



# Riverside

## Early Years Curriculum

A Guide for Parents



Challenge  
Community  
Care



# Riverside School *Prague*

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# Contents

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Mission Statement/Core Principles            | 4       |
| Strategic Values                             | 5 - 6   |
| EYFS Framework Overview/Continuous Provision | 7       |
| Building the Model of Continuous Provision   | 8       |
| EYFS: Overarching Principles                 | 9       |
| EYFS: Characteristics of Effective Learning  | 10      |
| EYFS: Areas of Learning                      | 11 - 14 |
| The School Day                               | 15      |
| Beyond the Classroom                         | 16      |
| Student Support                              | 17      |
| Parents in Partnership                       | 18      |
| Progress and Development                     | 19 - 21 |
| Key Contacts                                 | 22      |



# Mission Statement

Riverside School values the uniqueness of the individual, providing high-quality education and skills for life to students of diverse cultures, within a Christian ethos and supportive family environment.

The staff team is dedicated to impacting students by building positive relationships and preparing them to become accomplished, global citizens.

# Core Principles

At Riverside School, we recognise and act to instil the following principles:

- ◆ Each child is valued and respected; each is unique.
- ◆ The wellbeing of each child is of critical importance to the life of the individual and the school.
- ◆ Each child is cared for in a protective, secure, family-oriented environment.
- ◆ High quality education provides an opportunity for each child to develop to their full potential.
- ◆ The positive impact of the school staff is of critical importance to a successful school.
- ◆ Children develop positive relationships and attitudes to others.
- ◆ The school, privileged with diversity of culture, provides a space for social connection and develops globally-minded citizens.
- ◆ The school makes a positive impact on the local and wider community.

# Strategic Values

Riverside School seeks to champion the ideals of Challenge, Community, and Care through every aspect of the School.

Riverside's Strategic Values encapsulate the Guiding Statements, including the Mission Statement and Core Principles. Decision making, including strategic planning, is underpinned by the Strategic Values.

## Challenge

We ignite a passion for **exploration** and **curiosity** among children, fostering a love for learning as they embark on journeys of **discovery**. Through a diverse range of hands-on activities and engaging problem-solving tasks, we cultivate **resilience** and **creativity**, instilling in our young learners the **confidence** to confront challenges with **determination** and a **growth mindset**.



Together, we celebrate their individual **achievements**, fostering a sense of belonging and **unity** that strengthens our collective bond. With a focus on **collaboration** and mutual respect, we **empower** children to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, preparing them for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

# Community

We prioritize the cultivation of a profound sense of **belonging** by actively engaging in explorations of our local area and wholeheartedly **embracing** the diverse backgrounds of our children. Through **collaborative projects** and **shared experiences**, we deliberately celebrate the myriad of cultural differences present among us, fostering a **climate of inclusivity** and understanding.



Together, we embark on a journey of **discovery**, delving into our surroundings and each other's stories, thus forming meaningful **connections** that enrich our **perspectives** and deepen our sense of unity.

# Care

At Early Years, our primary focus is on fostering a culture of care and **kindness**. Through daily interactions, we instill values of **compassion** and **respect** in our young learners. Our dedicated team ensures that every child feels **nurtured** and **supported**, offering a safe and **inclusive** environment where friendships blossom and differences are celebrated.



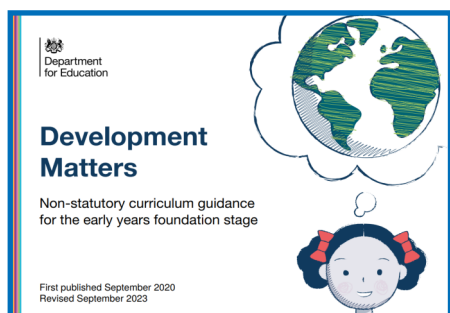
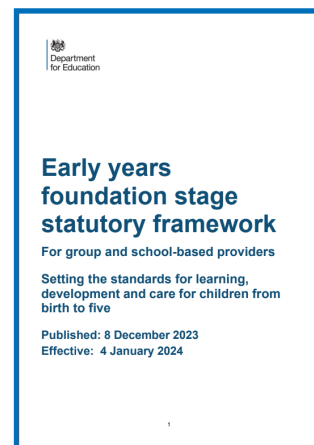
Through gentle **guidance** and **encouragement**, we promote **cooperation** and **understanding** among our students, teaching them the importance of **sharing**, **listening**, and helping one another. We strive to create lasting memories and meaningful connections that lay the foundation for a lifetime of **empathy** and **generosity**.

