



Rotherhithe Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook 2025 - 2026



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Welcome to Rotherhithe Early Years!



Rotherhithe Primary School is a welcoming, secure and happy environment where every child is valued.

Your child is about to start their journey where they will learn through discovery, excitement and play. We hope that you will work closely with us in supporting your child throughout their journey and in ensuring that your child reaches their full potential.

There are many opportunities to become involved in your child's journey- from joining us on a school trip, reading with groups of children, or sharing any skills you may have.

We hope that this booklet will give you an insight into your child's learning and what you can expect from the Early Years. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the Early Years Leader should you have any queries.

Meet the team!

Nursery

Turtle class

Heather Danabie - class teacher

Michelle Roberts - support assistant

Laura O'Sullivan - nursery nurse

Reception

Jellyfish class

Sinead Lewis - Class Teacher

Olga Skachko - support assistant / cover teacher

Penguin class

Kealan Doherty - Class Teacher

Jo McDonagh - support assistant



The EYFS Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) is the framework in which all OFSTED registered early years' settings work from. This framework ensures that settings provide a positive and consistent foundation for children's learning and covers children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The Foundation Stage is based on the recognition that children learn best through play and active learning and states that,

'A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up'.



There are four guiding principles that shape practice in early years settings.

1. Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
2. Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
3. 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; and
4. Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities

At RPS we use Birth to 5 Matters to help shape our curriculum. See our **Long Term Curriculum Map** for Nursery and Reception on our school website more details about our themes, topics and learning for each half term



The EYFS Curriculum

The areas of learning covered by the Early Years curriculum are:

Communication and language

development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development

involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination and control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional

development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Literacy

development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.

Understanding of the world

involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Working at home with your child

Communication and language

- talk to your child about anything they are interested in
- play word games e.g. eye spy
- sing songs and rhymes together
- encourage children to make up stories/ role play

Personal, social and emotional

- encourage your child to say please and thank you
- encourage your child to be independent e.g. taking off and putting on their own coat
- allow them to select some toys and activities themselves and discuss their preferences and opinions
- encourage your child to use the toilet unaided
- support your child in turn taking and sharing
- encourage your child to talk about their feelings

Mathematics

- count out loud with your child
- count using fingers
- point out numbers to your child e.g. door numbers, bus numbers etc.
- sing number songs or rhymes
- read stories with numbers in them
- practice counting groups of objects and ask questions such as, 'how many?'
- encourage children to identify shapes

Physical development

- give your child the opportunity to handle both large and small equipment
- support your child in using scissors
- provide opportunities for your child to run, hop, skip, jump and travel and manoeuvre in a range of ways
- play games such as follow the leader to develop coordination
- discuss changes to their bodies after exercise; heart beating faster, feeling hot etc.

Literacy

- allow your child to select books for themselves; ones that interest them
- look at and discuss picture books with repetitive language e.g. Julia Donaldson books
- ask your child to 'read' what is happening in pictures, prompt them to share a sentence about what is happening
- begin to form letter shapes; write them in sand, in the air, etc.
- support your child in recognising their own name and beginning to write their name and other letters of the alphabet

Understanding of the world

- talk to your child about special occasions
- encourage them to explore their surroundings, particularly the outdoors
- allow your child to observe and speak about animals and plants
- provide opportunities for them to explore age appropriate technology for short periods

Expressive arts and design

- allow your child to listen to and sing songs and rhymes
- engage in role play with your child e.g. pretending to be characters, playing house etc.
- explore different media and tools; paint, pencils, crayons, glue, scissors etc.
- dance to songs and make up actions to songs and rhymes e.g. the wheels on the bus
- encourage them to feel and describe different textures e.g. rough, smooth, soft etc.

Assessment & Progress

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners knowing children's level of achievement and interests, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. This EYSFP assesses children's learning through developmental age-related bands throughout Nursery and Reception.

Your teacher/key worker will keep you updated at regular intervals of their progress and attainment and will provide you and your child with achievable targets and next steps to help them on their journey.

Reception Baseline Assessment

Within the first six weeks of your child joining reception, the class teacher will administer a reception baseline assessment (RBA). This is a short, task-based assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills.

The assessment can take place at any point in the first 6 weeks of your child starting reception. The assessment will form the start of a new measure of how schools are helping their pupils to progress between reception and year 6.

