

# Risca Primary School

## Early Years

### Parent Handbook



*" Inspiring, Challenging, Empowering  
Always Doing our Best"*

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**Head Teacher:**

**Mrs J. Arthur**

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**Mrs F. Green**

# What is "Early Years"?

The Early Years phase encompasses the developmental needs of children. At the centre of the statutory curriculum framework lies the holistic development of children and the fostering and development of skills across the curriculum, building on their previous learning experiences, knowledge and skills. The curriculum promotes equality of opportunity and values and celebrates diversity.



Children learn through play-based activities. Through these activities children practice and consolidate their learning, play with ideas, experiment, take risks, solve problems, and make decisions individually, in small and in large groups. First hand experiences allow children to develop an understanding of themselves and the world in which they live. The development of children's self-image and feelings of self-worth and self-esteem are at the core of this phase.

# Approaches to Learning and Teaching

Our provision for our Early Years children at Risca is holistic, with the child at the heart of the curriculum. Our practitioners are readily available to notice, analyse and respond to the needs and interests of the children; understanding, inspiring and challenging children's potential for learning.

At Risca Primary School we promote a balance between play-based learning through child-initiated activities and those directed by practitioners. We currently follow the CFFNMNS curriculum (Welsh Government) and have been working closely with advisors in the EAS to roll out this fantastic curriculum into our Early Years settings. If you would like to read anything about the curriculum, you can find the full publication on Google. This curriculum follows **5 pathways**. It ensures that children have a sense of *belonging* within their setting, that they can *communicate* effectively, can *explore* new concepts, and are healthy and happy with a focus on *physical development* and *wellbeing*.



Whilst at Risca Primary School your child will:

- access their learning through planned play, practical activities and teacher directed learning;
- be involved in planning, developing and reviewing their own work;
- develop their thinking skills and develop a positive disposition to learning;
- develop skills of observation, creativity and expression;
- celebrate differences and develop their knowledge and understanding of racial, cultural diversity;
- have regular access to the outdoor classroom to support their learning.

# What can I expect?

The Early Years Phase will enable your child to be a happy, confident and sociable child, who is valued as an individual.

## The Importance of Learning in the Outdoor Classroom

It is widely recognised that children who have experienced good quality outdoor learning develop strong social skills, are able to work in groups effectively and display a higher level of both self-esteem and independence. At Risca Primary your child will be given every opportunity through the use of the Outdoor Classroom to develop these skills.

Many children prefer learning outdoors and fresh air can have a profound effect on the concentration and involvement of children.

Remember, the outdoor classroom will be used in all weather and there is no bad weather, only bad clothing!

Please provide a pair of wellies for your child. These wellies will stay in school for your child to wear outside in wet weather.



## How will my child learn?

Whilst at Risca Primary School your child will experience a range of activities. Some will be directed by staff, others freely selected by your child.

Your child will learn to investigate; explore; experiment; question and solve problems through learning experiences that are relevant to their stage of development.

In the Early Years we place a high priority on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, to successfully underpin later skills of reading and writing.



## How can I help my child?

At Risca Primary School we welcome your partnership in supporting your child on their journey through the Early Years. By working together, we can lay the foundations for your child's lifelong learning. You can further develop your child's learning by reinforcing skills at home by playing with your child; talking together about experiences; reading all sorts of print in order to develop a love of reading and counting objects wherever possible.

# What happens on my first day in Early Years?



A special grown up will wait outside with you until school starts. You will come in on your own and the teacher will help you to hang up your coat.

We ask for a weekly donation of £1.25. This contribution helps us buy fruit for our snack station, where all children can access fruit and milk throughout the day. It also enables us to facilitate learning opportunities through cooking and trips to local shops to buy our favourite snacks and ingredients to cook with.

## Reception only - What about my dinner?

You can bring sandwiches or have a school dinner; It is much easier to find your sandwich box if your name is on it.

Since September 2022 all children in Reception are eligible for Free School Meals. Our lunch time is 11:30-12:30.



# What do I wear in Early Years?



Your child will need a school sweatshirt/cardigan (items with the school logo are available from Darren Morgan Sports, Crosskeys) tracksuit bottoms and trainers or something warm every day to do activities outside the classroom. Children are not allowed to wear jewellery.

*On sunny days can you ensure that you apply sunscreen to your child before coming into school please.*

## What will happen if I lose something?

We will try and help your child to find it. It is much easier to find belongings if they have your child's **name clearly marked** on them.

Your child's name should be on **all** their clothing, lunch box, book bag etc.



# Session Times



Reception:

Doors open 8:40-8:50am

Lunch time 11:30-12:30pm

End of day 3:10pm

Nursery AM

8:50-11:20

Nursery PM

12:40-3:10