

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

1. 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
- Children participate in activities that give them learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum in Year 1 and beyond.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress in accordance with their own individual learning profile.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- That children access a language rich environment that values both spoken English and British Sign Language as languages for communication and children learn through an environment that adapts to each child's needs as their linguistic skills develop.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#).

3. Structure of the EYFS

Royal Cross Primary School is a specialist setting for pupils who are deaf and/or require specialist support to meet their additional specific communication and language needs.

Royal Cross has an Early Years class for pupils in their pre-school years and in Reception. If appropriate to the needs of the children, some pupils in Year 1 may remain within the Early Years class and access elements of the EYFS curriculum for an additional year.

The pupils are taught by a qualified Teacher of the Deaf and Specialist Support Staff. All of whom have a minimum of British Sign Language Level 2 qualification.

4. Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage has four guiding principles which shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured

- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS.

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.

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

At Royal Cross, we follow a 4 year Creative Curriculum theme cycle and children experience activities within each theme as they progress through the EYFS and KS1 and 2. The Curriculum is delivered through the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

4.1 Planning

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 focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. At Royal Cross we believe 'Communication is key' and the priority is to develop pupils' Communication and Language skills during these early years of their development.

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 challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child. Where a child may have special educational needs or disability additional to their deafness, staff work closely with other specialist support, linking with relevant services from other outside agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, the teacher of the deaf reflects on the ways individual deaf children learn and include these in their practice.

4.2 Teaching

At Royal Cross we are committed to ensuring that all children have access to a high quality curriculum and learning environment that is flexible and embraces individuality. Appropriate communication strategies are seen as key and the value of learning through first-hand experience and play is prioritised.

We value the achievement of all children, fostering their confidence, self-esteem and developing a strong sense of identity while respecting those of others. Royal Cross provides a rich, flexible and versatile outdoor and indoor environments that allows for different experiences and different styles of learning.

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.

Music, signing and listening games are all part of the curriculum and the Teacher of the deaf works closely with Speech and Language Therapists and Cochlear Implant Teams to support children in the development of their spoken language and lip reading skills.

Teaching supports pupils to achieve the outcomes identified in their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). Pupils' long term outcomes are broken down into annual goals and more achievable termly goals. These goals are incorporated into weekly and daily activities and their progress towards these goals is observed.

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.

5. Assessment

At Royal Cross, we encourage and provide opportunities for children to attend our Early Years Setting initially on a 'stay and play' basis with their parents whilst a formal EHC Plan assessment is being made to determine an appropriate school placement. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes.

Assessment is carried out through a mixture of informal observation, interaction with the child, the use of the information on record sheets and regular discussions with all staff. Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis and the children are observed working independently both indoors and outdoors. Records of such observations are made in a pupil's individual Learning Journal. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

On entry to the school, EYS practitioners, SALT and the BSL Instructor will review the starting point for a child's development in all areas of the EYFS Profile and their own individual language profile. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Pupil's progress against the EYFS Profile is recorded half termly. 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

Exceeding expected levels or,

Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers. The Early Years Lead attends local termly EYS cluster meetings where learning journals and judgements made are moderated.

Pupil attainment is also recorded using school assessment systems PIVATS 5 and B Squared at the end of the Reception Year as part of a pupil's transition to Year 1.

The EYs lead and support staff work closely with SALT and CI teams working with pupils and each child's communication skills in either their developing British Sign Language and/or English are assessed and monitored with respect to each individual child's language needs and preferred communication mode. Their progress is recorded in their Individual Language Profile.

WOW Cards

These Achievement Cards are sent home to families to enable them to record achievements and steps of progress across any aspect of the child's daily life. In this way all achievements are shared by home and school alike. These are then presented in whole school Assemblies by the Head Teacher.

Annual Review of pupils' EHC Plans

Pupil's EHC Plans are reviewed 6 monthly or at least annually during the Reception year in line with Lancashire's guidelines. Parents and other professionals working with the child are invited to attend and discuss progress. By involving all professionals working with the child across the areas of Education, Health and Social Care, a whole picture of achievement is created and strategies for support are shared across all areas of need. Photo stories are made of individual children's learning as the year progresses. The children then share these with family; other professionals and the whole school.

6. Working with parents

At Royal Cross, we recognise that children learn and develop best and reach their full potential when there is a strong partnership between practitioners 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. Regular information is provided for parents about activities undertaken by the children so that they can become involved and help to support their child's learning journey.

The Teacher of the deaf is assigned as each pupil's key person and they ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The teacher of the deaf supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home and also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

At Royal Cross we work in partnership with parents in a number of ways:

- Telephone contact and termly home visits. The class teacher makes a termly visit to a pupil's home to meet with parents to discuss their child's progress. In addition to this, the class teacher and parent/carer may have additional telephone conversations as needed.
- Parent Text. Royal Cross uses a parent text service which can send important information to parents instantly.
- Class email, class Dojo, home-school book. We use a class email/messenger system or a home-school book for families to exchange information and for school to send news and photographs of children's day in class.
- Newsletters. A newsletter is sent home at the start of each new topic with an outline of the activities and areas being covered. It also includes specific ICT links and ideas to support learning at home.
- School Web Site. Children's achievements across the curriculum are shared and links to some curriculum sites are shown to help parents support learning at home.
- Coffee Afternoons/ PTFA/Stay and Play sessions. Parents are encouraged to become involved wherever possible and at times school is able to provide transport for some parents who would otherwise find it difficult to attend.
- Family Support. There is support for families with any individual need and with guidance when working with children to reinforce curriculum and develop sign language. Meetings are held on a regular basis in school and all family members are encouraged to attend.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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

8. Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

We believe all children have a right to access the full curriculum, adapted to their medical needs and to receive the on-going support, medicines or care that they require at school to help them manage their condition and keep them well. Working together with parents, children, healthcare professionals and other agencies, we develop, monitor and review Individual Healthcare Plans. An IHCP will be written for pupils with a medical condition that is long term and complex. It will clarify what needs to be done, when and by whom and include information about the child's condition, special requirements, medicines required, what constitutes an emergency and action to take in the case of an emergency clarity. IHCPs will be reviewed annually, or earlier if evidence is provided that a child's needs have changed

9. Staff Development and Supervision

The identification of training needs for Foundation Stage staff takes place through the annual school appraisal process and/or staff development professional reviews. The school Senior Leadership Team ensures that the appropriate dissemination of training/materials/good practice takes place regularly and a record of CPD and INSET activities is maintained.

In accordance with the EYFS Framework, staff supervision in the EYS occurs daily through regular staff feedback opportunities at the end of the day, weekly at class team meetings and staff have the opportunity termly to discuss any issues or concerns in a more formal supervision meeting with the EYS lead teacher.

10. Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) funding.

Where a pupil is identified to be in receipt of additional EYPP funding, this is used to support pupils within the setting in accordance with the school's Pupil Premium Funding Strategy, as published on the school website.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by The Early Years Lead annually

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.