



Rockland St Mary Primary School and Nursery

EYFS POLICY

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EYFS Policy

Early Years' education is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives and is an education that encompasses all learning. This policy outlines the aims, principles and strategies for play, teaching and learning in the Early Years at Rockland St Mary Primary School and Nursery.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: RSM Safeguarding policy, Teaching and Learning; Equal Opportunities; SEND; Health and Safety; Feedback and Marking; Assessment; all curriculum policies.

Our Intent

At Rockland St Mary Primary School and Nursery we understand that each wonderful child in our setting is a unique individual who we believe is entitled to a high quality early education.

We intend to foster positive relationships with each child and their families, with staff developing a warm yet professional relationship with the families we serve. We aim to offer each child the opportunity for a secure and safe attachment, intending for each child to feel safe, valued, listened to and an important member of our school community. We intend to enable children to explore, develop a sense of awe and wonder, ask questions, follow their individual interests and to feel empowered to learn. Our beautiful learning environments, both inside and outside, create calm, engaging, purposeful settings for our young children. The opportunities, both child led and adult led, follow the ethos of the Curiosity Approach, with children having the opportunity to use and learn from real, authentic resources as well as open ended loose parts. This will enable children to make links with the real world around them, develop their imaginative skill, instil a sense of awe and wonder from the artefacts on offer as well as develop a deeper, more accepting cultural awareness. This will naturally develop the children's cultural capital, moving their learning on from their immediate experiences.

Communication and language development is prioritised across all areas of learning, with high-quality adult interaction, modelling of vocabulary and sustained shared thinking embedded throughout provision.

At our schools we provide:

- Positive relationships between children and adults.
- An enabling environment safe and secure and provides rich and stimulating experiences, which is planned for with language rich and inviting opportunities to learn.
- Continuous and enhanced provision that gives opportunities to learn and revisit through active exploration using a wide variety of equipment and authentic materials.
- An individual approach to each child's learning. We recognise the individual needs of children – emotional, social, physical, language acquisition, creative and intellectual and that they develop at different rates and learn in different ways.
- A strong recognition in the importance of learning through play to support the development of children.
- A warm and caring environment, where the children can develop a positive image of themselves.
- An environment, which promotes respect and equal regard for themselves and other people in the world around them.
- An open partnership with Parents/Carers.

We embrace each child as the individual they are and aim to build on next steps through capturing child voice and interest, and subsequently plan purposeful activities, allowing children to gain a sense of ownership to their learning. We will teach using both child led and adult led activities, as well as use objective led planning approaches. We understand the importance of responding to a child's emerging needs promptly and therefore will respond accordingly.

We teach the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-based providers (Effective from 1 September 2026) and use Development Matters 2021, which comprises of the seven areas of learning; Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. We develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning (Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, Creative and Critical Thinking) to upskill our children to use positive approaches to their learning, and embrace the 4R's of our school vision and ethos (Respect, Resilience, Resourcefulness and Reach.) Each child will receive a daily phonics lesson following Little Wandle. We teach a daily English session using The Write Stuff which will aim to increase vocabulary and language as well as sentence construction verbally and in written form. Children will be taught Mathematics using the Mastery approach. We understand that links made with a child's family and home life is very important, and therefore use Tapestry to inform parents of their child's learning and track a child's progression in their learning using Pupil Asset.

Planning and Organising

At our schools we plan for learning and development in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-based providers (effective from 1 September 2026) and the New Development Matters Revised July 2021. As we have mixed age classes, we work carefully to ensure that our provision is tailored to the age, stage and needs of the children within the class.

Planning will:

- Be clear and concise to provide broad and balanced opportunities and experiences which provide scope for flexibility, differentiation and annotation.
- Be informed by interactions and observations of children on what they know, can remember and do.
- Include a balance of child initiated, and adult led activities, to also link with their interests.
- The EYFS also plans for school visits and trips to the local community and surrounding areas and welcomes visitors into the school to share their skills and knowledge. This will give the children first hand, real experiences as a foundation to their learning.
- Children working within the EYFS will receive teaching and support from a full-time and a part-time Teaching Assistant at Rockland St Mary Primary School and Nursery.
- The Nursery class at Rockland St Mary Primary School will be overseen by the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader and have teaching from a qualified teacher and teaching assistant.

