



Welcome to the Early Years at Rockmount Primary School



www.rockmountprimaryschool.co.uk

Welcome to Rockmount Nursery and Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers

We are very pleased to welcome you to Rockmount School. We hope that your child will enjoy many valuable learning opportunities and that you will join with us in a partnership aimed at ensuring your child makes good progress in a happy and caring learning environment.



We are looking forward to meeting you soon and working closely with you.

What is the Foundation Stage?

The *Early Years Foundation Stage* is the name given to children's first two years of schooling and covers the time your child spends in the Nursery and Reception classes. As the name suggests this is the period for laying the foundations upon which your child's learning will be built in Key Stage 1 and beyond.

The play-based Early Years Curriculum is carefully structured and sets high expectations in the learning goals that children will achieve by the end of their Reception Year.

Positive early school experiences are crucial as children's attitudes to lifelong learning begin here. Provision, both indoors and outdoors, is made for the different starting points from which children develop, building upon what they can already do. Learning activities are well planned and purposeful, providing the structure within which children can explore, experiment and make decisions for themselves. This enables them to reason, understand, develop and progress.



Children follow a curriculum which builds in lots of opportunities to learn through 'talking and doing'

What Do Children Learn in the Early Years Foundation Stage?

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning. It is organised into seven main areas, all of which are crucial to a child's overall development.

Communication and Language

- We provide children with opportunities to talk and to listen carefully, to practise and extend the range of vocabulary and communication skills they use.
- To develop their understanding and answer questions about their experiences.



Physical Development

- We provide opportunities for all children to develop and practise their fine and gross motor skills and to increase their understanding of how our bodies work and what they need to be healthy and safe



Personal, Social and Emotional Development



- We provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of the school community, promoting a strong self-image and self-esteem.
- We give children an enthusiasm for knowledge and a confidence in their abilities to be successful learners.
- We ensure that children develop the ability to be mindful and make sure they understand how to successfully manage their feelings and behaviour.

- We encourage children to cooperate and work harmoniously, respecting each other's needs, feelings and differences.



Literacy

- We develop reading and writing skills by providing a wide range of experiences for all children to explore and use language. A rich variety of literature fosters a love of reading and children learn to write through purposeful activities.



Mathematics

- We provide opportunities for all children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space by offering a wide range of practical situations within which they can explore, discuss and solve problems.



- Children enjoy mathematics both indoors and outdoors. Staff provide weekly 'maths challenges' that encourage children to think creatively and critically about number, measurement, pattern, shape and space.



Understanding the World



- We provide opportunities for all children to investigate, make decisions, predict, plan and question in a variety of contexts.
- We encourage children to explore and find out about their environment and the people, places and events that have significance in their lives.
- We include the use of up to date technology in all areas of learning.



Expressive Arts and Design

- We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art; design, technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative role play activities.



In both the indoor and outdoor learning environment, we provide opportunities for child initiated learning as well as focused, adult led activities based on the seven curriculum areas.

Throughout your child's time in the Foundation Stage, staff keep detailed assessment records and observation notes of the progress your child is making. An "Early Years Foundation Stage Profile" is completed at the end of the Reception Year. This provides a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1.

We have regular parent/carers evenings during the year when we will share information on your child's progress and targets. We are also happy to have informal discussions as the need arises.



Safeguarding

The welfare and wellbeing of our pupils is of paramount importance to us. We have secure policies, systems and procedures in place to ensure that all our pupils are kept safe and that their physical and mental wellbeing is addressed.

Inclusion

At Rockmount we believe that each person is unique in terms of ability, needs, culture, beliefs, attitudes, language and experience. We respect and value this and ensure that everyone is fully included in school life. We have specialist staff available when needed to support children who may have any additional needs.

Home School Partnership

We aim to develop competent, confident learners who achieve well. Although we are all trained, we appreciate that you know your child best. We value you as the first and enduring educator of your child and we believe that a genuine partnership between home and school has a positive impact on your child's development and learning.

