**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy – Rendell Primary School**

**Introduction**

'Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people and the world around them. Development is not automatic; it depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments.' *Development Matters – EYFS*

This policy sets out Rendell Primary School's approach to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), covering children from the start of Preschool to the end of their Reception year. Our EYFS provision complies fully with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024), including all safeguarding and welfare requirements.

At Rendell Primary School, we recognise that early childhood (birth to age 5) is a crucial phase in every child's development. It lays the foundations for future learning, wellbeing and long-term success. Many children join us with lower-than-average starting points, particularly in vocabulary, communication and early life experiences. Our role is to close these gaps rapidly so that every child can thrive.

**Our Vision for Early Years at Rendell Primary School**

We believe that:

- Every child is capable of making strong progress from their starting point.
- Early intervention is essential to prevent long-term disadvantage.
- Children learn in different ways and at different rates, and our provision must reflect this.
- High-quality early education transforms life chances.

Throughout their time in EYFS, children at Rendell Primary School will have opportunities to:

- Build on what they already know and can do
- Develop confidence, independence and resilience
- Strengthen imagination, curiosity and understanding of the world
- Build social skills, cooperation and decision-making
- Develop a love of reading through stories, rhymes and rich vocabulary
- Gain strong phonic knowledge through our RWinc program
- Develop secure early number concepts using concrete, visual and symbolic representations
- Begin to master early writing, spelling and composition
- Experience a broad, knowledge-rich curriculum
- Learn through purposeful play that develops imagination, language and physical skills
- Begin their journey as life-long learners

**Transitions**

Transitions into Preschool, Reception and Year 1 are carefully planned. Staff share assessment information, meet to discuss individual needs, and ensure children experience consistent routines. Parents are supported through meetings, settling sessions and opportunities to visit the new environments.

By the end of Reception, children will be well prepared for the demands of Year 1 and the National Curriculum.

**Teaching and Learning**

Teaching in the EYFS is grounded in strong relationships, purposeful interactions and a curriculum that builds essential foundations. Staff provide clear explanations, skilful scaffolding and well-timed interventions that move learning forward. Our approach reflects Vygotsky's view that children learn best through social interaction and guided discovery, with adults supporting them within their *zone of proximal development*.

Key features of EYFS practice at Rendell Primary School include:

- Strong partnerships between practitioners and parents/carers
- Effective relationships with local nurseries and early years providers
- A carefully planned curriculum that builds essential foundations
- Ongoing assessment that identifies what children know and what they need next
- High expectations for all children
- Purposeful modelling, questioning and sustained shared thinking
- A stimulating indoor and outdoor environment that promotes curiosity and risk taking
- A strong emphasis on spoken language, vocabulary and comprehension
- Daily routines that help children feel safe, secure and ready to learn
- Daily opportunities for Literacy and Mathematics, taught flexibly with increasing structure across the year
- A rapid start to Reception, with most children attending fulltime from Week 1
- Weekly Forest School sessions for our reception children
- Preparation for Year 1 through increasing independence and structured learning opportunities
- Reading at the heart of the curriculum

**Reading**

Children develop strong early reading skills through high-quality talk, daily story experiences and systematic phonics. They learn to listen attentively, speak clearly and use accurate vocabulary. Staff model rich language and correct misconceptions sensitively (e.g. *"yellow"* not *"lellow"*). Children enjoy stories, rhymes, non-fiction and role play, retelling familiar tales and discussing books with increasing

confidence. Reading is taught through our structured phonics programme, supported by matched decodable books that children practise at home.

**Writing**

Children build early writing through purposeful opportunities to rehearse ideas orally, form letters correctly and compose simple sentences. They develop secure pencil grip, handwriting fluency and the ability to check their writing makes sense. Teaching includes spelling common exception words, writing from dictation and sequencing short narratives. Children write frequently across the provision, using both paper and books to develop stamina and confidence.

**Mathematics**

Children learn early number concepts through direct teaching, practical exploration and a mastery approach. They develop counting, numeral recognition, comparison and early calculation using concrete and visual representations. Daily opportunities strengthen number bonds, partitioning and fluency, supported by traditional games and elements of White Rose maths. Teaching moves beyond the ELGs where appropriate to ensure children are well prepared for Year 1.

**Play in the EYFS**

Children learn deeply through play. It enables them to explore, imagine, communicate and make sense of the world. Through purposeful play, children develop social skills, problem-solving, independence and resilience. As Piaget noted, *"Play is the work of childhood"* — a core driver of cognitive development and understanding.

