



Early Years – The RAB Way

Vehicles for Learning

The EYFS curriculum is delivered to the children at RAB through the following vehicles for learning:

- Phonics
- NCTEM Mastery approach to Maths
- Gardening
- Cooking
- Forest School

There are other elements to our provision including; funky fingers activities, Dough Disco, handwriting and direct teaching of Literacy, Music, French, Art, PSHE and P.E.

Children develop the skills and knowledge they need to be able to achieve the Early Learning goal for each area of the curriculum as well as readiness for the National Curriculum.

Learning throughout the year is 'hooked' onto high quality books. These may be linked to contexts such as the time of year or provocations which have occurred.

The amount of writing the children do increases throughout the year – see Appendix 1 for progression.

Language Development

This is an explicit focus throughout the year. Vocabulary is specified in planning. Tier 2 words are selected to be explicitly introduced each week and used throughout provision. These words are displayed to ensure that all adults in the room are aware of them. The main words referred to throughout the year are 'similar' and 'different' to ensure that the children's understanding of these words and concepts are embedded as they are so crucial to many aspects of the EYFS curriculum.

Poetry, Nursery Rhymes and Songs

Children sing every day. Songs are part of the routine of being in Reception, saying good morning, practising the days of the week, counting aloud, tidying up etc.

Nursery rhymes are taught explicitly in Music sessions. Children are taught the words, develop actions and perform them to each other. A Nursery rhyme book is revisited weekly in story time sessions, allowing the children to join in with the familiar rhymes and songs. See Appendix 2 for Nursery rhymes taught.

Each season the children learn a simple poem related to that season. They discuss the vocabulary, practise saying it aloud as a class, develop their own actions and continue to revisit it throughout the season. See Appendix 3 for poems.

For specific events such as Harvest and Christmas the children learn a selection of songs of varying styles which they perform in front of an audience.

Assessments

September

- Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)
- Example of unaided writing
- Writing name in Literacy book
- Playful Maths
- Phonics

December

- Unaided writing
- Writing name in Literacy book
- Playful Maths
- Phonics

February

- Phonics
- Writing name in Literacy book

Easter

- Unaided writing
- Writing name in Literacy book
- Playful Maths
- Phonics

May

- Phonics

June

- Unaided writing
- Playful Maths
- Phonics

Observations take place while children are engaged in Active Learning (child initiated activities), adult led learning, and during whole class teaching sessions. These observations will enable the teacher to form a judgement on which children need further exposure and support as well as those who need to be extended.

During Maths sessions assessments will be continuously carried out and assessment grids can be updated if teachers feel confident that the children are secure.

Assessment grids are completed at the end of each term to capture if the children are 'on track' for each of the areas of learning.

Assessments take place at the end of a Spotlight focus period to gauge which children need to continue to be supported with that specific skill.

Spotlight Focuses

These skills will be introduced and focused on in concentrated periods of time. The children will have a range of opportunities to practise the skills and be supported to do so by the enabling environment and the adults in the setting. The ‘spotlight skill’ will be high profile across the setting. The current ‘spotlight skill’ will also be shared with the parents and carers so that the children can consolidate their experience at home.

Skill	Focus
Writing own name	The children will write their name forming each of the letters correctly
Number recognition	To be able to recognise numerals 0 to 10
Using scissors	Children to be able to hold scissors correctly and use safely, making accurate cuts
Counting	Use 1:1 correspondence to count up to 10 objects consistently and confidently
Handwriting	To be able to write letters using the correct formation
Numeral formation	Children to be able to form written numerals

The ‘Spotlight skill’ will be focused on for a set period of time. After this time has finished those children who have not mastered the skill will continue to have support until they have also mastered it. Every opportunity will be taken to ensure that children continue to develop and apply the skills which have been focused on. For example, after the focus on name writing, children will consistently be supported and expected to always write their name correctly. After the focus on scissors it will continue to be a regular ‘Funky Fingers’ activity as well as scissors being freely available to use in the Creative area of each classroom.

Parent Communication

- Open door policy, parents are encouraged to pass on any relevant comments or ask questions when they drop off and pick up their child. For longer conversations an email can be sent via the school office.
- Weekly newsletter ‘Reception Roundup’ detailing insight into learning during the week, ideas for parents to support at home, any relevant notices for upcoming dates and events.
- Seesaw online platform, parents will receive a weekly post detailing an exciting activity or remarkable learning moment.
- Videos will be uploaded to Seesaw to provide parents with information about Phonics, Maths and Reading skills and how they can be supported at home.

