



EYFS in the Reception Year a guide for Parents

*"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. 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. **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** sets the standards that all children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children develop a broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life."*

(EYFS, DFE.)

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The EYFS is a stage of children's development from birth to the end of their first year (Reception) in school.

The EYFS Framework is different to the National Curriculum. It describes how early years practitioners should work with children and their families to support each child's individual development and learning to ensure that your child achieves the most that they can in their earliest years of life.

Teaching and Learning Style

Teachers must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.

What will my child learn in Reception?

The areas of learning and development

There are **seven** areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected. 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. These three areas, the **prime** areas, are:

communication and language;
physical development; and
personal, social and emotional development.

Children must also be supported in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

literacy;
mathematics;
understanding the world; and
expressive arts and design.

Learning In Reception

Educational research continues to inform us that children learn best when they are active and engaged in their learning. In planning and guiding children's activities, teachers reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';

active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and

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

Types of Activities

In Class the activities will be:

- **Teacher input**- this is usually a short carpet session where the Teacher will introduce a concept. For example, ordering numbers to 10. The teacher may use a game or a song on the interactive whiteboard that the children can watch and participate in.
- **Focus activity** – the Teacher or the Teaching Assistant will work with small groups of children reinforcing and extending the concept through a practical activity. In relation to the example above, this could be ordering number tiles on a washing line, deciding the correct order and talking about which numbers are bigger/smaller.
- **Teacher directed activity** – this is an activity that has been set up in preparation to support the concept from Teacher input. A small group of children will be directed there to work independently. The teacher only intervenes to support the learning or correct any misconceptions.
- **Child initiated activities** - this is when the children are given opportunities to 'play', accessing resources independently and doing what interests and engages them, incorporating ideas and concepts from current/previous learning. Teachers will listen, observe, support and challenge children's play but will never guide the learning away from the child's own ideas and interests. For a child play is a time to reflect on their own learning, put ideas into practice in their own way and clarify their own understanding.

REMEMBER—
*'Play is work
for the
child'.
(Froebel,
2008)*

Learning Phonics

Our practice in EYFS includes teaching children to read using guidance from '**Letters and Sounds**' incorporating synthetic phonics. There are 6 stages to learning phonics which will be covered in Reception and beyond into Year 1 and 2.

Phase 1

Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.

Phase 2

Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.

Set 1 - s a t p

Set 2 - i n m d

Set 3 - g o c k

Set 4 - c k e u r

Phase 3

The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.

Set 6 - j v w x

Set 7 - y z zz qu

Phase 4

No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, and jump. The main challenge in this phase is to help children to blend and segment words.

Phonics also introduces children to 'nonsense' words. Nonsense words may have no definition or meaning, for example; zop, han, nooch, crat, but teaches children the complexity of the English language and secures phonic knowledge and awareness.

Phase 5 and 6 in Year 1 and 2

In the next years children move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.

Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

Parental Tips for Helping with Phonics

- Make it fun—Play hide and seek with objects or hunt for letters when out & about
- Write sounds while in the bath
- Make sounds from sticks, stone or paint them with water
- Spot letters in books and move forwards to identify words
- Make sure you pronounce them correctly!

Early Reading and Writing

Terms to Help you with Letters and Sounds

Phoneme - The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words.

Grapheme - A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g. ough.

Oral Blending - This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

Blending- This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and trying to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

Oral Segmenting - This is the act hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

Segmenting - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it and working out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.

Remember...

We all make progress with reading and writing at different speeds. Some children will be ready to learn to read and write at the start of Reception and some children may need some more time to develop.

We are all here to work together, if you are worried about helping your child learn to read and write please speak with us.

Ideas for helping with Early Reading

- Create a love of books—enjoy reading make it a happy time
- Let your child use the pictures to tell you a story
- Enjoy it when children memorise the story and can ‘tell’ you the words on the page
- Spot words that your child knows in the book—Mum, Dad, dog or cat are often great words to start
- Find words that your child can segment and blend by themselves—set them up to impress you!
- Read everything—books, cereal packets, signs, number plates, posters—whatever takes their fancy!

