

# RUNNYMEDE COLLEGE

British International School • Madrid



Founded 1967

## Foundation Stage Curriculum

A Guide for Parents 2009 — 2010

*Dear Parents,*

*The following pages outline the education that your child is receiving in Nursery and Reception. It should give you an understanding about what is taught, the methods employed and also enable you to help in the learning process.*

*The areas encompass the requirements of the Foundation Stage Curriculum.*

*Should you require any further information about the curriculum or about the school in general, please do not hesitate to get in touch.*

*Yours sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher Say". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

*Christopher Say*

*Head of Junior School*

# Introduction

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The early years of a child's learning experiences are crucial to his/her educational development. We aim to provide a positive caring and stimulating environment in which children can feel secure and confident from the very first day.

## Entering the Nursery

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At Runnymede, education begins in the Nursery. Children are encouraged to develop skills, concepts, knowledge, confidence, autonomy and independence in a relaxed caring environment. The Nursery Staff have a key role in supporting and directing the children in the development of knowledge and new concepts.

## Preparing Your Child For School

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Children must be toilet trained by the time they start in the Nursery. They should also be able to feed themselves independently. It is important that they are emotionally ready to cope with the routines and with the independence expected of them. A Nursery child should start school in a happy and relaxed manner. At Runnymede an induction meeting is organised in May for all Nursery parents. In addition, a 'Visiting week' is arranged in June to enable a Nursery Child to spend a morning in the Nursery class and to meet the Nursery staff. To also ensure a positive start is given to a Nursery child, a staggered entry is organised at the start of the school year for Nursery children. The children will spend a morning only on their first day at school and then half the children will start on consecutive days, this is to try and allay any anxieties.

The following points are intended to help you make your child's entry to school as enjoyable and relaxing as possible.

1. Your child will need to be reassured about school and it would be helpful if you could talk to your child about the teacher and the classroom and familiarise your child with the patterns of the day as well as talking about some of the things s/he will be doing.
2. Starting school is a very important event in a child's life and they may need some time to settle and initially they will be tired.
3. The school day in the Foundation Stage begins at 9.00 am and ends at 3.50 pm. You must be prompt in both bringing and collecting your child from school.
4. All children's clothes must be labelled, even shoes.
5. Children are required to have a Runnymede bag and an art apron ('babi') for art active ties.
6. It is important that all children have a Runnymede drawstring bag with a full set of spare uniform in, also labelled.
7. The school provides a healthy snack to eat mid-morning break and a plain biscuit in the afternoon. Children are continually encouraged to drink water throughout the day and milk is an option for them at lunch times. You must not send a snack into school due to allergies.
8. Please do not send your child to school if he/she is unwell or taking antibiotics or other medication. We are not allowed to administer medicines. You should also ensure the school is informed of your child's absence.

# Foundation Stage Curriculum

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Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience within the early years has a major impact on their future. The Foundation Stage Curriculum involves planning for the education of the whole child, emphasizing the development of the child emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually. Every child is an individual, they learn and develop at different ways and the Foundation Stage Curriculum acknowledges this, planning is differentiated in order to meet individual needs and ensure a broad, balanced curriculum is received.

A young child learns principally through play activities and we employ a wide range of structured play activities both indoors and outdoors within our daily planning. We adapt a topic based approach to learning to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are being integrated, above all activities have as many learning aspects as possible.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of six areas of Learning and Development. These are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional development.
- Communication, Language and Literacy.
- Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy.
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World.
- Physical Development.
- Creative Development.

All areas of Learning and Development are connected to one another and are equally important. All Areas of Learning and Development are underpinned by the principles of the EYFS which are:

- A Unique Child, every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable and confident and self assured.
- Positive Relationships, children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or key workers (teachers, teaching assistants).
- Enabling Environments, the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- Learning and development, children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development, as already stated, are equally important and inter-connected.

The Areas of Learning and development are as follows:

## Personal, Social and Emotional Development

At Runnymede Children are provided with experiences and support which will help them to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others; social skills; and a posi-

tive disposition to learn. We provide support for children's emotional well-being thus to encourage children to know themselves and what they can do.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is made up of the following aspects:

- Dispositions and Attitudes- is about how children become interested, excited and motivated about their learning.
- Self-confidence and Self-esteem- is about children having a sense of their own value and understanding the need for sensitivity to significant events in their own and other peoples lives.
- Making Relationships- is about the importance of children forming good relationships with others and working alongside others companionably.
- Behaviour and Self control- is about how children develop an understanding of what is right and wrong and why, together with learning about the impact of their words and actions on themselves and others.
- Self care- is about how children gain a sense of self-respect and concern for their own personal hygiene and care and how they develop independence.
- Sense of community- is about how children understand and respect their own needs, views, cultures and beliefs and those of other people.