Evidence

- Each child has a Literacy book
- Their Literacy book is used for all of their writing. Children write mainly in their books rather than having sheets stuck into them, these also include examples of child initiated writing.
- Each class has a floor book for Maths, this is used for compiling evidence of the content covered and includes children’s work, photos and post it notes.
- Each class has a whole class floor book, this will be a compilation of the work which the children produce, photos etc.
- These journals are available for children to look at in the classroom and for parents at Parents Evenings.

Reading

At home

Children are given a Reading record which is used as a communication between home and school. This is where a record of which books the children read at home is kept. Children begin with a book from set 0 which do not have words. When they are confident blending sounds to read VC and CVC sounds with the phonemes they have been taught they are given a book with the corresponding sounds. The children take these books home to read and parents are asked to record this in their reading record. When they have read their book three times it will be changed. This generally happens on a Monday and a Thursday.

At school

Following our baseline assessments, we know whether the children can blend orally or visually as well as which phonemes they are familiar with. If a child can visually blend they start on the books with words. The other children start on the books without words.

When we 'read' with the children individually initially we practise the individual phonemes which have been introduced in our phonics sessions with flash cards. We then practise oral blending using 'my turn, your turn'. When the children are confident blending orally we begin visual blending by putting the flash cards together to make words. When the children are confident blending they are moved onto a book with words. This replaces the phonics practise.

During the teaching of Phase 2 phonics the children take part in an individual reading session with a book carefully matched to their reading ability. They will then read the same book a further two times to an adult in school. This reading is recorded in their Reading record, as well as in the class Reading folder. Children who are identified as needing to read more regularly read their book for home with an adult in school which is also recorded in their reading record (essentially compensating for them not reading at home).

During the teaching of Phase 3 phonics the books are matched to the sounds which are being taught each week. Three sounds are introduced in the Monday phonics session. Every child reads their book to an adult that day. The same book is sent home for the children to read at home. This book is reread with an adult in school on Wednesday or Thursday. On Thursday it is changed for a new book with the same three newly taught sounds to read at home. If the children are still working within Phase 2 of phonics they are also given a book at this level to read at home. They are heard reading this book at least once in school during the week.

Fine Motor Development

This is an area of focus throughout the year. Children's pencil grip and control is assessed through observation and their baseline unaided writing. This informs the provision that is put in place, for example, size of letters in their handwriting book or additional strengthening activities etc.

'Funky Fingers' activities are used in the Autumn term as 'start of the day' activities. These are set out on each of the tables for children to access when they come into school. There is always be at least one fine motor activity as part of each classroom's continuous provision.

'Dough Disco' takes place daily in the Autumn term. This is a 5-minute whole class session when children use play doh to exercise their hands and strengthen their grip and control.

Handwriting

The initial focus is for children to be able to form the letters in their own name correctly. This is a 'Spotlight' focus in the Autumn term. The children are then taught explicitly how to form each letter using the correct formation during a weekly handwriting session. The formation of each letter is taught using a mnemonic which is a sentence explaining the shape of the letter. The letters are introduced in letter families to support the children in linking the formation of letters.

c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s, f

l, i, t, u, j, y

r, m, n, h, b, k, p

v, x, w, z

Handwriting is taught in weekly whole class sessions. It is recorded which children need further support with the formation of the letter being taught so that they can have further opportunities throughout the week to practise the formation. When a letter has been introduced in a handwriting session it is then expected that whenever the children are writing that letter it is formed correctly. See Appendix 4 for accompanying phrases.

Continuous Provision

There are three levels of continuous provision within the classrooms;

- the resources and activities which are always available and on offer to the children
- activities which are set up for children to access independently
- linked activities which follow directly from specific teaching

The activities in the second level of continuous provision are generally changed on a weekly basis. These are stimulated by the children's interests, needs and the current focus of learning. They are adapted and changed throughout the week if necessary.

The linked activities are specifically planned and follow on from teaching either to consolidate the learning or as an enhancement.

The continuous provision in each classroom enables children to develop their skills across the curriculum. Every classroom always has an activity linked to:

- Maths
- Writing
- Small World
- Role Play
- Fine motor
- Sensory or malleable
- Creative
- Construction

Outdoor provision

The outdoor area is a continuation of the classrooms. Children have access to it on a 'free flow' basis throughout the day. This means they make the decision if they would like to be outside or inside during their active learning.

The outdoor area is set up each morning to ensure that it provides a range of opportunities for the children to access. These are mainly in areas which are not possible to cover inside the classrooms, for example, large scale physical activities, hands on 'messy play' and activities which are noisy.

