

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
'EXCELLENCE FOR ALL'



Partnership Learning

Ratified by Governors: November 2024

To be reviewed: September 2023



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Scope of Plan: This plan applies to all staff, students, governors and volunteers at Riverside Bridge School

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'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012



Introduction

Riverside Bridge School's Early Year's policy describes the framework upon which the beliefs and practice of this school are based.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. Riverside Bridge School Reception aged children with an EHCP (or a pending EHCP) requiring SEND support are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives.

We have four EYFS purpose built classrooms at Riverside Bridge School. We have spaces for 24 pupils who need a specialist provision. Classes serve six pupils, supported by one teacher and two co-educators. Our main cohort of pupils will have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or associated social communication difficulties. All classes have access to a hygiene room and toilets near the classrooms.

At Riverside Bridge School, we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development helping pupils maximise their talents and skills. However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life, in the Early Years Foundation Stage we aim to give this by building on what the children know and can do and supporting them to fulfill their potential. We have a high focus on developing the children's communication and language, as this enables children to develop their self-confidence and gives them the ability to express themselves.

Children become independent learners through the provision of a specialist curriculum which incorporates the Foundation Stage Framework and provides a balance of child initiated and adult-led experiences, which may be based on play, first hand experiences and structured activities. We endeavour to provide a supportive and structured environment with a wide range of teaching approaches/opportunities to support the children's learning styles.

At Riverside Bridge School we aim to provide a broad, balanced functional curriculum which will

enable each child to develop emotionally, socially, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential and at their own pace. Each child is unique and is valued as an individual

Aims

- To provide a high-quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and guidance.
- To provide a happy, caring, safe and secure environment for learning.
- To provide learning and development opportunities for all children, which meet the individual needs and interests of each child.
- To develop warm and secure relationships between children and adults.
- To develop children's self-esteem confidence and independence.
- For the children to become aware of moral and social values.
- To encourage active learning through first hand experiences in both indoor and outdoor play,
- To develop the children's communication skills through both verbal and non-verbal communication.
- To value the cultural diversity within our school and community.
- To foster positive home school partnerships and share a common sense of purpose with parents.

Entitlement

As a Rights Respecting school this policy links directly to articles 12, 28 and 29:

Article 12: "Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making choices that affect them and have their opinions taken into account." (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Article 28: "Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free." (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Article 29: "Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respects their parents and their own and other cultures." (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Children with special educational needs and disabled children (children with SEND) deserve the same opportunities and rights as non-SEND children to achieve qualifications and skills (Every Disabled Child Matters).

We believe that all children in the Foundation Stage, should be offered full access to broad, balanced and relevant education, including the appropriate curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage, regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, disability and special or medical needs.

Each child is supported within their school environment, helping them to settle in, ensuring each child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, recording the development of the children and fostering good home school partnerships.

Parents are informed of who their child's classroom staff is when the child starts attending Riverside Bridge School.

Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs,

interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to develop their communication and interaction in order to achieve the best outcomes.

At Riverside Bridge School, our school curriculum drivers are: joy, creativity and aspiration. These values underpin the curriculum, inform our decision making, and guide the way we interact with one another. Our ambitious, thematic curriculum is rooted in quality texts which foster a love of reading and inspire a curiosity to learn more. Core texts are chosen for each half term and much of the learning is themed around it. Texts are chosen for their rich language content and opportunities for practitioners to link the prime and specific learning areas.

Staff understand that young children do not develop in a fixed way. We see children's development as like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line; our thematic curriculum works perfectly to meet the needs of all children regardless of their stage of development. Play forms the structure for all new learning and all activities are rooted in high quality play. Our practitioners have an excellent knowledge of child development which informs the planning and decisions we make in order to move learning on in a challenging, yet supportive and nurturing way.

The learning is structured in the following way:

Directed Activities

Curriculum taught through focused teaching and group activities. These are adult-led taught lessons where teachers introduce the learning, provide instruction, model skills and give examples of processes. Adult directed activities at Riverside Bridge School are where children are explicitly taught new skills by a practitioner. Adult directed lessons are built around the core subjects and cover all seven areas of the EYFS framework. Our team plans celebrations of learning which widen the horizons of children and allow them to experience rich and fascinating experiences to inspire, enthuse and motivate.

