Rimon Jewish Primary School

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy / Handbook



Written by: Yesim Helva (Assistant Headteacher / EYFS Leader)
Approved by: Sarah Simmons (Headteacher)
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1. Vision and Ethos

At Rimon Primary School, our Early Years provision is grounded in a deep understanding of child development and a belief that every child deserves the best possible start. We are passionate about creating a joyful, nurturing, and intellectually rich environment where children thrive-personally, socially, and academically both in secular and Kodesh learning.

Guided by the Statutory Framework for the EYFS (updated 2025) and the Development Matters guidance (2021), our approach is thoughtful, research-informed, and rooted in our school's values. We believe in the power of play, the importance of strong relationships, and the capacity of every child to flourish when nurtured in the right environment.

Our learning spaces, both indoors and outdoors, are carefully planned to spark curiosity, challenge thinking, and empower children as capable, independent learners.

2. Aims of Our EYFS Provision

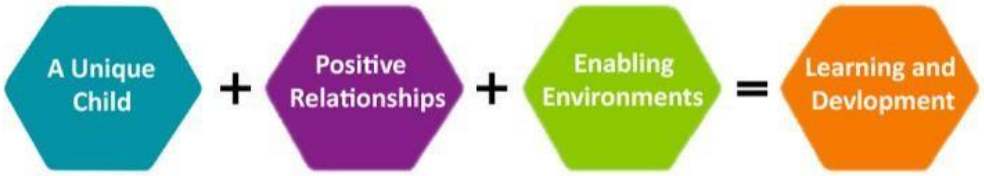
Our Early Years practice aims to:

- Provide a warm, safe and inclusive environment where children feel emotionally secure and deeply valued.
- Inspire a love of learning through meaningful experiences, purposeful play, and high-quality adult interactions.
- Foster independence, curiosity, resilience and creativity through play-based and adult-led experiences.
- Build children's confidence, resilience, and independence to prepare them not only for Year 1, but for life.
- Work in strong partnership with families, recognising them as our children's first and most enduring educators.

- Ensure that all children are challenged from their starting points in playful learning to make strong progress.

3. Our Core Principles
Our pedagogy is rooted in the four guiding principles of the EYFS:

- Every Child is Unique: We value the individuality of each child and tailor our provision to celebrate their strengths, interests, and developmental needs.
- Positive Relationships: We foster relationships that are consistent, loving and respectful, creating a secure base from which children can explore and learn.
- Enabling Environments: Our classroom environments are rich, responsive, and engaging, designed to offer choice, challenge, and inspiration.
- Learning and Development: We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates, and we celebrate the full range of their achievements - academic, social, emotional, and spiritual.



4. Our Curriculum and Pedagogy

A Broad, Balanced and Intentional Curriculum
Our curriculum is ambitious, inclusive, and tailored to meet the needs of our cohort. It blends structured teaching with child-led exploration and is thoughtfully sequenced to build cumulative knowledge, skills, and attitudes. We prioritise communication and language, embedding high-quality texts, songs, and stories across all areas of provision. Vocabulary development, sustained shared thinking, and dialogic teaching are at the heart of our interactions.

We introduce children to real-life experiences such as cooking, gardening, woodwork, age-appropriate cultural/religious events e.g. Lunar Year, Ramadan, Remembrance Day, Israel Independence Day, ensuring learning is rooted in purpose and relevance. The British Values of Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect, and Tolerance are also promoted through everyday practice (e.g., circle time, turn-taking, celebrating different festivals).

Learning Through Play and High-Quality Environments
Play is central to how young children make sense of the world. We believe in the power of sustained, uninterrupted play as a vehicle for deep learning. Our provision is open-ended, varied and richly resourced, enabling children to test ideas, solve problems, and develop ownership over their learning.

Each area, indoors and outdoors is carefully planned and regularly reviewed to meet developmental needs, respond to interests, and build on prior learning. The children can choose what they play and learn with, following their personal interests, and learn to tidy up after themselves – ***'choose it, use it, put it away'*** is our motto! We encourage children to make their own choices, so their level of involvement becomes greater, and their independent learning deepens.