At least one adult is always outside if there are children outside.

Interventions

Following our baseline assessments, the children who need additional support are identified. The areas of support include:

- Fine motor strength and control
- Gross motor control and coordination
- Writing own name, using correct grip and forming letters correctly
- Grapheme recognition
- Oral blending
- Visual blending
- Numeral recognition
- Counting using 1:1 correspondence
- Turn taking, play skills
- Speech and language (using targets and programs from specialist Speech and language therapists)
- Writing

These interventions take place within the classroom or our outside area during the children's active learning sessions. They may be on a 1:1 basis or in a small group with peers at a similar level. They are often play based with the adult scaffolding the children's play and focussing their learning on the particular skill being focussed on. For example, building with lego, how many blocks have you used? Shall we count them using the skills we have been learning in maths? Or adding number cards to the race track – which numbers is your car driving past?

The interventions continue for as long as the children need the additional support. The focus of interventions tends to shift over the academic year. For example, many children may need additional practise to write their name in the Autumn term whereas in the Summer term there will be children having additional opportunities and support to write a sentence.

Children's progress is assessed half termly (phonics) or termly (writing, maths). However, children may move in or out of the intervention groups within that time if they are deemed needed or not needed.

A specific phonics intervention is set up across the cohort in the Spring term for children who are not able to visually blend. These children work with a teaching assistant in small groups at least three times a week outside the classroom to focus on Phase 1 phonics skills (rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, sound discrimination, oral blending and segmenting). This is in addition to the general class interventions they will be receiving. The progress of these children is closely monitored and communicated to class teachers and teaching assistants. The groups may be changed to match the levels the children are working at. When the children are able to orally blend sounds the focus changes to visual blending.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Writing progression

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer
Writing focus	Mark making, initial sounds, own name	Representing sounds	Writing short sentences, representing	Writing sentences, spelling known	Increasing stamina and independence

			sounds accurately	tricky words, using punctuation	
Amount of adult led writing tasks	Twice a week	Twice a week	Three times a week (including phonics application)	Three times a week (including phonics application)	Three times a week (including phonics application)

Appendix 2 – Nursery rhymes which children will know by the end of Reception

The Grand Old Duke of York

Incy Wincy Spider

Baa Baa Black Sheep

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Wind the Bobbin Up

I'm a Little Teapot

1,2,3,4,5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive!

Pat a Cake

Hickory Dickory Dock

Hey Diddle Diddle

Appendix 3 – Seasonal poems

Autumn

Autumn winds begin to blow,

Coloured leaves fall fast and slow.

Whirling, twirling all around,

Till at last they touch the ground.

Winter

Snow Kisses by Barbara Vance

“If you go out when it’s snowing

And look up at the sky,

You’ll feel lots of icy kisses

As the snowflakes flutter by.”

Spring

Daffodowndilly by A.A. Milne

She wore her yellow sun-bonnet,
She wore her greenest gown;
She turned to the south wind
And curtsied up and down.
She turned to the sunlight
And shook her yellow head,
And whispered to her neighbour:
"Winter is dead."

Summer

Summer Morning by Rachel Field

I saw dawn creep across the sky,
And all the gulls go flying by.
I saw the sea put on its dress
Of blue midsummer loveliness,
And heard the trees begin to stir
Green arms of pine and juniper.

Appendix 4 – Handwriting phrases

- a- The astronaut goes around the moon and down to earth
- b- The bouncy ball drops, goes up and around
- c- The cat has a curly tail
- d- The duck swims around the pond, jumps up out of the water and dives back in.
- e- The elephant lifts its trunk and it spins around.
- f- Feel the fish and draw on the fin.
- g- The gorilla swings around the tree and under the branch.
- h- Down the drain pipe and over the hedge.
- i- Dip in the ink and draw on the dot
- j- Scoop out the jam and dot on your toast.
- k- The kite bobs down and up and around with the wind.
- l- Down the lolly and give it a lick.
- m- The mole digs down and makes two hills.
- n- Nancy goes down and over the rainbow.
- o- Around the otters face, starting at the ear.
- p- The postman goes down the path and around the post-box.
- q- The queen walks around the castle, down the red carpet and waves.
- r- The rabbit jumps down and up and over the fence.

- s- The snail is leaving a trail.
- t- The tractor goes down the field and across the field.
- u- You swim under the water, back up and down you go.
- v- The volcano bubbles deep down and erupts.
- w- The worm wriggles down, up, down, up
- x- X marks the spot.
- y- The yoyo goes down up and spins around.
- z- The zebra has three stripes.