Your child does not need to prepare. There is no pass mark or score and your child should not realise they're doing an assessment.

Assessment at the end of EYFS

In the final term of Reception the EYFS Profile will be completed for your child. Your child's will be assessed against 'The Early Learning Goals' (ELGs) These are 17 goals across all the areas of learning that children are expected to achieve at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage. When your child achieves all 17 goals it is considered that they have made a "Good Level of Development" in EYSFP. Please check out website for details about each of these goals.

The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1



Starting School

At RPS we understand that the Foundation Stage brings many new and exciting changes for both children and parents which can be a very emotive time. We therefore value the settling in period and feel that it is important to introduce the children gradually to their new setting to ensure a smooth and successful transition. Both Nursery and Reception children will be given a settling in timetable outlining dates and times of when they will be attending school over the initial few weeks. We will work in partnership with parents to ensure that this transition period is tailored to meet the individual needs of each child.

Once your child is settled into the environment a normal school day will commence:

Nursery

Option 1 - AM 9.00 - 12.00

Option 2 - PM 12.15 - 3.15

Full time - Monday - Friday 9.00am - 3.15pm

Reception

Monday - Friday 9.00am - 3.15pm

Parents should drop off and collect their children **promptly** from their classrooms. Please wait outside the gate until a member of staff welcomes you into the Early Years area.

It is important to drop off and collect your child on time. Young children can become very distressed if they do not have a consistent routine. If you arrive late to pick up you will need to go to the school office for collection as the EYFS gate may be closed. In the event of an emergency, please telephone the school so that we can reassure your child and keep the staff informed.

Please note, we are unable to allow a child to leave with an adult who is unfamiliar to us or with someone who is under the age of 16.

School uniform

School uniform is an important aspect of who we are as a school community and we need your support in ensuring that your child / children come to school dressed in full school uniform. See the office for an order form.



Shirts: Plain, white, cotton long/short sleeved shirt with collar or white polo t-shirt

Jumper: Burgundy school jumper / fleece with the school badge

Bottoms: Grey/black tracksuit bottoms for EY pupils or black/grey trousers

Skirt: Grey, plain approximately knee length.

Headscarf: Plain black (if worn). White headscarves may be worn in summer.

Shoes: Must be completely black, flat shoes or completely black trainers with black velcro straps. Laces are only allowed for children who can tie their laces this is to support their own independence skills for self-care and dressing.

Tights: Grey or plain black thick tights to be worn under skirts.

School Bag: One bag for spare clothes and the school burgundy book bag for homework, reading books and notes

Nails: No coloured nail varnish is allowed.

Jewellery: For health and safety reasons, jewellery in school is not permitted. For children with pierced ears, we will allow one pair of small stud earrings.

It is important to ensure that **all** personal items are **clearly labelled** with the child's **name and class** to prevent items being lost. Please practise getting dressed and undressed at home to support your child with developing independence skills and recognising their own clothes.

Food and Drink

Children have access to fruit throughout the day. Children are encouraged to try different fruits and taught about the importance of healthy eating.

Children must bring a water bottle to school and we help them refill this throughout the day if needed. Water is always available for the children to access independently.

Lunch is served in the Lunch hall. Children walk to lunch together, line up to get their food sit and then sit at tables together to eat a nutritionally balanced main and dessert course.

Any information given to the Early Years staff or on a medical form concerning allergies or special food requirements will be noted, recorded and discussed as a staff team. Additional/supply staff will be kept informed.

First Aid



Occasionally children will have an accident while at school. All of the Early Years support staff are first aid trained and available at all times. When First Aid is administered a slip will be completed and sent home with your child with details of the incident. In the event of a head injury you will receive a phone call. If it is thought any injury requires additional treatment or close observation, the parent/carer will be called and asked to collect their child.

Mindfulness & Wellbeing

The **ZONES** of Regulation®

BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

At RPS wellbeing and children's mental health is of the utmost importance. We use the Zones of Regulation to support our children develop their emotional literacy by talking about our emotions and equipping them with the tools to help self-regulate and process.



RPS is working towards becoming a Mindful School by following the 'MindUp' programme. In this programme we teach children about how their brains work through story and puppets. Through these stories we can discuss our actions and how they impact on others and it gives children a safe space to freely express themselves.