Key environment features include:

- Well-defined and purposeful learning areas both indoors (Construction area, maths area, writing area, malleable area, loose parts, creative area, book corner) and outdoors (mud kitchen, literacy shed, maths area, construction, water play area, sand area, creative area, physical area, woodwork/D&T area and understanding the world tuff tray/trolley)
- High-quality, accessible resources labelled with visual prompts
- Classroom and outdoor space are maintained and resourced (reset and restock daily) – carefully linked to weekly learning intentions.
- Continuous provision enhanced through interactions, challenges, and questioning
- Daily outdoor access in all weather conditions during CP.
- Displays should celebrate children's individual work and reflect our intended curriculum. Maths and literacy working walls should be developmentally appropriate and accessible to all children.

Focused Use of Carpet Area during Continuous Provision (CP)

Carpet play during continuous provision (CP) should be progressive across the academic year, reflecting children's developmental stages and interests. Enhancements that guide children in play should be included weekly. This area must be purposefully planned to support both Prime and Specific Areas of learning as outlined in the EYFS. Practitioners should provide focused, adult-guided activities in the carpet area that target key learning goals, such as phonics games (Literacy) and maths games (Mathematics), alongside open-ended resources like Magnatiles, blocks, or small world toys.

This balanced approach supports both child-initiated exploration and intentional teaching, encouraging progression in Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Cognitive Skills. By ensuring the carpet area includes both structured and exploratory opportunities, we promote the characteristics of effective learning: playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically.

The Role of the Adult

Our practitioners are skilled in knowing when to step in and when to step back. Every interaction is seen as a teaching opportunity. Adults sensitively join children's play to scaffold learning, deepen thinking, and model language. We intentionally nurture the

Characteristics of Effective Learning, promoting children's ability to play, explore, persist, and think critically. Our staff celebrate effort, encourage curiosity, and support children to take risks and embrace challenge.

Screen Time

Any screen use in a Reception setting should be carefully planned for specific learning goals (such as phonics or maths tools) rather than passive viewing. Screen time should be limited to ensure children stay engaged in active, hands-on learning. The interactive whiteboard is used purposefully and sparingly, avoiding excessive use for stories. Programs like Numberblocks and Alphablocks may be used to support specific learning objectives, but adult-led storytelling and real-world exploration remain central to our approach and follows the EYFS guidance. For Reception-age children (4 to 5 years old) in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), official Department for Education and health guidelines recommend limiting total daily screen time to a maximum of one hour per day, ensuring it never replaces hands-on play, physical activity, or face-to-face interaction.

5. Curriculum Implementation

Our curriculum is designed around the seven areas of learning in the EYFS framework. These are interconnected and collectively nurture children's holistic development. We focus on providing high-quality learning during our carpet time sessions (teaching inputs) and embed this throughout our provision during continuous provision, through interactions and our enabling environments.

<u>Prime Areas of Learning:</u>

- Communication and Language:
  Rich daily opportunities for speaking, listening, storytelling, and imaginative play. Adults model expressive vocabulary and scaffold children's own narratives.
- Physical Development:
  A focus on both gross and fine motor skills through throwing, balancing, cutting, writing, and self-care routines. Our provision promotes independence and healthy habits.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development:
  Emotional literacy, self-regulation, and positive relationships are taught through role play, circle time, and our Middah of the Week. Children are supported to build empathy, manage emotions, and develop a sense of identity.

<u>Specific Areas of Learning:</u>

- Literacy:
  Daily phonics (Read Write Inc.), high-quality books, storytelling, and embedded writing opportunities across the provision (including early morning work and CP activities).

- Mathematics:
  Practical, hands-on exploration using White Rose Maths. Children investigate numbers, patterns, shapes, and measures through real-world contexts. Embed opportunities across the provision.
- Understanding the World:
  Children explore the natural world, technology, and their place in it through seasonal changes, celebrations, visits, and cross-curricular learning.
- Expressive Arts and Design:
  Opportunities for music, movement, role-play, design, and storytelling. We value children's creativity and provide the tools and freedom to explore it fully.