# EYFS Framework Overview

At Riverside Early Years, we follow the Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework as set out by the Department for Education for England.

The Framework:

- ◆ sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well.
- ◆ ensures children are kept healthy and safe.
- ◆ ensures children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school.



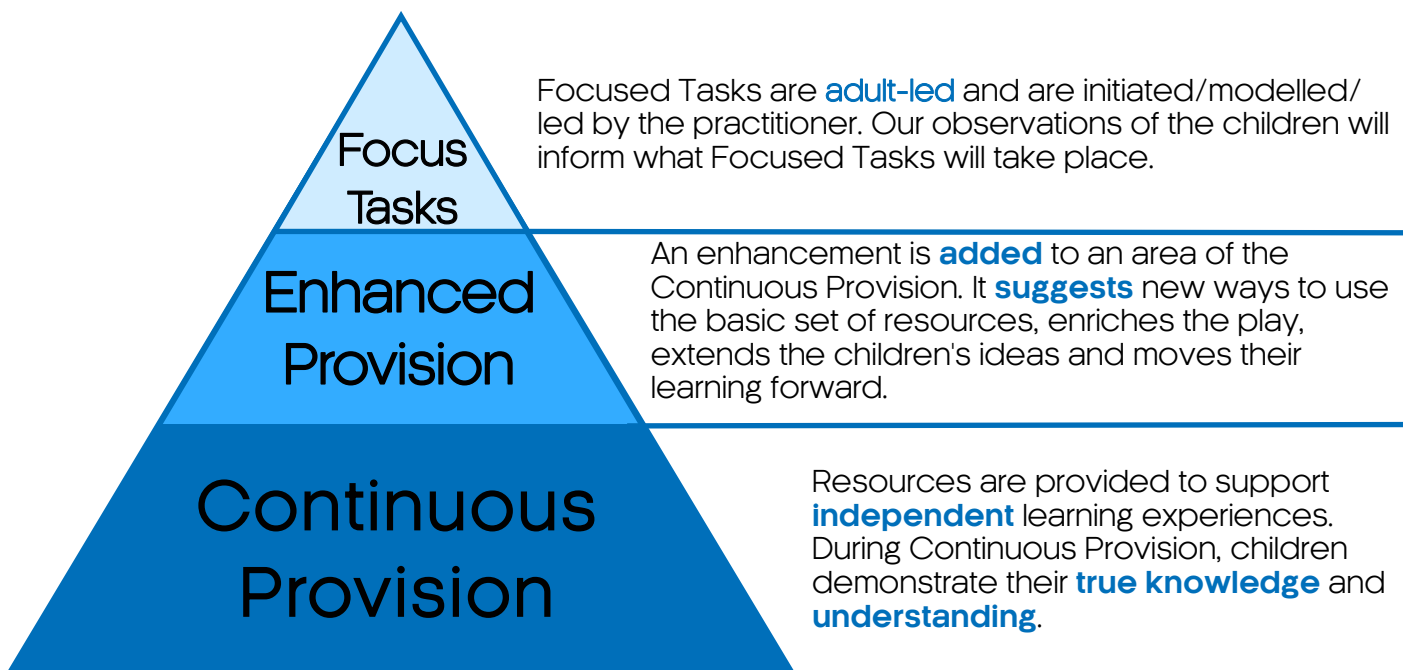
We also utilize non-statutory Curriculum Guidance for the EYFS called Development Matters to inform our approach and offer an overarching perspective on children's progress and learning. This guidance illustrates pathways of children's development across various ages and stages.