The Curiosity Approach

The learning opportunities available are planned according to the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-based providers (effective from 1 September 2026) and Development Matters 2021, the class planning overview and children's interests, next steps and own lines of inquiry.

These are presented to the children as invitations to play, and provocations to learn. This means, we aim to instil a sense of awe and wonder in our enabling environments, to capture a child's interest, provide resources which will support them and inspire them to learn. This will help to embed their developing knowledge and give extra challenge for those who are ready.

Using natural, authentic resources and equipment such as real tea cups, real food and real equipment, instead of a plastic toy alternatives, we believe, gives children the opportunity to independently learn from the environment as the third teacher as well as securing an environment to foster good wellbeing and engagement. By providing real resources to children, we believe that they will learn to respect the equipment they have, make links about their world around them, and feel trusted and respected themselves to use them; creating a purposeful, holistic learning environment.

A tour of our learning environment will show a well thought out, resourced enabling inside classroom, with those learning provocations reflected outside. We provide loose parts, both inside and outside for open ended imaginative learning opportunities which will give the opportunity and experience to create, imagine, adapt, problem solve and evaluate.

Children will be encouraged through mindful interactions to be curious, explore, investigate, as we endeavour to nurture our children to become confident, independent and active learners, inspired by the world around them.

Teaching and Learning

We deliver the EYFS in Nursery and Reception and also in the transition from Reception into Year 1 and where it is identified that this is in the best interest of a child.

Teachers and staff value the role of play at all stages of a child's development and recognise that through play children consolidate the teaching and learning experiences and opportunities they have had.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, actively applying their skills and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both inside and outside learning environments. We support children in using the characteristics of effective teaching and learning which help us to focus on and understand how children learn.

These characteristics are:

By playing and exploring children are able to:

- Find out and show curiosity
- Use what they know in their play
- Be willing to have a go

Through active learning children are able to:

- Be involved and concentrate
- Keep on trying
- Enjoy achieving what they set out to do

By creating and thinking critically children are able to:

- Have their own ideas
- Use what they already know to do new things
- Choose ways to do things and find ways to solve problems.

Purposeful Play is planned for throughout the environment where children can access and select opportunities that interest them and can be revisited. Play is also planned for by setting tasks with clearly specified aims and intentions using a variety of equipment and integrating it into the environment. Learning is planned in an engaging, practical way and where possible with context and purpose to real life.

Activities will be differentiated, and suitably open ended where appropriate, to cater for a wide range of abilities including SEND, and more able children. Making choices and decisions are key factors in the development of children's self-esteem and confidence. All staff work together to create a positive, purposeful learning environment where high expectations of positive behaviour are encouraged. The children are encouraged to participate in all activities with a high level of involvement and to become active, independent learners.

Provision is adapted to meet the needs of all learners, including those with SEND, ensuring full access to the EYFS curriculum through appropriate differentiation and support.

Children in Reception will take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) within the first six weeks of joining in September. Children within Nursery will be assessed through play-based interactions and observations. Individual learning and development is recorded in their Online Learning Journal, Tapestry. Assessment in the Early Years is an ongoing procedure using many approaches e.g. baseline, interactions, observations and other activities such as adult led activities.

Children are supported to develop early awareness of keeping themselves safe, including age-appropriate understanding of online safety, safe use of technology, and knowing when to seek help from a trusted adult.

Children are introduced to age-appropriate technology and digital tools to support early learning, communication and creativity. Staff ensure that technology use is purposeful, safe and carefully supervised.

Intimate Care and Personal Care

At Rockland St Mary Primary School and Nursery, we recognise that from time to time children in the Early Years Foundation Stage may require support with intimate care needs, including toileting, personal hygiene, changing clothes following accidents, or supporting medical or SEND-related needs.

The school is committed to ensuring that all intimate care is carried out in a way that protects children's dignity, privacy, safety and wellbeing at all times.

Principles

- Intimate care will always be provided with the child's dignity and respect as the highest priority.
- Safeguarding is paramount at all times.
- Staff will support children in a calm, reassuring and sensitive manner.
- Where possible, children will be encouraged and supported to develop independence in managing their own personal care.
- Care will be provided in a safe, hygienic and appropriate environment.

