



**Solihull**  
METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

***Reynalds Cross Vision:***

*Reynalds Cross is a safe, supportive and fun environment  
that nurtures individuality and enables  
every child to flourish to be the best that can be.*

# EYFS Policy

Date adopted: May 2023

Next Review date: Summer 2024

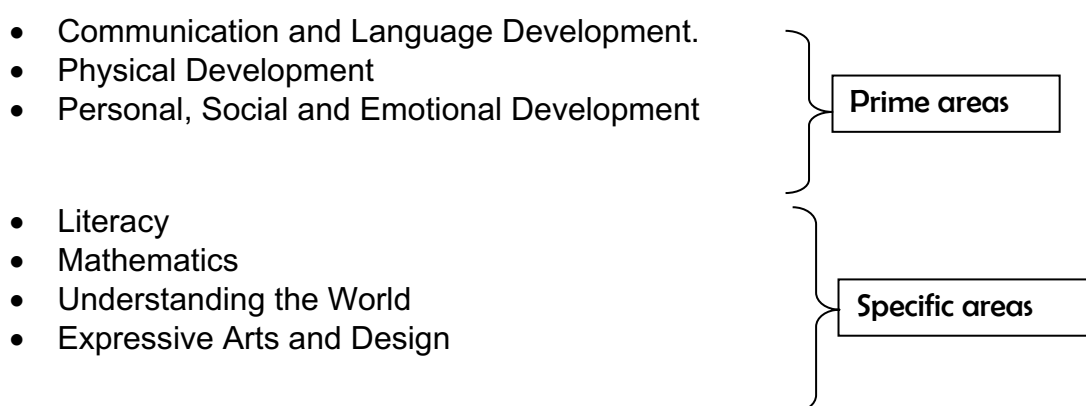


## **Introduction**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprises of 7 areas of learning. In the earlier stages of child development, the “prime” areas of learning are considered to be more prominent. As children make progress, the specific areas begin to be of equal significance to the Prime areas. This is because, the Prime areas are

*“particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.”*

*Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012*



The Prime areas form a fundamental part of the curriculum at Reynolds Cross, enabling pupils to focus on the essential early skills as needed, while moving on to develop skills in the Specific areas, at a pace that is appropriate for them.

## **Aims**

The EYFS is founded on the themes of: “A Unique Child”, “Positive Relationships” and “Enabling Environments”. It is considered that these together are instrumental to effective Learning and Development.

The EYFS curriculum aims to foster three ‘Characteristics of Learning’ which are:

- Playing and Exploring;
- Active Learning;
- Creating and Thinking Critically.

At Reynolds Cross, these are used as the basis for planning and facilitating learning opportunities.

## **Structure**

Reynolds Cross Foundation Stage currently spans two classes, which each comprise 1 Class Teacher supported by a combination of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and Personal Support Assistants (PSAs). The Nursery is on the

Green Lane site, separate from the school, while the Reception class is on the main Reynalds Cross site. The Head of Lower School oversees the Early Years Team as part of her role, who in turn reports to the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Communication as the basis for learning**

Children joining our school often begin with limited communication skills. The Reynalds Cross EYFS operates a Total Communication system, alongside that of the wider school. This means that the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), symbols, Makaton and speech are all used to support and extend children's communication and language development. Strategies such as Intensive Interaction may be incorporated as appropriate to the child.

Across the EYFS, weekly "Sing and Sign" sessions are incorporated, to familiarise children with Makaton signs, and to promote participation by signing, vocalising or gestures, as appropriate. Pupils are also asked to indicate their preferred choice of song by indicating either a corresponding object of reference, photo or symbol of their preferred song choice.

Pupils will be introduced to a "Schedule" when they start at Reynalds Cross, which supports their ability to respond to routines, and to visual cues. These may be portable, fixed, photo or symbol based as appropriate to the child.

Where appropriate to the child, opportunities to learn and develop the use of PECS will be provided. Progress in PECS will be tracked using the class assessment tool - 2Simple - as well as on the school PECS tracking tool.

A Speech and Language Therapist (SALT) is assigned to the school. Through consultation with the Early Years team, a 'Communication Profile' is created for each child. This outlines the learning needs of the child, with a view to feeding into appropriate communication targets. These are agreed between the class teacher and SALT.

### **Play-based Learning**

We believe in the importance of children being able to learn through play, by exploring and investigating. In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, we

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

*Statutory Framework for EYFS 2012*

At Reynalds Cross, the staff play a crucial role to play in facilitating play-based learning. This comprises of:

- Free choice sessions in which pupils are encouraged to make their own choices based on what is timetabled for that particular session. Where

children need support to access activities, adult support may be offered in the form of PECS books, mini-schedules, responding to the child's gestural cues;

- Outdoor play in which areas are developed to provide a wide range of play based learning, incorporating the 7 areas of learning. The class has access to undercover outdoor areas as well as open playground areas;
- Structured indoor play sessions where the teacher directs small group or individual activities.
- Access to specialist activities such as the Sensory Room and Soft Play areas.

Many pupils have play skills below that of a typically developing child of the same age. Therefore, the use of modelled and adult led play is required in most areas.

### **Planning, Observation and Assessment**

On entry to the Reynalds Cross EYFS, all pupils will have an initial assessment carried out, baselining their current stages of learning in each area. This takes into account information gathered during home visits during the term prior to the child starting. As expected by all Early Years settings, this data is submitted to the Local Authority in the first term, and then updated at the end of the academic year to demonstrate progress.