Phonics, reading and writing at Rimon

At Rimon, Reception children develop a love of reading and writing through daily experiences. They enjoy daily story times, a welcoming Reading Corner, and a weekly visit from a 'Mystery Reader'. Each child reads 1:1 with a teacher weekly, focusing on phonics, fluency, and comprehension.

Phonics is taught using *Read Write Inc* through daily, targeted group sessions. Children are assessed and regrouped every 6–8 weeks to ensure progress. Those needing extra support receive tailored interventions.

We immerse children in rich texts through role play and discussion. Writing is developed through spoken language and a secure understanding of stories, with daily opportunities to write, daily phonics practice within Continuous Provision (CP), and one focused writing task each week recorded in writing books.

Adults play an important role in modelling high-quality handwriting during learning activities, in books, and on displays.

Mathematics at Rimon

At Rimon, we follow the White Rose Maths scheme from Reception onwards. Our approach to teaching maths is grounded in real-life experiences, meaningful stories, and hands-on learning. We aim to build strong conceptual understanding and promote a language-rich curriculum that encourages children to reason, problem solve, and develop a deep understanding of mathematical ideas.

- Learning is rooted in concrete, meaningful experiences that connect maths to the world around the children.
- We ensure a maths-focused activity is planned during CP each week, directly linked to the current learning focus. These activities should be recorded on Tapestry to track and reflect on children's progress.
- Mathematical language and reasoning are embedded in daily routines and interactions, supporting children in becoming confident, articulate mathematicians.

Kodesh at Rimon

At Rimon, Kodesh teaching is rooted in strong EYFS practice. Kodesh lessons nurture a love for Judaism and pride in Jewish identity. Children have daily Kodesh sessions covering Hebrew reading, Parasha, Jewish topics, and general knowledge - often taught through songs and stories.

In Reception, Hebrew reading is a key focus. Children learn the names, sounds, and formation of Hebrew letters and vowels, and begin reading simple Hebrew words. Though Ivrit is not formally taught, basic Hebrew vocabulary is introduced throughout the year.

Children explore Jewish festivals and topics such as Creation, Brachot, Kashrut, and Shabbat, often integrating with secular learning. Each week, they study the Parasha and focus on a Middah (character trait), linking to PSHE and social development. Daily Tefillah and benching help children build gratitude and a personal connection to Hashem.

It is important that the Reception teaching staff maintain open and respectful communication with the Kodesh team. Liaising regularly and working collaboratively will help ensure consistency for the children and reflect a unified, respectful approach across both strands of the curriculum.

6. Daily Structure and Organisation in Reception

Our Reception day is carefully structured to balance direct teaching, meaningful routines, and rich opportunities for independent exploration. Consistent routines support children's sense of security, while flexibility allows us to respond to their needs and interests.

<u>What we expect to see daily in Reception</u>

Daily Routine Element	Key Features
Meet & Greet	Each day begins with a warm, personal welcome at the door. This sets the tone for positive relationships and provides space for emotional check-ins and parent communication.
Morning Tasks	Carefully selected early morning activities to support fine motor development, retrieval practice and consolidation of learning. This includes playdough/fine motor activity, literacy activity, maths activity and creative activity. *Weekly EMW planning should be completed.*
Calendar & Visual Timetable	These are used daily after registration and Teffilah to build children's understanding of time, sequence, and routine.
Carpet Inputs	Whole class teaching inputs take place at least twice a day. These sessions introduce core concepts in learning - maths, literacy, and wider knowledge areas.
Continuous Provision (CP)	Our indoor and outdoor learning spaces remain open throughout the day and are enhanced with purposeful, inquiry-based resources. Staff scaffold learning through observation, questioning, and dialogue. Activities within Continuous Provision (CP) should link to the week's learning. Children are expected to have opportunities to engage in writing in a variety of ways

	throughout the week. *Weekly CP planning should be completed (working document).*
Focused Writing	Every child completes at least one supported independent writing task each week in their writing book during CP time (after inputs). *Weekly focused work planning should be completed.*
Adult-Led Groups	Daily sessions in phonics, maths, and topic areas are adapted to children's needs, supporting small-group learning and tailored challenge.
Tapestry	Staff share daily snapshots with families via Tapestry, fostering ongoing home–school partnership and parental engagement.
Rolling Snack	A designated rolling snack table is available during Continuous Provision (CP), where children can independently sit, eat, and drink. A sound button is provided to play brachot, enabling children to engage with daily prayers in a meaningful and accessible way. This promotes independence, social interaction, and a calm, respectful snack experience. All EYFS staff hold paediatric first aid training in line with EYFS requirements.