## Continuous Provision

At Riverside Early Years we plan for the children's development and holistic learning through the use of 'Continuous Provision'. This refers to the resources which are always available within the EYFS setting (indoors and outdoors) for the children to access. Different learning areas, such as sand or construction will be regularly 'enhanced' with familiar and new resources, which will enable children to **learn skills**, follow their **interests**, challenge **their thinking** and help them to **embed concepts**. It also provides the context for a variety of learning conversations between children and adults with rich opportunities for modelling and extending speech and vocabulary.

# Building the Model of Continuous Provision

Continuous Provision is a method which builds on what children **can** do, therefore putting the **child** and not the curriculum at the **centre of learning**. It begins by looking at the **impact of the learning environment** upon children's learning and how this must be reflected in planning.



# EYFS: Overarching Principles

The Overarching Principles describe the features of practice on which the EYFS is based. They emphasise that the child is of first importance and that all relationships, experiences and the environment together influence how the child will develop, play and learn.

## A Unique Child

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.



## Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.



## Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.



## Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in Early Years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.



# EYFS: Characteristics of Effective Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Learning describe behaviours children use in order to learn. To learn well, children must approach opportunities with **curiosity**, **energy** and **enthusiasm**. These abilities and attitudes of strong learners will support them to learn well and make good progress in all the Areas of Learning and Development.

## Playing and Exploring

- ◆ Plan and think ahead about how they will explore or play with objects.
- ◆ Make independent choices.
- ◆ Bring their own interests and fascinations into early years settings.
- ◆ Respond to new experiences.



## Active Learning

- ◆ Begin to predict sequences because they know routines.
- ◆ Show goal-directed behaviour.
- ◆ Begin to correct their mistakes themselves.
- ◆ Keep on trying when things are difficult.

## Creating and Thinking Critically

- ◆ Concentrate on achieving something that's important to them.
- ◆ Know more, so feel confident about coming up with their own ideas and make more links between those ideas.
- ◆ Take part in simple pretend play.



# EYFS: Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. The **Three Prime Areas** are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas. The **Four Specific Areas** help strengthen and develop the three prime areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm.

## Prime Areas

Communication  
and Language

Physical  
Development

Personal, Social  
and Emotional  
Development

## Specific Areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding  
the World

Expressive Arts  
and Design

## Communication and Language

Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. Through **conversation**, **storytelling** 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.



## Physical Development

**Gross Motor Skills** and **Fine Motor Skills** evolve gradually during early childhood, beginning with **sensory** explorations both indoors and outdoors, which contribute to the development of a child's **strength**, **coordination**, and **positional awareness**. Fine motor control and precision aid in **hand-eye coordination**, which later connects to early literacy skills. Consistent exposure to **diverse activities** such as small world **explorations**, puzzles, arts and crafts, and engaging with small tools under adult supervision fosters **proficiency**, **control**, and **confidence** in children.



## Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for them to lead **healthy** and **happy** lives, and is fundamental to their **cognitive development**. 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 structured educational sessions and supported interactions 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.



## Literacy

In literacy, children learn to **read** and **write** by improving their **language skills** and **physical abilities**. Reading has two parts: understanding language and recognizing words. It develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (fiction and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Children acquire reading skills through **phonics**, a systematic approach that involves connecting sounds with corresponding letters to **blend** and **decode** words. Recognising words comes later and involves reading new words quickly and recognizing ones they already know. Writing includes **spelling** and **handwriting** (transcription) and **expressing ideas** before writing them down (composition).



## Mathematics

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**.



## 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.



## 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**.



# The School Day

During the school day, the children will participate in a variety of timetabled activities to guide their learning, making use of our well resourced and carefully planned learning environments, both inside and outside.

## Example of Daily Timetable

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>8am</b>     | Soft Start/Indoor/Outdoor Provision  |
| <b>9am</b>     | Morning Circle Time/Phonics Session  |
| <b>9.30am</b>  | Morning Snack Time   |
| <b>10am</b>    | Maths/Literacy Focus Session & Continuous Provision<br>(Indoor/Outdoor)  |
| <b>11.15am</b> | Outdoor Playtime   |
| <b>12.30pm</b> | Lunchtime  |
| <b>1.00pm</b>  | Quiet Reading/Puzzles/Yoga time *Nursery children can nap  |
| <b>1.30pm</b>  | Afternoon Focus Session (Indoor/Outdoor)<br>Music, RE, Science, Cooking, Czech, PSHE etc                                   |
| <b>2.30pm</b>  | Afternoon Snack and Story Time   |
| <b>3.00pm</b>  | Home time<br><b>*3.00-3.45pm</b> Skills For Life Clubs<br><b>*3.00-4.45pm</b> Extended Day program (additional fees apply) |

Please note that this is a sample timetable only, to give an idea of the structure of each day.