Ideas for helping with Early Writing

- Start writing on a big scale—outdoors with a paint brush or chalk
- Check and encourage your child to grip the tool correctly, using a pincer grip
- Draw and copy patterns—these will develop the writing motions of up and down strokes or rounds and diagonals
- Think about writing with your ‘wrong’ hand while wearing a glove—this is like writing for a child—it’s tricky!
- Let them free write—they can tell you ‘what is says’ - marks and then letters have meanings!
- Watch out for children writing the first sound of the word they are sounding out
- Encourage spelling by sounding out the letters
- ‘Check’ how the word would look like in a book if your child asks
- Again have fun, don’t make it a chore, make them love it!

Early Maths

Early maths at home involves number, shape and measure. By the end of Reception children need to read, write and order the number to 20. The activities below will help you engage

Recognising Number

Choose a number for the week, e.g. 2.

Encourage your child to look out for this number all the time.

Can your child see the number 2 anywhere?

at home - in the kitchen or on pages in a book

in the street - on doors, on car number plates or on buses

while out shopping - on the shop till, on shelves, in shop windows

Patterns and Games with numbers

Find two apples, toys, spoons, straws, sweets, etc.

Make patterns, such as two knives, two forks, two spoons, two knives, two forks, two spoons...

Practise writing the number 2.

Shape and Space

While you have all the items out of the cupboard—what shapes can you find?

Open up the packets—can you see a square and rectangle? What about other shapes?

Count the corners and sides—remember the names of the shapes and the number of corners and sides they have!

Calculation—Play a Dice game

Use a 'dotted' dice and write the numbers 1 to 6 on a sheet of paper (or use the numbered animals).

Throw the dice. Can your child guess how many dots there are? Check by counting.

Ask your child which number on the paper matches the dots on the dice.

Add 2 numbers together—add the dots by counting, write a sum. Who can reach 20 first?

What would 1 less or 1 more than that number be? What about 2 more or 2 less?

Counting

Practise counting. Start at 5, and count on from there to 11.

Start at 9, count back from there to zero.

Choose a different starting number each time.

Count using numbers to 10, 20 and then beyond to 100.

Measure—Cupboard maths

Ask your child to help you sort a food cupboard out, putting **heavier** items on the lower shelf and **lighter** items on an upper shelf.

What about height—can you also sort the items according to height? Are the heaviest items always the tallest?

Day to Day Routines

At the start of Reception each day will bring something new—remember we are here to help.

The classroom door is always open between 8.45 and 9am for our drop off time. This is a great time to catch us for a brief moment and an excellent time to share in learning. By 9am, when the bell rings on the playground we will be needing you to say a happy goodbye.

If you want to talk to us in more detail we are more than happy to make an appointment after school.

Sharing Home Learning

We love to share our learning. As the term progresses you will have the opportunity to share in our Learning Journals.

However, we love to celebrate things that have been learnt at home—riding a bike, making the bed or winning an award for swimming! Please feel free to bring things in to share—items that support our topic are always warmly welcomed.

We do ask though that children don't bring in large toys—small items that can fit in a drawer are welcome.

Reading Books

Children will bring home a 'book banded' reading book. These are for you to share and read with your children every night.

The books are found in drawers in the link area just outside of the classroom, we ask that you swap the books before school so that you always have a new book to read at night.

You are welcome to take more than one book, but please keep within the same colour.

Computing to Support Learning

There are some excellent website and apps t help with early learning. Engaging with your child while they are playing and learning will really support them.

The BBC offer some excellent interactive games to help with phonics and maths. Also Phonic Play can provide some excellent resources.

Things to Bring to School Every Day

- Water Bottle
- PE Kit
- Coat—we do go outside if it is raining
- Wellies in the winter months

6 Weeks In Meeting

In a few weeks time we will invite all Reception Parents to a meeting in the hall. This will be the first opportunity to share in the learning journals and see what the children have been up to!

It always proves a great time to get to know other parents and the staff team a little better.