We work in a supportive partnership by:

- Remembering that respect is the cornerstone of the home/school partnership
- Keeping you informed about all aspects of your child's life at school
- Arranging regular parent/carers evenings to inform you of your child's progress and actively involving you in their development
- Openly discussing concerns as and when they arise

(In case of any concerns, please speak to any of the Early Years Team or to the Head of School)



Preparing your child for school

There are many things you can do to help your child to be well prepared for Nursery or Reception including;

- Ensuring they can take care of their basic needs e.g. go to the toilet and wash their hands
- Encouraging them to put on and take off outdoor clothing by themselves
- Reading to your child every day and discussing books and stories with them
- Supporting your child to make decisions and choices for themselves
- Having frequent conversations with your child and helping them to develop their language skills and extend their vocabulary
- Giving your child specific jobs or responsibilities within the family
- Explaining boundaries and consequences of actions and being consistent with these
- Being aware of your child's television and video viewing and limiting the time they spend on these activities
- Letting your child know that making mistakes is part of the learning process and help them to take responsibility for the choices they have made
- Letting your child know that when they start something you expect them to finish it
- Expecting your child to help to tidy away after him/her
- Giving your child a wide variety of experiences - bus rides, trips, group activities, various kinds of music etc.
- Encouraging your child to share with others, helping them to understand that it is not possible to always have things their own way



How can you help your child to settle?

The settling-in period is different for each individual child. We seek to support the children's wellbeing and positive mental health through successful transition and ensure consistency of support throughout their school journey. The more relaxed you are about it, the less apprehensive your child will be.

- Talk positively about school
- Take advantage of pre-school visits and explore the environment together
- Stay with your child for a while if needed
- When you leave, avoid a prolonged good-bye
- Talk about your day and theirs. Ask them to tell you about something or someone that made them happy, emphasising the social aspects of school
- Collect your child on time, it is very frightening for young children to think they have been 'forgotten'



Behaviour

Our Behaviour Policy is based upon the principle of behaviour transformation. We have high expectations and we support pupils to learn from the mistakes they make. Our ordered and disciplined routines and attitudes in school provide a secure framework of boundaries within which effective teaching and learning can take place.

The self-discipline, which we foster, is based on an awareness of right and wrong and an appreciation of the needs of others. If a child is showing unacceptable behaviour we need to take immediate action to protect others and our learning environment and to address the child's own difficulties. Unacceptable behaviour is that which hurts or disrupts others in the community or damages property. We ensure that what we expect of young children is realistic and is based on their level of maturity and understanding. Behaviour which is hurtful to others is never ignored.

What Staff do:

- Stop the unacceptable behaviour - children usually respond to a calm assertive adult voice and close physical presence at their level

- We deal with the matter immediately, first comforting the child who is hurt
- We try to establish with all involved what was happening - this means listening to and supporting the children in expressing their perception of the situation
- We make clear what is unacceptable and support the child in finding ways to respond to the situation, such as negotiation
- We help reconciliation and a genuine expression of regret, including eye contact and appropriate words
- We conclude the incident, making sure that the child understands not to repeat the behaviour. We ensure that all involved are diverted into positive activity, having found ways of jointly clearing up any mess or repairing any damage
- We focus on the behaviour as being wrong, silly or hurtful rather than saying that the child is bad
- We talk to parents/carers about what has happened so that we can support each other in modifying inappropriate behaviour
- In more serious incidents the Head Teacher or Head of School may invite parents in to discuss any issues

Rockmount Rules

- **Be kind, helpful and truthful** • **Listen to others**
- **Do your best** • **Look after property** • **Be polite**

Health and Safety Matters

We welcome and support pupils with medical conditions. All our staff are aware of the most common serious medical conditions and receive regular training for emergency situations. Several members of our team have their paediatric first aid qualification. Please let us know if your child has any medical condition or specific needs and this will be discussed with you on an individual basis. If she/he has asthma we need to have the appropriate medication at school with written instructions and the child's name clearly identified.