## Communication, Language and Literacy

Children's learning and competence in communicating, speaking and listening, being read to and beginning to read and write must be supported. At Runnymede we therefore provide a range of opportunities and encourage children to use their skills in range of situations and for a range of purposes and support children in developing the confidence and disposition to do so. We identify the need for the children to communicate in their mother tongue within the School environment therefore they will have a 30 minute session each week in Spanish. This will also provide the non-Spanish speakers with the opportunity to have their first contact with the language.

Communication, Language and Literacy is made up of the following aspects:

### Language for Communication

Language for Communication is about how children become communicators. Learning to listen and speak emerges out of non-verbal communication, which includes facial expression, eye contact, and hand gestures. These skills develop as children interact with others, listen to and use language, extend their vocabulary and experience stories, songs, poems and rhymes.

## Language for Thinking

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Language for thinking is about how children learn to use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences and how they talk to clarify their thinking and ideas or to refer to events they have observed or are curious about.

## Linking Sounds and Letters

Linking sounds and letters is about how children develop the ability to distinguish between sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. They develop understanding of the correspondence between spoken and written sounds and learn to link sounds and letters and use their knowledge to read and write simple words by sounding out and blending.

## Reading

Reading is about children understanding and enjoying stories, books and rhymes, recognising that print carries meaning, both fiction and fact, and reading a range of words and simple sentences:

At Runnymede children are introduced to the 'Jolly phonics' scheme along with the 'letters and sounds' scheme. Each day, the children in Reception are introduced to a new phonic, through a lively and interactive technique. During term two, after a good knowledge of sounds, they are introduced to the Foundation Stage Reading scheme which consists of a range of books, mainly Jolly Phonics. A reading meeting is held during the second term to ensure parents understand our approach to reading and the best way to encourage your child to read at home. Although it is important to understand that reading to your child is extremely important and that reading should not just be about reading the books that your child brings home.

## Writing

Writing is about how children build an understanding of how the relationship between the spoken and written word and how through making marks, drawing and personal writing children ascribe meaning to text and attempt to write for various purposes:

## Handwriting

Handwriting is about the ways in which children's random marks, lines and drawings develop and form the basis of recognisable letters.

## Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

Children are supported in developing their understanding of Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy in a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about their developing understanding. They are given a whole variety of opportunities to practise these skills to gain confidence and competence in their use. These experiences may be developed through stories, games, and imaginative play so that children enjoy using and experimenting with numbers.

Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy is made up of the following aspects:

## Numbers as Labels and for Counting

Numbers as Labels and for Counting is about how children gradually know and use numbers and counting in play, and eventually recognise and use numbers reliably, to develop mathematical ideas and to solve problems:

## Calculating

Calculating is about how children develop an awareness of the relationship between numbers and amounts and know that numbers can be combined to be 'added together' and can be separated by 'taking away' and that two or more amounts can be compared.

## Shape, Space and Measures

Shape, Space and Measures is about how through talking about shapes and quantities, and developing appropriate vocabulary, children use their knowledge to develop ideas and to solve mathematical problems.

## Knowledge and Understanding of the World

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Children are supported in developing the knowledge and skills and understanding that helps them make sense of their world. Their learning is supported through offering opportunities for them to use a range of tools safely; encounter creatures, people, plants, objects in their natural environments and in real life situations; undertake 'practical experiments'; and work with a range of materials.

Knowledge and understanding is made up of the following aspects.

## Exploration and Investigation

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Exploration and Investigation is about how children investigate objects and materials and their properties, learn about change and patterns, similarities and differences, and question how and why things work.

## Designing and Making

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Designing and Making is about the ways in which children learn about the construction process and the tools and techniques that can be used to assemble materials creatively and safely.

## I.C.T.

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ICT is about how children find out about and learn how to use appropriate information technology such as computers and programmable toys that support their learning.

## Time

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Time is about how children find out about past and present events relevant to their own lives or those of their families.

## Place

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Place is about how children become aware of and interested in the natural world, and find out about their local area, knowing what they like and dislike about it.

## Communities

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Communities is about how children begin to know about their own and other peoples cultures in order to understand and celebrate the similarities and differences between them in a diverse society.

## Creative Development

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Children's creativity needs to be extended through their curiosity, exploration and play. They are provided with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings, for example, through a variety of art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role-play activities, mathematics and design and technology. At Runnymede children also have a 30 minute music session each week with the music teacher.

Creative Development is made up of the following aspects;

Being creative-responding to experiences, expressing and communicating ideas- is about how children respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, touch or feel and how, as a result of these encounters, they express and communicate their own ideas, thoughts and feelings.

Exploring Media and Materials-is about children's independent and guided exploration of and engagement with a widening range of media and materials, finding out about, thinking about and working with colour, texture, shape, space and form in two and three dimensions.

Creating Music and Dance- is about children's independent and guided explorations of sound, movement and music. Focusing on how sounds can be made and changed and how sounds can be recognised and repeated from a pattern, it includes ways of exploring movement, matching movement to music and singing simple songs from memory.