Enhanced Provision

Curriculum taught through resources, stimulating activities and interactive learning zones to enrich learning. They are thematic and children can use the ideas, vocabulary and concepts learnt through directed activities to engage with and explore their learning on a deeper level. Enhanced provision provides opportunities for the children to engage with the theme, usually through enhanced provision set up by an adult. However, children are given the freedom and independence to engage with learning activities at their own pace. They can build upon ideas, create new ones and use their imagination as they wish. For some of our children, these experiences may need to be modelled first before they are able to engage with the opportunities.

Continuous Provision

Everyday resources that are set up and remain constant throughout the school year - children can access them all of the time. They provide a permanent framework to children's play and can be enriched across the year to support progression. Continuous provision at Riverside Bridge School ensures pupil well-being. The classrooms are stimulating environments that are filled with exciting, purposeful activities that require independence and creativity to motivate and enthuse children, promoting their well-being. Our continuous provision sets the foundations for pupils developing lifelong learning skills. It encompasses the characteristics of effective learning: play-based learning promotes children's engagement, motivation and critical thinking skills.

Our high quality continuous provision allows children to make links and embed skills and knowledge. Children have the opportunity to develop metacognitive skills and develop self-regulation. They

make links between their learning and use a wide range of skills across variety of subjects and tasks

As set out in the Early Years Framework, there are seven areas of learning that are taught in our EYFS. All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. The seven areas of learning have been linked with our wider school curriculum to support progression and continuity throughout school.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive, both in the EYFS and into other pathways within the school.

These three areas are the prime areas:

- Communication and Language – Communication and Interaction.
- Physical Development – Healthy Living.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Personal Development, Healthy Living, Independence and Community Participation.

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy – Communication and Interaction, phonics.
- Mathematics - Engagement and Learning.
- Understanding the World - Engagement and Learning, Independence and Community Participation.
- Expressive Arts and Design – Creative and Sensory.

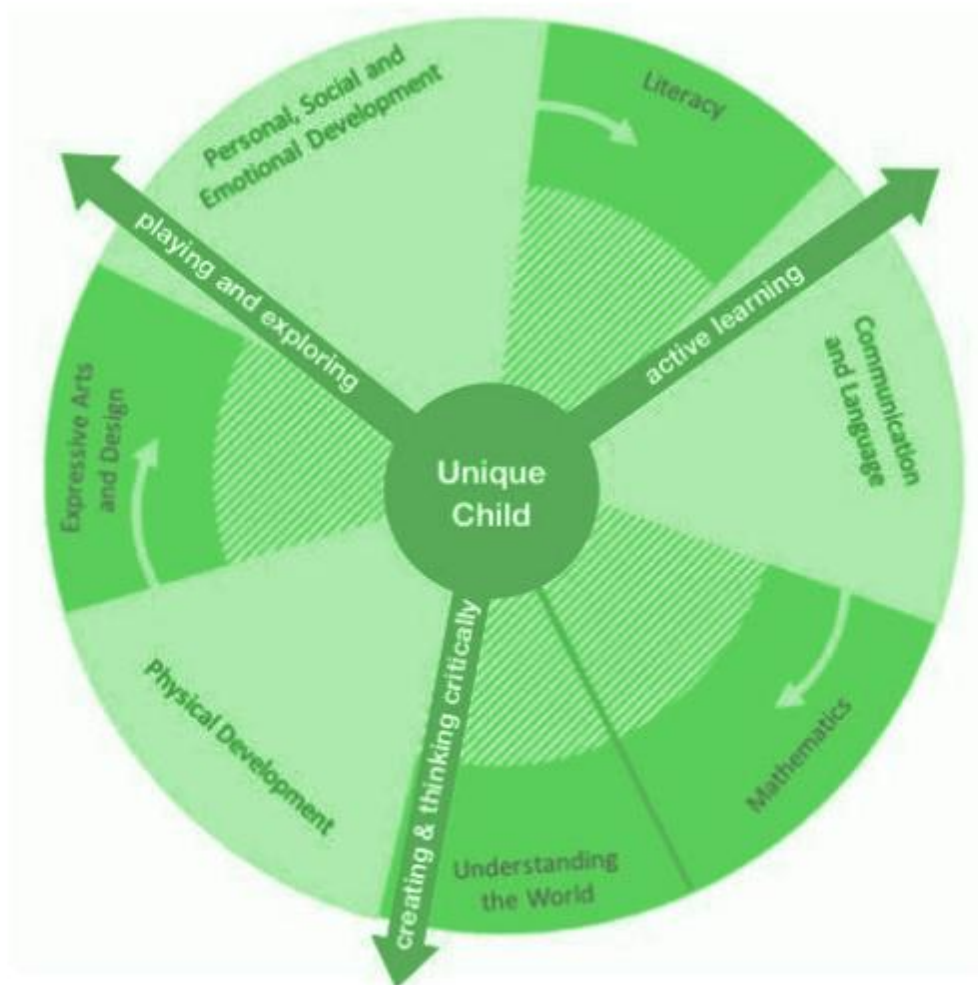
An example timetable is shown below for the EYFS Seeds classes. Lessons written in pink are Directed Activities, lessons in black are themed for Enhanced Provision activities.

