



## CURRICULUM POLICY

### Aim

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) forms the basis for the learning within our nursery school and we believe it has great importance as a foundation for inspiring life-long learning. During these early years children acquire knowledge and understanding, develop attitudes and learn social and personal skills.

Our curriculum at Rockwood has been developed with our Image of the Child underpinning all aspects of learning. Rockwood staff believe that working with our young children is a privilege and that our goal is to provide the very best start to their educational journey. We feel privileged to be able to work within the early years and believe that all children have a right to the very best learning opportunities regardless of their starting points. Our Image of the Child was formed by staff, families and governors through exploring the unique offerings of Rockwood, the families and the community it is situated in. Our overarching ethos and value is:

*"We aim to make the years the children spend at Rockwood happy and fulfilling so that, by the time they move onto the next stage, they will be competent, confident learners who take pleasure and pride in their achievements."*

Our Image of the Child is to support our children to be:

Loved  
Creative  
Curious  
Independent  
Confident  
Motivated  
Resilient

The nursery school operates within the updated framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework and legal guidance and is resourced according to the age and needs of the children accessing it. Practitioners use information from the statutory framework for the EYFS which was updated for September 2021, as well as the Rockwood Curriculum outlines to plan

provision and activities for the children in their care. These activities and the provision are adapted accordingly to suit the needs of all children through adapted teaching to support the outcomes for certain children. For some children a greater level of adapted teaching is required because they have additional or special educational needs. Practitioners are sensitive to the developmental needs of the children in their care and when they are adapting activities and provision have this in mind so that all children are able to access the setting in a way that is appropriate to their needs. The below section is taken from: the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage - Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five' for your information:

### **The areas of learning and development**

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are the prime areas:

- **communication and language development**
- **physical development**
- **personal, social and emotional development**

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- **literacy**
- **mathematics**
- **understanding the world**
- **expressive arts and design**

### **Educational Programmes**

Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning.

#### **Communication and Language**

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with

extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

*Please see our Communication and Language curriculum for further information.*

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently and begin to understand the emotions they feel or empathise with how someone else may be feeling. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

*Please see our Personal Social and Emotional curriculum for further information.*

### **Physical Development**

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

*Please see our Physical Development curriculum for further information.*

## Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

*Please see our Literacy curriculum for further information.*

## Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

*Please see our Mathematical Development curriculum for further information.*

## Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them - from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

*Please see our Understanding the World curriculum for further information.*

## **Expressive Arts and Design**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe

*Please see our Expressive Arts and Design curriculum for further information.*

## **Supporting your Child's Development**

All children on entry have a baseline assessment completed within the first few weeks of starting nursery. This process begins with information from yourselves as parents/carers in the format of an All About Me of your child. This is written reflecting your parental views, based on what we discuss with you and see ourselves on the home visit.

Children who may already have an Education Health Care Plan or recognised additional needs may already have a Lancashire 'All About Me Profile' that has been written prior to starting nursery and this would be referred to prior to your child starting at Rockwood and updated with input from yourself and your child as their time with us goes on. If not, this can be completed once your child starts nursery.

The EYFS endorses an ethos of learning through play. The children are guided to meet the learning outcomes at their individual rate, at a speed that reflects their stage of development and opportunities they have had. Planning is seen as vital to ensure the children have opportunities to try out new skills and to explore objects, sometimes for the first time.

Rockwood Nursery School has extensive grounds surrounding the building with hard and soft surfaces and garden areas. All areas of learning are available out doors on a larger scale. The children are dressed in appropriate waterproof outdoor clothing, particularly in the winter months and on wet days so they play outdoors so that they can jump in puddles and get muddy.

## **Your Child's Key Person**

The key person system is well established at Rockwood, with each child being under the care and education of a consistent key teacher and key person within their allocated group. The role of the key person is to nurture your child and help tend to their needs both personal and educational. They support and carry out fun activities linked to your child's interests, getting to know your child, and you very well through discussions and daily contact. More formal meetings are held with you and your child's key teacher at the end of your child's first half term and again at the end of their final term before transition to school, to ensure you are up to date with your child's

learning and future targets. This offers the opportunity for you and the key teacher to discuss further support and strategies we could implement at nursery and at home to meet your child's needs.

Partnership with parents is a vital component of the EYFS and one that we support and advocate. Children benefit from a supportive and a positive approach to play and learning. Rockwood Nursery offers children an excellent foundation onto which future learning can be built. The Nursery operates an 'open door policy' to be available to families to discuss any issues or concerns. This may necessitate an arranged appointment in order to fit around staffing and curriculum needs of the Nursery.