# Beyond the Classroom

At Riverside, we are proud to provide children with diverse and comprehensive learning experiences. This extends beyond our EYFS classroom to include a variety of specialist lessons for our students. These specialized classes help children feel connected to the wider school community while expanding their learning in various ways.

## Subject Specialist Teaching

Children at Early Years benefit from experienced staff who are dedicated subject specialists, ensuring engaging and enriching learning experiences tailored to their developmental needs and interests.



## Extra Curricular Activities

During the school year the children are introduced to a variety of different learning opportunities such as Pony Care, Swimming and Indoor Rock Climbing. We also take advantage of the many local attractions such as the Pumpkin Farm, Agriculture Museum and Prague Zoo to enhance the children's learning.



# Student Support

Every student attends Riverside to advance their education and gain access to a comprehensive, diverse, and tailored learning experience, as defined by the Riverside Curriculum.

The programmes of study and schemes of work within the school take account of a wide range of student **abilities**, **aptitudes** and **interests**.

For children who speak English as an additional Language we provide extra support through the use of an experienced and highly trained **EAL Teacher**. The EAL Teacher works with children both in and out of the classroom environment to help them gain skills and develop their **English speaking vocabulary**. Through **targeted instruction** and **engaging activities**, students receive the support necessary to navigate academic challenges and integrate effectively within the school community.



There are some students who have particular educational needs, which necessitate additional provision. It is the school's aim to enable each student, including those who have particular educational needs and require **additional provision or support**, to progress and be appropriately challenged.

Our Objectives are:

To identify the needs, through liaison with professionals and parents or guardians, screening, assessment and observation.

To put in place appropriate support based on a student's individual needs.

To disseminate targets and strategies and to monitor and record progress through regularly reviewed referrals and Individual Education Plans.

To coordinate these procedures through effective communication between teaching staff, SMT, professionals and parents or guardians.

# Parents in Partnership

At Riverside Early Years, we deeply value the role of parents in our educational community. We believe that parents are essential partners in their child's learning journey, and we encourage active involvement in various aspects of school life. From regular communication about your child's progress and participation in parent-teacher meetings to volunteering opportunities and workshops, we strive to create meaningful avenues for parents to engage with our school.



## Teacher-Parent Communication

### Weekly Newsletter

Written by the Head of Early Years, this Newsletter will inform about the various events and goings-on at the Early Years School.

### Open Door Policy

We welcome parents, guardians, and caregivers to actively participate in their child's education and school life.

### Class Dojo



At Early Years we use Class Dojo as a safe platform to share photos and videos of the children's time at school.

### Friends of Riverside

The Whole School Facebook page where information and photos of school events are shared.

### Parent Teacher Meetings

Parent-Teacher meetings foster collaboration and open communication about a child's progress and development.

### Formal Reports

Offers a comprehensive overview of a child's achievements, social development, and areas for further improvement.

# Progress and Development

## Early Learning Goals

The Early Learning Goals serve as the benchmarks for children to reach by the culmination of their EYFS Reception year. These goals guide their progress throughout their Early Years journey. EYFS outcomes emerge from continuous observations and assessments of each child, ensuring they progress at the anticipated pace while identifying areas where additional support may be necessary.

Here are a few examples illustrating the Early Learning Goals. Please be aware that this list is not exhaustive.

### Communication and Language

#### Listening, Understanding and Attention/Speaking

- ◆ Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- ◆ Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

- ◆ Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- ◆ Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.
- ◆ Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

#### Self-Regulation/Managing Self/Building Relationships

### Physical Development

#### Gross Motor Skills/ Fine Motor Skills

- ◆ Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- ◆ Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.

## Literacy

### Comprehension/Word Reading/Writing

- ◆ Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- ◆ Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
- ◆ Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.

