

The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools



EYFS Policy

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Executive Headteacher: T Ward

Chair of Governors: P. Gibbons

The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools

EYFS Policy

Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that applies from September 2021.

Structure of the EYFS

At The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools, children enter the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. We provide a series of induction sessions for new starters and their families which start with a parent induction meeting. We also liaise with the feeder settings which the new starters prior to them attending a series of visit to our setting and familiarise with the teaching staff, classroom and provision. The children also stay and experience our school meals on their final visit. The overarching principles that the EYFS is based upon are:

- Every child is a unique child
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

A Unique Child

At The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning. We learn through exciting play-based activities that are linked to the children's current interests, sharing 'wow moments' from home to inspire others to be 'constantly learning'.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our schools. We strongly believe that all our children matter and we give them every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning. In the EYFS we set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of our children through:

- careful observation of their self - initiated and adult led activities, which provides a foundation for our planning
- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

It is important to us that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children.

Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021. The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected. 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.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

The Learning Environment

The classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The EYFS class is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. It has its own limited, enclosed outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers the children further opportunities to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Teaching and Learning Style

At The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools, we define effective teaching and learning as follows:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers know how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;
- the good relationships between our schools and the settings that our children experience prior to joining our schools.

Play

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which helps them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to practise skills, develop ideas and think creatively alongside other children as well as individually. The children communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They have the opportunity to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

Children should be given planned opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Assessment

At The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools, 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. Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA, May 2021). Observations are recorded and shared with parents using a learning journey, staff use 'I can' titles to ensure that the learning intention is clear. Significant achievements and steps towards the ELG are recorded in Maths Journals, paper Learning Journals and My Try writing books. Each class has an 'Our Learning Journey' display which charts learning steps throughout the year. 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
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

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 local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Working with parents

Key to ensuring high quality early years' experience is to ensure continuity between all settings and to ensure that the children's social, emotional and educational needs are addressed appropriately. At The Ribblesdale Federation of Schools, transition is seen as a process, not as an event and is planned for and discussed with parents, children and practitioners of the pre-school settings that the children of our schools attend. We recognise that parents are the children's first and most enduring educators and that when parents and practitioners work together the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. We encourage parent partnership through:

- Showing respect and understanding for the role of the parent in the child's education
- Listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns they may have
- Making parents feel welcome by being friendly, approachable and having an open door policy
- Maintaining an on-going dialogue
- Being flexible in arrangements for settling children in
- Meeting with parents of Reception children regularly to discuss progress
- Inviting parents in to share their child's Learning Journal and see a range of work
- Through the use of Tapestry, an online learning journal which parents can access at home
- Encouraging parents to make use of the home/school communication book
- Inviting parents in the school to share their specialised skills

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers. 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.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS/KS1 teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body, raising any issues that require discussion. The Executive Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.