Ongoing assessment largely takes the form of photos and annotation through use of the '2 Simple' software tool. Pupil achievements are then tracked alongside the EYFS areas and age bands. Children with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) may be assessed using a small step profile called 'The New Developmental Journals'.

Where appropriate to the child, samples of work such as mark-making may be retained as evidence of pupil progress. These, along with evidence from '2 simple' are then collated and used for moderation purposes within the class team, or through moderation opportunities with other schools, ensuring consistency of judgements.

Assessments are collated regularly to ensure that up-to-date records are maintained for each child. This also means that pupils' "next steps" can be worked into subsequent planning.

In line with the wider school, staff in the EYFS department receive regular evaluations through Learning Walks and Lesson Observations.

### **Partnership with Parents & Carers**

At Reynalds Cross, we firmly believe in Parents/Carers as Partners and offer excellent home-school links.

Wherever possible, a home visit will be made prior to a child's admission. This is an opportunity to meet parents in an informal environment to enable them to share

information about their child's skills and interests, as well as to discuss any issues that may be concerning them.

Parents are informed on a daily basis regarding activities their child has been involved in, as well as any medical or welfare issues via each child's home-school book. Parents are also invited to use this method of communication to note any concerns or matters of significance.

Where appropriate, telephone links between staff and parents are used. Parents are welcome to ring school to discuss or inform staff of any significant issues. They are also welcome to arrange visits with staff as appropriate to raise any issues or discuss progress. Parents are also invited to an Open Evening in the Autumn term, a mid-year meeting as well as a Parents' Evening in the Summer term. An End of Year Report on pupil progress is sent home prior to the summer meeting. In addition, an Individual Education Plan and more general targets are shared with parents each term.

Reynalds Cross has a committed Family Support Team providing excellent home school links. Parents can request a meeting or a home visit to discuss any issues they may have. This could include advice on behavioural strategies, communication or other issues. This also includes drop-in coffee mornings, visiting speakers and workshops that may be of interest to parents. The school also hosts a regular weekly visit from the Learning Disability Nursing team, who are available to meet with parents and discuss relevant concerns. Many children begin at Reynalds Cross with established "Team Around the Family (TAF) support. These are attended by the Family Support Worker for as long as the family feel they need the support.

There are additional wider opportunities within school to support home school learning, including R.E. roundabouts and Special Assemblies such as the End of Term Prize Giving celebration.

The Green Lane site has an allocated Family Support worker whose role is to work with parents to record the 'Family Conversation' in preparation for an EHCP referral. In addition to this, visits may be made to children's other settings on request, to promote consistency of approach, and support with strategies for developing children's communication, emotional or behavioural needs. Open events are also planned where parents are invited to attend 'Stay and Play' sessions at seasonal events.

## Reynalds Cross

### Early Years Foundation Stage Covering 7 Areas of Development

#### Prime Areas

**Prime** areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other 'Development Matters 2012'

A high emphasis is placed on each of these areas, as they are considered to be the basis that development in other areas is built upon.

<b>Communication and Language Development</b> Incorporating: Speech/ Gesture Makaton PECS Colourful Semantics Visual Cues	<b>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</b> Incorporating: Independence skills Sharing and co-operation skills Understanding of routines	<b>Physical Development</b> Incorporating: Gross Motor Fine Motor Personal Care Health
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#### Specific Areas

**Specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society. 'Development Matters 2012'

<b>Mathematics</b> <i>Number/ Shape and Space</i>	<b>Literacy</b> <i>Reading/ Writing</i>
<b>Understanding the World</b> <i>People and Communities/ The World/ Technology</i>	<b>Expressive Arts and Design</b> <i>Exploring Media and Materials/ Imaginative Play</i>

Throughout the curriculum, TEACCH strategies may be used as appropriate to the pupil. All pupils have access to a visual timetable. Some pupils have access to a 'Work Station' and / or a personalised timetable.

## Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are summarised as follows:

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

'Development Matters 2012'

These are monitored along with, and through observation of activity, relating to the Prime and Specific Areas of Development.

Characteristics of Effective Learning	
Playing and Exploring- engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding out and Exploring</li> <li>Playing with what they know</li> <li>Being willing to 'have a go'</li> </ul>	In Reynolds Cross EYFS, pupils learn through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Free choice play relating to their developmental needs and interests</li> <li>Adult directed tasks</li> <li>Whole class, small group and individual tasks</li> <li>Personalised targets/ IEPs</li> <li>Familiar and predictable routines</li> <li>Sensory experiences</li> <li>Engagement in wider school activities.</li> <li>A three year topic cycle ensuring that they have opportunities to visit and experience a broad range of experiences.</li> </ul>
Active Learning- motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being involved and concentrating</li> <li>Keeping trying</li> <li>Enjoying achieving what they set out to do</li> </ul>	
Creating and thinking critically- thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having their own ideas</li> <li>Making links</li> <li>Choosing ways to do things</li> </ul>	

For further information on some of the information referred to in this policy, the following websites might be of interest.

**EYFS- Statutory guidance:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework—2>

**Development Matters:**

<http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2012/03/Development-Matters-FINAL-PRINT-AMENDED.pdf>

**Intensive Interaction :**

<http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk/about/how-does-intensive-interaction-work/>

**PECS:**

<http://www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com/>

**TEACCH:**

<http://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/teacch.aspx>

**Makaton:**

<https://www.makaton.org/>