7. Planning and Assessment

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Our planning and assessment systems are purposeful, responsive and centred on children's developmental needs.

Planning: Long term, and short-term plans are informed by observation, assessment, and children's interests. Our continuous provision is enhanced weekly in response to current learning. Weekly plans are expected to include a maths plan, literacy plan, topic plan, indoor and outdoor provision maps (CP plan), and an Early Morning Work (EMW) plan.

Teaching: Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. A blend of high-quality play, rich interactions, and direct teaching. As children grow in confidence, our teaching evolves to include more structure in readiness for Year 1.

Assessment:

- The Reception Baseline Assessment is completed within the first six weeks of school.
- Regular phonics assessments are carried out to track progress.
- Formative assessment take place daily through observations and interactions.
- Summative assessments include on-entry data (September), Autumn 2 data (December), Spring data (April), and Summer data for the EYFSP. Data is shared during pupil progress meetings and with the EYFS Lead.
- Focus Children – see appendix for further information
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is completed at the end of Reception and assesses all 17 Early Learning Goals.

At the end of Reception, all children, including those who join throughout the school year, are assessed as either Emerging or Expected against each Early Learning Goal (ELG). A child who meets the expected standard in all prime areas, as well as literacy and maths, is considered to have achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD).

8. Inclusion & SEND

We are proud to be an inclusive setting where every child's voice matters. Our learning environments and teaching approaches are designed to reflect and meet diverse needs. We have high quality provision to support and meet needs of all children.

Children with SEND are supported through:

- Early identification
- Individual Support plans
- Targeted interventions
- Close partnerships with families and external professionals

Our curriculum is adapted to ensure equity of access and ambitious outcomes for all.

9. Safeguarding & Welfare

Children's safety and wellbeing is our highest priority.

We have the following in place:

- All staff are trained in safeguarding
- All staff hold paediatric first aid training in line with statutory EYFS guidance.
- Staff follow Rimon's safeguarding and child protection policy
- Statutory adult-to-child ratios are always maintained
- Outdoor Risk assessment are regularly updated
- Healthy routines and emotional regulation are promoted.
- An intimate care and toileting policy is in place.
- All staff are aware of and support children's dietary and medical needs, which are regularly updated by parents/carers.

10. Working in Partnership with Families

We believe that strong home–school relationships are key to a child's success. We have open communication and meaningful collaboration with families.

We offer:

- Daily updates via Tapestry
- Weekly updates via email (NewsFlash)
- Regular parent workshops and curriculum meetings
- Celebrations of learning and festival performances

- At the end of the year, families can download their child's Tapestry learning journal
- Reporting to parents – focus child meetings and end of year reports

All communication with parents/carers via email should be from the Reception Teachers mailbox and not from personal work email.

We value parent voice and actively involve families in their child's learning journey.

11. Transitions
We support smooth, child-centred transitions into and out of the EYFS.

Into Reception:
- Home visits, nursery visits, class visits, and staggered starts help children settle confidently.

To Year 1:
- Shared learning sessions, park at lunchtimes, visiting the classroom, moving up hour, and professional handovers ensure continuity of learning and care.

12. Monitoring and Review
The EYFS Lead monitors the quality and consistency of provision through:
- Learning walks
- Tapestry reviews
- Planning scrutiny
- Book Looks
- Progress meetings

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner in response to statutory updates or emerging needs.

13. Appendices
- Phonics Policy
- Book Bag Books Document
- Focus Child Policy
- Risk Assessment – Reception outdoors
- Weekly planning template (maths, literacy, topic, indoor & outdoor provision map and EMW plan)