- ◆ Have a deep understanding of numbers to 10, including the composition of each number.
- ◆ Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, doubles facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

## Mathematics

### Number/Numerical Patterns

## Understanding the World

### Past and Present/People, Culture and Communities/The Natural World

- ◆ Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- ◆ Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- ◆ Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

- ◆ Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- ◆ Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and when appropriate, try to move in time with music.

## Expressive Arts and Design

### Creating with Materials/Being Imaginative and Expressive

The ELGs support practitioners to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development at the end of the EYFS, and their readiness for Year 1.

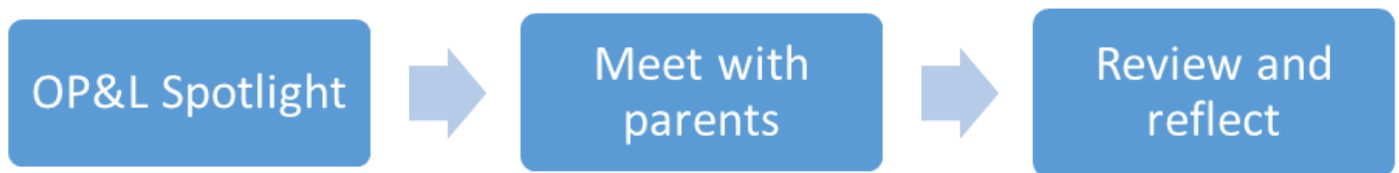
## OP&L - Observation of Play and Learning

OP&L works on the basis of having very simple, six-monthly child developmental milestones, which we use to monitor children's development. These milestones reflect what we believe a 'typical' child, should be able to achieve. We know that not all children will have 'typical' development. OP&L allows us to tell and celebrate each child's story and focus on the support they need from us.



The observations and assessments that we make are called 'spotlights' and the first report is called a 'Starting Point'. We observe children's innovation, their creativity, their ideas, their intents and feelings. The insight that we gain enables us to discuss, reflect and plan our environment to support and shape future learning.

OP&L follows a simple, three step cycle



**Typical Development at 36 Months**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
  - Shows an interest in others and makes new relationships.
  - Explores new environments.
- Communication and Language**
  - Responds to questions and instructions.
  - Asks for help if they need it.
  - Speaks in simple sentences.
- Physical Development**
  - Uses the toilet with some support.
  - Moves around their environment with awareness and control.
  - Manages a range of equipment purposefully e.g. can use a spade to fill a bucket.
- Literacy**
  - Enjoys sharing books with adults.
  - Uses simple marks including lines, curves and circular movements.
- Maths**
  - Shows an awareness of number.
  - Uses mathematical language in their play e.g. big, small, heavy, light
- Expressive Arts and Design**
  - Explores and plays with a wide range of media and materials.
- Understanding the World**
  - Explores natural materials and the natural world.
  - Talk about their family and people important to them.

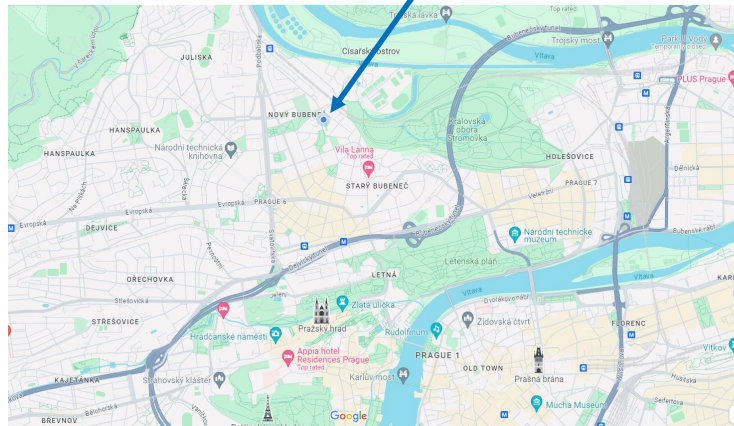
This document was created by Barnet Early Years Alliance (2018) and forms part of the 'Observation of Play and Learning' system.

Example of OP&L Milestones for a child aged 36 months.

# Key Contacts

## Riverside Early Years

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