Seeds	Start	1a	1b	2a	2b	Break		3a	3b	Lunch		4a	4b	5a	5b	DEAR	End
	9:15-9:30	9:30-9:50	9:50-10:15	10:15-10:35	10:35-11:00	11:00-11:15	11:15-11:30	11:30-11:50	11:50-12:15	12:15-12:45	12:45-13:15	13:15-13:35	13:35-14:00	14:00-14:20	14:20-14:45	14:45-15:00	15:00-15:15
Monday	Morning routine	CN	CN	Pe	Pe	Snack in class	Playground	Ph	Co	Lunch	Playground	PD	Ma	WRL	Ind	Reading Time	Home Routine
Tuesday		SMSC	SMSC	Mu	Mu			Ph	Co			PD	Ma	Ar	Ar		
Wednesday		Sc	Sc	Ar	Ar			Ph	Co			PD	Ma	Ind	Ind		
Thursday		Hu	Hu	ICT	Ind			Ph	Co			PD	Ma	Ind	Ind		
Friday		HL	HL	Pe	Pe			Ph	Co			PD	Ma	Sc	Ind	Assembly	

Underpinning all learning and teaching in the EYFS are the characteristics of effective learning.

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.

- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.



The Unique Child and Characteristics of Effective Learning are central to all learning in our EYFS

Positive Relationships

At Riverside Bridge School we recognise that children learn to be joyful, self-assured, confident and independent through the development of secure relationships. We develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child.

We strive to create and maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

We do this by:

- sending an information welcome pack to parents before the children start school;
- talking to parents about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school and at our home visits carried out in the first week of September;
- holding a stay and play session in September before the children start school so that the

- parents and children can get to know their environment and the adults working with them;
- using a home-school communication diary to ensure that communication between home and school is fostered daily;
- being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Summer terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- encouraging parents to read with their child at home and offering parent and child reading workshops to support parents to feel confident to do this;
- providing information about each topic, along with home learning ideas on our school website that highlights how parents and carers can support their child at home;
- inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- providing parents with an annual report using Earwig so that they can monitor the progress of their child;
- drawing on links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on local area trips and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

Enabling Environments

At Riverside Bridge School, we recognise the learning environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We strive to ensure our environments encapsulate the following:

- an environment that is warm, welcoming and nurturing and facilitates a sense of belonging offer a range of resources, which are familiar to the children as well as activities that are new to them;
- activities and environment offer room for outdoor and indoor play, sufficient space for children to move and collaborate, and encourage exploration and risk-taking;
- a range of activities which serve different purposes: inspire imagination and role play, exploration of personal relationships and feelings, problem solving, quiet time and reflection. planned construction area, home corner, indoor and outdoor reading zones, music and art available every day;
- topics and environments that foster close collaboration with parents;
- a regulation areas to meet the needs of pupils who need support to help to regulate themselves;
- activities and resources are at child height and accessible and resources which can be moved and used in a variety of ways;
- reduce noise distractions at certain times in the session to allow children to focus;
- engage and involve children in creating a clear guide for positive behaviour;
- activities to build children's emotional resilience and social skills;
- out outdoor facilities include opportunities for sensory investigation in the playground along with access to a water area, sand pit and a mud kitchen. In addition, access to an undercover learning area and a physical development playground, which has a climbing frame with three towers to encourage gross motor skills development; with a thermoplastic road surrounding it to enable balance and co-ordination development through use of bikes and trikes and the teaching of road safety.