We value your contributions to your child's education and you can send pictures into the key person via Tapestry, through the [info@rockwoodnursery.com](mailto:info@rockwoodnursery.com) email and you will be provided with the email of a named member of staff in your child's group which can be found on your child's group welcome pack. You can use this to send updates, information and any questions or concerns.

We also use Tapestry, an online learning journal for children which allows staff to add short observations, videos, photos and 'wow' moments throughout your child's journey and Rockwood. If parents/carers log in to the system, it also allows them to send comments, photos and videos into their child's journey too.

If you wish to speak to your child's key teacher and/or key person at any time please ask.

Your child's key person, as well as talking to you, will be constantly observing and talking to your child about what they like to do and ideas of any future learning they may want to do i.e. what they want to achieve and how. These discussions help them plan their learning and develop. They monitor your child's achievements through ongoing assessments, ensuring appropriate learning takes place to meet your child's needs. Your child is therefore encouraged to express their views about their own learning.

Your child's group team will work and plan together for your child throughout the year. The planning will develop around key areas for development according to the EYFS curriculum INTENT that we have designed at Rockwood to best meet the experiences we feel are most appropriate and relevant to our children here. It will also involve key topics, themes and books throughout their years at Rockwood to expand their knowledge and help them become lifelong learners; based within Burnley, but a child of the world.

### **Target Setting - PLOD (Possible Line of Development) and TLP's - Teaching and Learning Programmes**

All children will have a PLOD drawn up by the teaching staff in the nursery, based on these assessments, setting targets for the children to strive towards over the next few months. The PLODs are evaluated regularly and updated at

least termly. Any children working significantly above or below age expected levels based on these assessment outcomes will be placed on the Nursery SEND register, following parental permission and will receive additional intervention work based around their additional needs.

Additional Targeted Learning Plans (TLP's) for the children placed on the SEND register are written either as a group Provision map plan or as individual Target Plan to break down these national targets further, to ensure all children achieve their full potential at Rockwood Nursery School. These interventions may be carried out internally by the experienced staff within the nursery or externally by relevant professionals e.g. Speech and Language therapists, occupational therapists etc. This is reflected in our inclusion policy which can be found on our website.

The Nursery School complies with the SEND Code of Practice (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). Assessment will be made in accordance with the Code, and an Individual Teaching and Learning Plan (TLP) will be formulated for children to ensure their needs are met, monitored and reviewed. If a child's needs are more severe, the Nursery may work with the parents/carers to involve other agencies in order to more appropriately meet the needs of the child and family. This might also involve applying for an Education Health Care Plan.

### **Impact and Further Evaluation**

We continue to track the progress and attainment of our children, throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, once they move onto school. The positive feedback we receive about the children who have transitioned from Rockwood validates impact of our curriculum.

### **Continuous Curriculum Improvement**

We continue to monitor and evaluate our curriculum to ensure it is having impact through:

Governors monitor coverage of the Curriculum and compliance with other statutory requirements through 'Buddy Governor' school visits, the Headteacher report, SENCO report, reports from staff with responsibility for areas of learning, Governor meetings, learning walks, talking to all staff and talking to children.

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders monitor the way the curriculum is being taught and children's learning, ensuring all children are making progress throughout the school by:

- Planning scrutiny, learning walks, child observations, learning journey scrutiny (Tapestry), staff observations, talking to children, tracking assessment data, tracking progress of all children and all groups of children, external and internal moderation
- Evaluate results to determine school improvement priorities.

Staff members with responsibility for 'areas of learning' monitor the way their area of learning is being delivered through:

- Learning walks, child observations, talking to children, role of the adult, focussed group activities, assessing data in their area of learning and responding with targets and actions

Staff with responsibility for monitoring the classrooms ensure the weekly planning includes:

- Objectives are identified for activities on the weekly plans
- Objectives identified on the termly overview plan is included into the plans
- Purposeful vocabulary is displayed to support the role of the adult and early reading
- The core provision is consistently provided
- Enhancements in class areas and that show progression of learning
- 'Enhancement sheets' are used to support the role of the adult and help monitor progression of learning
- Resources are stored, managed and replaced
- Review how the area is used by children through child observations and 'progression in key skills' data providing targets and actions for improvements
- Where practical, cross curricular provision is provided i.e. reading material; mark making, design, being imaginative, technological, mathematical opportunities
- Areas proffer provocative objects/pictures to trigger interest

### **External Support and Review**

We work with other professionals including External Agencies, Local Authority School Advisors, Local Authority Consultant's, other Maintained Nursery Headteachers and Specialist teacher's monitoring and evaluating our curriculum and reacting to advise to ensure the highest standards are maintained.

The Senior Leadership Team annual evaluate and review the curriculum, plans and systems to ensure they continue to meet the needs of our families and children.