We practise "Brain Breaks" three times a day which is a 2-3 minute time of quiet relaxation, where the children are encouraged to clear their minds to give their brains a rest, and be calm and ready to learn. See our website for some videos and more information about mindfulness.



Forest School



Forest school is an inclusive way of learning. At its core is a desire for children to be empowered to drive their own learning and make their own decisions. Each child is individually valued and given responsibilities that highlight their integral role as learners. Forest school encourages children to develop their resilience, build confidence and develop new skills e.g. tool use, building structures. Children are given the opportunity to share their own ideas, to discover answers to their own questions and to teach and support their peers. We incorporate and use Forest School activities across our learning environment and working on making this programme accessible to all children. Our Forest School area is in a dedicated area in Southwark Park.

Music



Music ignites all areas of child development and skills for school readiness, including intellectual, social-emotional, motor, language, and overall literacy. It helps the body and the mind work together. At RPS we have a passionate and inspiring music specialist who teaches the children music every Friday. Children are exposed to a range of different instruments and get the opportunity to play weekly. Children work towards a performance in the Summer Term for parents to attend.

Reading Homework



At RPS we love reading and aim to provide regular opportunities which will allow staff, parents and children to share books together.

All children will be given a reading record and a reading book, which will be changed at least once a week, to read with adults both at school and at home. The reading record will serve as a progress log and as communication between school and home. Regular communication between adults is important in order to track progress.

Reception children will also be encouraged to take home a variety of '**story books**' which they will be unable to read themselves and should have read to them by an adult. These books aim to further promote and develop your child's love for reading.

Reading Café: Once the children have settled into school we will be hosting regular 'Reading Café' where parents/carers are invited into the classroom for the first twenty minutes of the day to read a story with your child in class.

Please ensure that your child brings their book bag to school every day to maximise opportunities for shared reading.

Phonics: At RPS we use Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc programme to teach phonics. Phonics is how children learn to read and write by learning the sounds of letters of words.



Home - School Communication

We know that children do best when parents and teachers work together!

We aim to maximise communication between home and school in the following ways:

- Conversations at drop off and/or pick up
- Tapestry
- EYFS notice board
- Weekly school newsletters
- RPS's school website
- School texting service
- Parents evenings/ open days
- Parents workshops

Tapestry



At RPS we use an online learning platform called Tapestry. This is used for recording significant learning moments and tracking children's progress. You can

access this platform via an app or the website. As parents/carers you can upload pictures and comments of special events and learning moments at home too. This is a useful tool for communication and celebrating children's work. The class teacher will provide you with further information when your child begins school.

Parent workshops

Throughout the year we will be hosting a number of parent workshops, designed to 'keep you in the know'. The workshops are a fun and interactive and help parents to become involved and support their child's learning and development. The sessions will be relaxed and friendly and are a great opportunity to ask questions and meet other parents! Dates and times will be confirmed near to the time and sign-up sheets will be available from the class teacher.

Events for you to look forward to!

We have many fun filled events for you child and your child to participate in while attending RPS.

- Christmas Performance
- Crazy Hair Day
- Carnival celebration in EY
- Sports Day
- Enterprise Week
- Science Week
- Anti-Bullying Week
- Children's Mental Health week
- Black History Month
- Poetry Week

Things to practice

- Can you put your coat on and do it up? Can you take your coat off? Can you carry and look after your book bag?
- Can you put your shoes on by yourself?
- Can you use a knife and fork to eat?
- Can you drink from a cup by yourself?
- Can you go to the toilet on your own?
- Can you wash and dry your hands correctly?
- Can you tell an adult what you need?
- Can you recognise your name?
- Can you share toys with others?
- Can you tidy up your toys and put them back in the right place?
- Can you talk about yourself and the things you like?

Equal Opportunities

All pupils, parents and carers are valued whatever their race, gender, social status, religion or belief, disability or colour of their skin. We celebrate diversity and have toys and books readily available to promote positive inclusive values and principles in all aspects of caring for and educating our children.

All children and families are fully accepted, respected and valued.



We look forward to seeing you!

This handbook should be used alongside the Early Years Foundation Stage policies and procedures which are available on the school's website.

Thank you in advance for your support. We look forward to working with you so that together we can enjoy an exciting and successful year.

Best wishes,

The Early Year's team.