Staff Responsibilities

- Only DBS-checked staff will carry out intimate care duties.
- Staff will follow agreed school procedures at all times.
- Intimate care will be carried out by a member of staff known to the child where possible.
- Where a child requires regular or planned intimate care support, this will be documented in a care plan agreed with parents/carers and relevant professionals where appropriate.
- Staff will use appropriate hygiene practices, including the use of gloves and other protective equipment where necessary.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

- Staff will always maintain professional boundaries when carrying out intimate care.
- Wherever practicable, a member of staff will inform another adult that they are undertaking intimate care support.
- Any concerns arising during intimate care (including marks, disclosures, or safeguarding concerns) will be recorded and reported immediately in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- Staff will ensure that children are never placed in situations where they feel unsafe, embarrassed, or distressed.

Parental Engagement

- Parents and carers will be informed if their child requires regular intimate care support.

- For children with ongoing needs, an Intimate Care Plan will be agreed with parents/carers.
- The school will work in partnership with families and external professionals (where appropriate) to meet the child's needs safely and consistently.

Hygiene and Health & Safety

- Staff will follow appropriate hygiene procedures at all times.
- Gloves and other PPE will be used where required.
- Waste will be disposed of safely and in line with school health and safety procedures.
- Staff will ensure handwashing and cleaning procedures are followed before and after supporting a child.

Equality and Inclusion

- All children will be supported to access education safely and with dignity, regardless of additional needs or disability.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to support individual pupils.

EYFS Safer Eating Policy

1. Purpose

At Rockland St Mary Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) eat and drink safely in a supportive, hygienic, and well-supervised environment. This policy supports safeguarding, health and safety, allergy management, and the promotion of healthy eating habits.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All EYFS children (Nursery/Reception where applicable)
- EYFS staff, teaching assistants, lunchtime staff, and volunteers
- All meals, snacks, milk and water provision, and packed lunches

3. Supervision during eating

- Children are fully supervised at all snack and mealtimes.
- Staff remain seated with children to actively monitor safe eating.
- Eating is treated as a social and calm learning time.
- No child is left unsupervised while eating at any time.

4. Choking prevention and safe food provision

To reduce choking risks:

- Food is prepared in age-appropriate sizes (e.g. grapes cut lengthways, sausages sliced).
- High-risk foods are avoided or modified for EYFS children.
- Staff are vigilant during all eating times and aware of individual children's needs.
- All EYFS staff hold valid paediatric first aid training, including choking response procedures.

5. Food hygiene and safety

Rockland St Mary Primary School follows strict hygiene procedures:

- Handwashing is completed before and after all food consumption.
- Eating surfaces are cleaned and sanitised before snacks and meals.
- Safe storage of food is maintained at all times.
- School procedures align with Food Standards Agency guidance.

6. Allergies and dietary requirements

- All allergies and dietary requirements are clearly recorded and shared with EYFS staff.
- Individual Health Care Plans are followed where required.
- Food is clearly labelled to prevent cross-contamination.
- Staff are trained in recognising allergic reactions and administering emergency medication (e.g. auto-injectors where prescribed).
- Parents/carers are responsible for keeping the school informed of any changes.

7. Packed lunches and food from home

Where children bring food from home:

- Packed lunches must support the school's healthy eating expectations.
- Any restrictions (e.g. nut-free guidance) must be followed.
- Food is stored safely and appropriately labelled.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to provide balanced, age-appropriate meals.

8. Drinking water and milk

- Fresh drinking water is available to children throughout the day.
- Children are encouraged to drink regularly, especially during active play.
- Milk provision is offered in line with school arrangements and funding schemes where applicable.

9. Mealtime environment and learning

At Rockland St Mary Primary School:

- Mealtimes are calm, structured, and supportive.
- Children are encouraged to develop independence skills (self-feeding, pouring drinks, clearing away).
- Staff model positive behaviour around food and promote healthy attitudes without pressure or reward-based eating.

10. Staff training and responsibilities

- Sufficient EYFS staff hold valid Paediatric First Aid qualifications to ensure compliance with EYFS statutory requirements.

