

Literacy at Rockwood Nursery School.

What is it?

Literacy is the ability to read and write. There is a great emphasis on reading and writing and it is through these mediums that all other areas of the curriculum are assessed when children move on in their education. It is essential that children develop these skills and understand their role within communication. At nursery we believe in building firm foundations for future learning in a fun, realistic and purposeful way.

In the Revised EYFS CAL is broken down into two aspects:

Reading

This aspect is about how young children learn to handle and enjoy books and first begin to recognise words. Later in the foundation stage they learn how letters relate to sounds and can be used to build up words. Children at Rockwood are in a print rich stimulating environment and have the opportunity to enjoy many different texts both inside and out.



What we do at Rockwood to support children's Literacy.

Reading

Within the continuous provision all areas are clearly labelled with both words (in various languages) and pictures making the provision a language rich stimulating environment. Our book area includes storytelling shelves which includes puppets and resources for children to retell the stories they have heard, story boards for recalling stories and rhyme cards for children to explore. Books are changed frequently and are chosen with the children's interests and ideas in mind. Books include first word books, seasonal information books, books about the home and stories. Within the book area there are also some books that our children have made within their groups; we have found that this is both fun and very rewarding for the children involved and even the children who rarely visit the book area have wanted to read these books! . Our outdoor book area has book bags containing a book, rhyme and activity for children to explore in the outdoor environment. Our book areas are planned to be cosy and inviting but also stimulating for children to develop a lifelong love of reading. At Rockwood we love telling stories and saying rhymes so the children regularly have story times where staff use puppets; storyboards and books to engage children.

Books are within other areas of the continuous provision and are readily accessible. Within the home corner children can also look at catalogues, recipe cards, and print on packets etc.

Enhancements made to the continuous provision often use activities that include print and pictures to encourage children's early reading skills.



All children at Rockwood have a book bag so that they can use the school library with their parents/carers. Children can visit the library as often as they like and can borrow a book and a rhyme card each time they visit. Each week story sacks are also available to share at home. These contain a story, an information book, and activities to bring the story to life. Nursery rhyme packs are sometimes given to support children with language difficulties.

Writing

This aspect is about how children begin to make marks that they sometimes give meaning to, and eventually, as they become more aware of the sounds in words, their writing becomes more recognisable. At Rockwood we understand that young children need to develop their fine motor skills to gain the control, strength co-ordination and confidence required for writing. Mark making is valued and encouraged at Rockwood both inside and outside and staff support and praise children's early marks acting as role models for children to aspire to. Mark making is included in role play and other areas to encourage writing for a purpose, for example, making shopping lists; taking a message etc.



What is mark making?

Mark making is the start of the journey to be able to write. Children make marks for a wide range of different reasons. They use marks to express their feelings and ideas, and communicate in ways they may not be able to articulate, and sometimes they make marks for pure enjoyment. Children learn through everything that they do. Some children may have had opportunities to experiment making marks in their earliest of years and others may not.

What does Rockwood do to promote Early Mark Making?

At Rockwood Nursery School we provide lots of opportunities for all children to make marks. We understand that it is important for children to develop the control, co-ordination, strength and the confidence that is required for early writing. To help them achieve this we provide lots of hands on sensory experiences, such as flour, shaving foam and activities that help to develop their hand muscles and co-ordination, such as threading and peg activities form part of the continuous provision in the finger gym.

We believe its key to keep children motivated and enthusiastic about their learning. We know that some children prefer to do most of their mark making outside, so therefore we offer a mark making area both indoors and outdoors for the children to explore. Mark making can also be found in different areas of the nursery, giving children lots of opportunities to communicate their ideas and feelings whenever required.



In the role play area we provide resources including shopping lists, telephone message books, and recipe cards. The construction areas have clipboards, paper and pens to encourage children to

record or plan what they are making. Tools in the malleable areas give children the opportunity to make marks in different ways, exploring with different tools/mediums and sometimes exploring materials with their hands.



Outdoors we provide chalks for the children to use on a larger scale on the floor or the big chalk board. We have big wheelies that the children can use in paint or water to make tracks. Outdoors the children can make their own number plates for their bikes and scooters and signs or the roadway.

The children access forest school once a week where there are opportunities to develop their fine motor skills.



We provide a print rich environment for children, displaying different types of languages, prints, pictures and labels, helping children to become aware of print in their environment, and eventually make signs and labels of their own. Name card books and words are provided for the children to use to write their own names and other labels as they develop their interest and desire to write.

Each child is individual and at Rockwood we feel that it is key to look at each child as a whole and follow their interests, to help them develop to their full potential. Following the children's interests makes learning more meaningful and children are more willing to have a go - Mini beast hunts around the garden and activities linked to favourite stories. Superhero/princess/pirate themes are often common interests explored.

Staff at Rockwood take the time to plan and create opportunities that are fun, enjoyable and meaningful for all children. They take the time to observe, listen and look at children's mark making and understand its purpose and celebrate each child's individual achievement. Wow moments are celebrated and children's achievements are displayed on boards around nursery.