Adults make intentional decisions about when to:

- **Step in** to scaffold learning
- **Step back** to allow independent exploration
- **Structure play** to introduce new concepts
- **Provide open-ended opportunities** that promote creativity
- **Use Sustained Shared Thinking (SST)** to develop collaborative play and deepen thinking

Outdoor play has a clear purpose and complements indoor learning rather than duplicating it. It supports:

- Nature exploration
- Gross-motor development
- Physical activity and fitness
- Opportunities for all children, including girls, to engage in active, high-energy play

Play is central to our curriculum and is used deliberately to build language, strengthen relationships and extend children's thinking.

**Inclusion**

Rendell Primary School is committed to meeting the needs of:

- Boys and girls

- Children with SEND
- Children who are more able
- Children with disabilities/barriers to learning
- Children from all cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds

We ensure inclusion through:

- Planning that builds on children's interests and experiences
- A wide range of teaching strategies
- Motivating and challenging learning opportunities
- A safe, supportive environment
- Resources that reflect diversity
- Early identification of additional needs
- Work with external agencies (e.g. SALT, EPs, ASD specialists, sensory support)

Children who are not keeping up receive immediate additional support.

**Cultural capital**

We broaden children's experiences through visits, visitors, outdoor learning, stories, celebrations and hands-on exploration that build cultural capital.

**SEND**

Children with SEND access an ambitious curriculum with adaptations that meet their needs. Interventions are monitored for impact and reviewed with parents and external agencies.

**Behaviour**

We teach children to:

- Self-regulate
- Make positive choices
- Understand consequences
- Respect personal space
- Share and cooperate
- Use good manners
- Work as part of a team
- Value diversity and differences

Children taught to follow and respect the Rendell Primary School Rainbow Virtues. Staff model self-regulation strategies and support children through co-regulation, emotion coaching and consistent routines.

**Key Person**

Every child in Preschool has a named key person who:

- Builds a secure attachment
- Supports emotional wellbeing
- Develops a strong relationship with parents/carers
- Shares progress and development
- Ensures children feel safe and known

**Parents and Carers as Partners**

We recognise parents/carers as children's first educators. Partnership includes:

- Home visits before starting
- Settling-in sessions with encouragement for parents to stay during this early settling
- Stay and play sessions
- Educational workshops
- Opportunities to discuss progress
- Termly parent meetings
- Annual written reports
- Encouragement for parents to stay during early settling
- Activities that promote collaboration

**Curriculum**

The curriculum supports all children, including those with SEND, and provides experiences that build knowledge, skills, concepts and vocabulary.

Medium-term planning identifies intended learning and outcomes for children working towards or already meeting the Early Learning Goals.

**Curriculum sequencing**

Our EYFS curriculum is carefully sequenced so that children build knowledge cumulatively. Staff know what children should learn next and use assessment to identify gaps and misconceptions. Learning in Reception prepares children securely for the demands of Year 1.

**Assessment and Tracking**

Assessment includes:

- Observation
- Independent work

- Baseline assessment on entry
- Ongoing formative assessment
- Half-termly summative assessment
- Evidence collected in phonics and learning journeys
- Class floor book

Assessment informs planning and identifies patterns of attainment across the cohort, but we ensure that it is not onerous and that the information we collect is to inform children's Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Evidence is collected only when it supports teaching and learning, and staff workload is protected.

Parents receive:

- Preschool -Evidence me correspondence
- Areas they can help with at home
- Wow moments recorded
- Termly updates through parent consultation evenings and next steps to learning
- An annual written report

**Staff training & professional development**

Staff receive ongoing professional development in early reading, mathematics, SEND, behaviour Sustained Shared Thinking and curriculum delivery. Leaders monitor EYFS practice through observations, planning reviews and discussions with staff to ensure consistency and continuous improvement.

**Resources**

We provide a learning environment that:

- Promotes a positive attitude to learning
- Reflects the diversity of our community and the wider world
- Encourages independence through choice
- Supports both indoor and outdoor learning

**Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is central to all EYFS practice. All staff receive regular training and know how to report concerns promptly to the DSL. The EYFS follows statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements, including safer recruitment, supervision ratios, paediatric first aid, intimate care procedures, and the management of medical needs. Children are kept safe through secure routines, vigilant supervision and a culture where staff know children well and act swiftly if concerns arise.