

Early Years Foundation Stage 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
- 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.

Legislation

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

Structure of the EYFS

Royal Cross Primary School is a specialist setting for pupils who are deaf/HI and 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 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.

Curriculum

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 Specific areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Planning

- Long term planning sheets identify each of the Prime and Specific Areas of Development to ensure that all curriculum areas are covered whenever a topic or activity is planned.
- Planning is done on a weekly basis to ensure that learning can be child initiated and, as much as possible, following their current interests. Themes are linked to these interests, as well as being linked to books, specific times of years and seasonal celebrations. This way of planning ensures learning is relevant and contextual.

Staff plan activities and experiences that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, practitioners working with the 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 consider 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.

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.

Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

Music, signing and listening games are all part of the curriculum and the Teacher of the deaf works closely with Speech and Language Therapists to support children in the development of their spoken language, where appropriate.

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.

Importance of Play

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support, children will be able to:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Supporting children's learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning.
- Narrating children's play.

- Asking questions about children’s play.

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, regular discussions with key staff and with communication with home.

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, key staff will review the starting point for a child’s development in all areas of the EYFS Profile, including their specific communication styles and needs. This assessment 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 and tracked half termly using the Special Schools Developmental Matters. This document tracks small steps of progress against the 7 areas of learning and identifies individual ongoing progress and attainment.

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:

- Exceeding expected levels or,
- 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 then shared with parents and/or carers. The Early Years Lead attends local termly EYFS cluster meetings where learning journals and judgements made are moderated.

Pupil attainment is recorded using B Squared at the end of the Reception Year as part of a pupil’s transition into Year 1.

The EYs lead and support staff work closely with the Speech Therapists 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 celebrated with the pupils in class

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 and any other professionals at the review.

Termly Personal Learning Plans

The EHCP outcomes are broken down and used to inform target setting set out in their Personal Learning Plans. These are shared with parents and monitored / reviewed by EY key staff on a regular basis and evaluated termly in consultation with parents / carers.

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 Dojo. We use an instant messenger system 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 term 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.

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

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

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

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 half- termly to discuss any issues or concerns in a more formal supervision meeting with the EYS lead teacher.

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.

Equal Opportunities

At Royal Cross we aim: -

- To ensure that no child is excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, religion, culture, family background, disability, gender, home language, special educational needs or ability.
- To ensure that all the children feel secure, included and valued.
- To establish feelings of respect and trust with all children and their parents or carers.
- To treat each child as an individual and provide equality of opportunity
- To encourage self-confidence and a positive approach to learning in all children.

When planning, setting up and altering the rooms, outdoor areas, displays and equipment, the staff will aim to create an environment that encourages a positive attitude to learning.

This will include:

- Keeping the environment free from any discriminatory practice or stereotypical images
- Valuing the local community and environment as a source of learning opportunities
- Using displays, resources and equipment that reflect the community in which the children live as well as the wider world.

The curriculum will include activities to encourage children to respect their own cultural background and beliefs and those of other people.

These will include:

- Activities relating to a wide range of religious, ethnic and cultural festivals
- Telling stories, listening to music and looking at pictures and videos from a range of cultures and religions
- Role play activities that reflect a variety of cultures
- Discussions with and between the children about the similarities and differences in their experiences and the reasons for those similarities and differences.
- We will ensure that all children are given support to participate in activities, experiences, visits and discussions and to ensure that all children are listened to carefully and with respect.
- We will carefully consider the need for equality of opportunity when planning activities and experiences.
- When necessary we will modify activities or provide additional equipment or materials to ensure children are not excluded.

Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Early Years Lead annually and shared with the Governing Body

List of statutory documents and procedures for the EYFS.

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy