour is addressed in a calm and dignified way – Read Academy is a non-shouting school. Children are given three warnings and where the behaviour continues there is an appropriate consequence decided by the class teacher or teaching assistant.

## **Medical Care and Medication**

Although your child will normally receive medical care from your family GP practice, we hold medical information on all our pupils, particularly regarding allergies, in order to ensure that we can provide appropriately for their needs, or look after them if they are injured or have an accident.

## **Complaints**

We hope that parents will not feel the need to complain and that any difficulty can be sensitively and efficiently handled before it reaches that stage. However, the school's complaints procedures are on our web site. We will send you copies on request.

Although the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is responsible for inspecting the EYFS setting, because it is part of an independent school, parents should be aware that if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint, they are entitled to make a complaint directly to Ofsted. They can download the Ofsted leaflet: "Complaints to Ofsted about Schools: Guidance for Parents" reference 080113 from

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-ofsted-about-schools-guidance-for-parents>

### **Monitoring & Review**

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure the implementation of this policy and to review it every two years.