Developing Imagination and Imaginative Play- is about how children are supported to develop and build their imaginations through stories, role-plays, imaginative play, dance, music, design and art:

# PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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The physical development of young children is encouraged through the provision of opportunities for them to be active and interactive and to improve their skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. They must be supported in using all of their senses to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know. They are supported in developing an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food.

Physical development is made up of the following aspects;

## Movement and Space

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Movement and Space -is about how children learn to move with confidence, imagination and safety, with an awareness of space, themselves and others.

## Healthy and Bodily Awareness

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Healthy and Bodily Awareness- is about how children learn the importance of keeping healthy and the factors that contribute to maintaining their health.

## Using Equipment and Materials

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Using Equipment and Materials- is about the ways in which children use a range of small and large equipment.

# ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING

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Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. Children are continually observed and assessed during their day to day activities to ensure they are responding appropriately and making progress. Through the observation of children a more holistic picture of a child can be established along with necessary planning in order to ensure children's individual needs are being met. Each Child has an individual profile, within this profile there are the six areas of learning which contain the assessment scales which progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach at the end of the Foundation Stage. The profile supports a child's learning journey and the different stages of progress a child should be making. It is important to remember that all children are different and will progress at different rates.

# REPORTS

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The children will receive an initial settling in report in Term 1 (before half term). In Term 3 a report is sent home reviewing your child's progress in all six areas of learning and development. Each term arrangements are made for parent teacher meetings, and meetings can be arranged at any point during the term to review your child's progress. It is important to note that the teachers within the Foundation stage are always available to meet and discuss any concerns or issues that you may have in relation to your child.

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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Nationally, about 20 per cent of children may have some form of Special Educational Needs (SEN) at some time during their school careers. Special Educational Needs may range from learning difficulties, such as dyslexia or mild behavioural problems, to those high achieving students who may be considered gifted and talented.

At Runnymede College we acknowledge that a small number of pupils will need additional support and guidance on account of their special educational needs. It is the responsibility of the SEN department, therefore, to liaise with teachers and parents in order to identify, assess and address special educational needs when they arise.

The earlier an educational difficulty is identified and addressed the more probable it is that the specific difficulty will be overcome. It is for this reason that the child's passage through the Junior school is carefully monitored, starting from Nursery all the way through to Year 6. Therefore, a special emphasis is made on liaising with the Early Years and Key Stage 1 teachers through classroom observation and ongoing assessment of children's progress with teachers.

### SEN Policy

The SEN Department has drawn up a policy which is the result of a general consensus on special educational needs at Runnymede and on the roles and responsibilities of management, staff, pupils and parents. It also clearly sets out the procedure to be followed once specific needs have been identified.

### Referral

When a teacher or parent shows concern about a particular child a process of referral is followed where the parent or teacher fills in a referral form explaining what the problem is and how it has been addressed up to the present time. According to the nature of the problem, the school

psychologist will liaise with both teachers and parents in order to obtain as much information about the child as possible. Assessment of the child may also involve testing to identify specific learning difficulties. When necessary, the child may be referred to outside specialists for further testing and/or treatment.

### Individual Education Plans

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Once the specific difficulties have been identified the school psychologist will liaise with the classroom teacher in order to develop a common plan of action that will address the child's needs within the classroom context. This common plan of action is called an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The IEP sets out the main areas of work which the teacher is going to carry out with the specific child. The teacher also specifies the targets s/he hopes to achieve by the end of each term. The child's progress is, therefore, reviewed at the end of each term and new targets and approaches are agreed upon. The child's parents are regularly informed of the progress made and are advised as to how they can best help their child at home.

### Screening

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Central to the work of the SEN department is the early identification of difficulties. The screening of children starting at the Foundation Stage is crucial for an effective intervention. Screening is carried out through observation, regular meetings with teachers or through formal assessment. A process of intervention and monitoring is activated once difficulties are identified and cases reviewed at the end of each term.

### Intervention

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Intervention may take place in a variety of ways:

1. Within the normal classroom context, following the basic school curriculum, with differentiated work appropriate for a child's particular needs which can be taught and monitored by the class teacher.
2. Within the normal classroom context children having similar needs may be placed in small groups which will receive individualised support on specific areas of the curriculum.
3. A child or a small group of children, who have similar needs, may be withdrawn from the classroom to work with the school psychologist or support staff. This work may take the place of some part of the curriculum. Every effort will be made for withdrawal to take place at a time which is not going to interfere with the teaching of any new concept in the classroom. The work will focus directly on the specific skill development necessary to enable the child to have greater access to the curriculum in the future.
4. For children who require a greater provision than the school can provide the SEN department will contact outside agencies for extra support.

The main objective, through this method of intervention, is to help the child overcome his/her difficulties and minimise,

as far as possible, the interference which these may have on learning processes. Our purpose, therefore, is to ensure that early identification, assessment and intervention in the Junior School will enable a child to make a smooth transition into the Senior School in later years.