We are a Healthy School and put a great deal of emphasis on helping children learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe. We provide clear advice on the benefits of good nutrition and regular exercise. When children ask questions on personal matters we respond honestly and then share this with parents and carers. We promote self-esteem for everyone and we challenge any hurtful language or actions by anyone in our school community.

We have an agreement that no one will smoke in or around the school where they may be seen by children.

If your child is absent please inform us of the reason and let us know of any infectious illness.

Clothing/Uniform

Children need clothes which are practical as well as smart for the activities they will encounter at school. It is very important that your child wears the correct Rockmount uniform. This is comfortable, practical and helps children gain a sense of identity as part of the whole school community.

Nursery

- Royal blue jogging bottoms
- Grey skirt/pinafore or trousers/shorts
- White or blue polo shirt
- Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan
- Blue and white checked or striped dress (summer only)
- Royal blue school fleece (outdoor wear only)
- Blue school book bag
- Black, flat shoes or sandals (not slip-on shoes or shoes with logos)
- Nursery children also need a spare change of school clothes that can be kept at school



Reception

- Royal blue jogging bottoms
- Grey skirt/pinafore or trousers/shorts
- White or blue polo shirt
- Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan
- Blue and white checked or striped dress (summer only)
- Royal blue school fleece (outdoor wear only)
- Black, flat shoes or sandals (not slip-on shoes or shoes with logos)
- Blue school book bag

Jogging bottoms, fleeces, polo shirts, sweatshirts and book bags printed with the school logo are available from the school office.

Please note that Nursery and Reception children do not need a P.E. kit.



Jewellery

For the purposes of safety, no jewellery should be worn. If a child has pierced ears they must wear stud earrings only. If you wish your child to wear a piece of jewellery for religious reasons please discuss this with us.

Footwear and Outdoor Clothing

Children should wear practical black shoes for school with low heels. It is helpful if younger children have shoes with easy fastenings to allow them to be independent. Even in winter weather our children use the outdoor areas so please ensure your child always has a suitable coat.

Named Clothing

It is essential that all items of clothing are clearly named. This helps us to identify lost property and return it promptly.

School Lunch

We are proud to be one of the two Lead Food Flagship primary schools in Croydon and our catering company hold the 'Gold Food for Life' award. We encourage all our children to eat the tasty, nutritious meals which are cooked on our premises each day. Children have free access to a salad bar which encourages them to make good choices from an early age. We do not allow any sweets or fizzy drinks to be brought to school.



Snacks

In Nursery and Reception Classes children are provided with a piece of fruit each day and are encouraged to have frequent drinks of water throughout the day. Milk can be ordered free of charge through our 'Cool Milk' scheme.



Rockmount Friends and Community (RFC) and Parent Forum

All parents are automatically members of our Rockmount Friends and Community, which works hard to raise funds and to support the school in many ways. Currently the RFC is working on a variety of interesting projects. You are encouraged to attend meetings, participate in events and become fully involved in the life of the school.

Half termly, Parent Forum meetings are held to facilitate good communication between parents/carers, staff and governors. This helps incorporate parents/carers perspective in school decision making.

Breakfast and After School Clubs for children attending school full time.

At Rockmount we provide high quality care before and after school. We offer a breakfast club facility from 7.45 am where children are given a healthy breakfast and have access to activities before the start of the school day. In addition, our Rockmount Children's Club, which has received recognition for good practice from an external assessing body, offers a wide range of activities until from 3:10pm until 6.00pm each evening.

On a final note

Your child is just about to begin a new and exciting learning stage. We are sure that your family will enjoy being part of our school community here at Rockmount. If there is anything further you would like to know, please come and ask.

We warmly welcome you to our school and look forward to seeing you soon