Planning

Activities and experiences are planned for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 7 areas of 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 a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

A core text supports children's learning in reception and is carefully chosen to support the children's ages and stages of development. Planning is sequential and a curriculum map provides a yearly overview and ensures all areas of learning are covered.

Medium-term plans set the learning intentions for the half term and cover all areas of learning to ensure that all key skills are being taught.

Weekly plans are then created across the phase to ensure that there is consistency with the key skills being taught. Adults then have autonomy to change learning opportunities within the continuous provision based on the children's own interests.

Assessment

If appropriate, the children will undergo the Reception Baseline Assessments (RBA) which will be completed in the first 6 weeks the children are in school, and this will be reported to the DfE. If we feel that children are not able to access the learning from the RBA then children will be disapplied.

Ongoing formative assessment is at the heart of Riverside Bridge School's Early Years practice. We follow good practice through observations including written observations to show progress and these assessments help to inform planning for progression. All of the information collected is used to review how the child is doing against their EHCP targets, which incorporate the seven areas of learning and development. Riverside Bridge School uses an adapted version of the Early Years profile that is recorded on the Earwig assessment tool to track the progress of the pupils during the year. A report of this progress is sent home to parents in the summer term.

Riverside Bridge School makes use of the engagement model to support and assess the learning of the pupils within the school. The engagement model is made up of five areas:

- Exploration - This shows whether a pupil can build on their initial reaction to a new stimulus or activity.
- Realisation - This shows how the pupil interacts with a new stimulus or activity or discovers a new aspect of a familiar stimulus or activity.
- Anticipation - This shows how much the pupil predicts, expects or associates a stimulus or activity with an event. They may anticipate that a familiar activity is about to start or finish by interpreting cues or prompts such as auditory (what they hear), tactile (what they feel) and visual (what they see).

- Persistence - This shows whether the pupil can sustain their attention in a stimulus or activity for long enough that they can actively try to find out more and interact with it.
- Initiation - This shows how much, and the different ways, a pupil investigates a stimulus or activity in order to bring about a desired outcome. The pupil will act spontaneously and independently during a familiar activity without waiting for direction.

The five areas of the engagement model are not hierarchical, there is no expectation that pupils need to demonstrate progress in all five areas. Instead, each of area represents what is necessary for pupils to fully engage in their development and reach their full potential. The areas also provide the scaffolding to enable pupils to become independent in developing a new skill or concept.

The children at Riverside Bridge School will have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or will be under assessment. Within the EHCP there will be specific outcomes that are personal to each child and these will also be focused on as part of their learning. At the end of the EYFS – in the summer term of the reception year in school – teachers complete an assessment which is known as the EYFS profile. This assessment is carried out by the teacher and is based on what they, and other staff / professionals caring for the children, have observed over a period of time. The school will give parents a report of the child's progress, including information from his or her EYFS profile.

Reporting is also made through:

- Annual Reviews of Educational Health Care Plans
- Parents Evening
- Home School Communication Diaries
- Planned weekly and informal observations of children in class, which are added to children's Earwig evidence
- External agencies – SALT, OT etc.
- 1:1 and group work observations made by the EYFS staff and recorded on a planning feedback sheet

Transition

Transition into Riverside Bridge School is carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. Riverside Bridge School liaise with the local nurseries and NARPs within the borough and visit all children who have been consulted for a place within our reception classes. A thorough handover between the child's current setting and Riverside Bridge School will take place.

A home welcome transition pack will be sent out to all families before the summer holiday, so that they have all of the information needed to help prepare their child for the change. Within this pack, a social story explaining their new school is also sent to children so that parents can read this over the summer break to help prepare their child for their new school.

Children starting at Riverside Bridge School Reception have an admission meeting with the Assistant Headteacher of the Seeds phase as well as the class teacher at the home visit, within the first two weeks of the new school year. During this visit the team and family can discuss any concerns or questions that the family may have about their child starting school.

Children are invited in for a short transition 'stay and play' session, within the first two weeks, accompanied by a parent or carer. This is so that the child can get to know the other children in their

class, become familiar with their environment and meet the team who will be supporting them.

At the end of the EYFS, the Reception practitioners meet with the next class team to liaise and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessments, Communication Profiles and Zones of Regulation Plans are shared with the new teacher so that their new teachers are able to plan for their next steps in learning. A social story explaining the changes of a new class will also be shared within the classroom and sent home for parents to share over the summer break.