- At least one paediatric first aider is present during EYFS sessions (including lunchtime where possible).
- Staff are responsible for implementing this policy consistently.

11. Risk assessment

- EYFS eating areas and routines are regularly risk assessed.
- Any changes to routines, trips, or special events include a review of food-related risks.
- Controls are put in place to minimise risks identified.

12. Safeguarding link

This policy supports the safeguarding and welfare of children by ensuring:

- Safe supervision at all times
- Protection from allergic and choking risks
- Safe and hygienic food practices

Paediatric First Aid (PFA) – EYFS Policy Section

Legal requirement and intent

The school meets the requirements of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework** in relation to Paediatric First Aid (PFA). The safety and welfare of all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is paramount, and effective first aid provision is in place at all times when children are present.

Provision of Paediatric First Aid cover

The school ensures that:

- At least one member of staff who holds a **full and valid Paediatric First Aid (PFA) certificate** is present on-site at all times when EYFS children are in attendance.
- Sufficient numbers of staff are trained in PFA to ensure appropriate cover during:
 - staff breaks
 - staff absence
 - start and end of the school day
 - educational visits and off-site activities
- A register of staff holding a valid PFA certificate is maintained, monitored, and updated regularly by the EYFS Lead and/or school leadership team.

Training requirements

The school ensures that:

- All PFA training is:
 - completed through an Ofsted/EYFS-compliant approved provider
 - valid for three years from the date of certification
- Staff renew their PFA qualification before expiry to maintain continuous coverage

- Newly appointed EYFS staff complete PFA training within an appropriate timeframe, normally within three months of appointment, or sooner where identified through risk assessment or operational need
- Records of qualifications and expiry dates are securely maintained and regularly reviewed

Responsibilities of staff

All EYFS staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of who the designated Paediatric First Aiders are at any given time
- Knowing the location of first aid kits and emergency equipment within EYFS areas and on school premises
- Reporting all accidents, injuries, and near misses promptly to a trained first aider
- Supporting first aid provision by following guidance and instructions from trained staff

Staff holding a PFA qualification are responsible for:

- Providing immediate care to any child who is injured or becomes unwell
- Assessing whether emergency medical assistance is required
- Contacting emergency services (999) where necessary
- Ensuring parents/carers are informed promptly following any significant incident
- Completing or overseeing accurate documentation of all first aid treatment provided

First aid equipment

The school ensures that:

- First aid kits are available and clearly accessible in EYFS classrooms, outdoor learning areas, and for off-site visits
- Kits are suitable for paediatric use and contain appropriate supplies
- First aid kits are checked regularly, replenished as required, and maintained in a clean and usable condition
- Portable first aid kits are taken on all educational visits and outdoor learning activities involving EYFS children

Emergency procedures

In the event of a serious injury or medical emergency:

- A trained first aider will assess the child and provide immediate care
- One adult will remain with the child at all times
- Another adult will contact emergency services (999) if required and inform school leadership
- Parents/carers will be contacted as soon as reasonably possible
- Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the safety and supervision of other children in the setting

Record keeping and reporting

The school ensures that:

- All accidents, injuries, and first aid treatments are recorded accurately and in a timely manner
- Parents/carers are informed of any injury sustained by their child on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable
- Records are stored securely in line with **data protection (UK GDPR) requirements**
- Accident records are reviewed periodically to identify patterns, trends, or required improvements in safety practice

Off-site visits and activities

For all educational visits and off-site EYFS activities:

- A minimum of one staff member holding a valid PFA certificate will accompany the group
- Risk assessments will determine whether additional first aid cover is required based on the nature of the activity, location, and group size
- A fully stocked portable first aid kit will be taken on all outings

Monitoring and review

This section of the EYFS policy is reviewed:

- Annually, or
- Sooner in response to changes in statutory guidance, incident review outcomes, or operational need

The Headteacher and EYFS Lead are responsible for ensuring ongoing compliance with Paediatric First Aid requirements and maintaining up-to-date training records.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Early Years' Foundation Stage has a subject leader.
- The Head Teacher and subject leaders observe and evaluate opportunities and experiences provided for the children.
- The Head Teacher and SET monitor assessment.

Other policies : All other school and SET policies relate to EYFS.