



Policy Number / Ref	KG_01	
Version	2.0	
Reviewed by / Date	JN / JW	Jan 2019
Approved by / Date	SWD	Mar 2019
Review Cycle	Biennial	

The Kindergarten Provision Policy

The Kindergartens at Ringwood Waldorf School provide a secure, inspiring and nurturing learning environment for children aged 2 to 6 years old. Our educational principles, policy and practice are based on and informed by the Steiner Waldorf Early Years curriculum and framework. Our Kindergartens usually have around 15 children of mixed ages, from age 3 - 6, and are led by a specially trained Kindergarten teacher and at least one assistant. In 2018 Ringwood Waldorf School opened 'Little Kindergarten' for the younger 3 year olds. This gives a gentle preparation to Kindergarten life.

We strive to give each child the best possible start in life and the individual support that enables them to unfold their potential, as well as providing a solid foundation step for all their future learning. The foundation skills in literacy and numeracy are laid through an environment rich in hands on activity and play and where language and communication are enabled through a rich oral tradition. Formal learning of the three R's does not feature in the Steiner Early Childhood curriculum in the belief that a child will learn these skills more effectively if he/she has had plenty of time and opportunity to develop socially, emotionally and physically first in a creative, secure, enabling and harmonious environment.

The Kindergarten day follows a predictable pattern, alternating child-led time with a teacher-led activity. The day includes a period of free play which could take place inside or out, and alongside a particular activity such as baking, painting, handicraft. The day flows with regular and repetitive activity, such as circle time, which includes songs and rhythmical verses, music and movement. The snack, prepared by adults and children is shared together around the table, where the mood is relaxed and social. Other activities include painting, drawing, crafts and the domestic arts such as cooking, baking, cleaning and care for self and others. The tradition of oral storytelling and puppetry are a part of the morning. The strong sense of routine enables the child knows what to expect and fosters a sense of security.

Very careful consideration is also given to the impact of everything in the Kindergarten environment upon all the senses of a young child. There are no 'hard' corners, no strong colours and all the furniture and toys are made of natural materials, as is some of the equipment like beeswax crayons and sheep's fleece. Our Kindergarten has a protected and safe natural outdoor area. The festivals, seasonal and cultural, are celebrated, and often parents are invited to participate in them and other events in the Kindergarten.

The Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Birth – 5 years, applies to all settings including ours. It sets out both learning and development requirements and safeguarding and welfare requirements for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. You can find out more about how we meet the requirements of the EYFS in *the EYFS/Steiner Interpretation and Read-over and other documents* which you will find in the kindergarten. You can also find a *Parent's guide to the EYFS* on the government website <http://www.foundationyears.org.uk>

Because there are some differences between EYFS requirements and Steiner Waldorf early childhood principles and practice, we have received some 'Exemptions and Modifications' to the EYFS Learning and Development requirements and Assessment regulations under the 'Established Principles' route. These are mostly to do with the introduction and in some cases formal teaching of reading, writing, mathematics and use of IT/media and electronics. This was agreed by the Secretary of State on the grounds that Steiner kindergartens cannot meet these EYFS requirements without compromising their ethos and practice. There is of course no exemption from the safeguarding and welfare requirements. A

list of *Exemptions and Modifications* can be found in *appendix 1* and are available to view in the Kindergarten.

Key Person Statement

In the Kindergarten, the overall Key Person role (See EYFS 1.11) is held by the kindergarten teacher, who has the overview of all the children in their group. It is the kindergarten teacher who will write up the assessments, reports and feedback to parents. We are aware that in order to properly meet the individual needs of each child, and to properly observe and assess their learning and development, each key person should be attentive to around 8-10 children in the group. Therefore the kindergarten assistant or other adult may be given a key person role in respect of certain children in the group, and they will share information with the kindergarten teacher on a regular basis. We will share with parents should a specific person other than the kindergarten teacher take on that role.

Curriculum

The Early Years curriculum supports and values the benefits of an unfettered childhood. The children are not rushed or over-stimulated and are allowed space to develop physical coordination and personal, social and cognitive skills. The focus is on child-led play with simple props to encourage creativity, ingenuity and problem solving skills. For example a block of wood can be a ship, a telephone, or a loaf of bread.

Free play is interwoven with more structured, hands-on activities with an emphasis on domestic, artistic and craft activities to emulate a lively extended family where children can learn through imitation – the easiest and most natural way for the young child to learn. They sing, paint, draw and move to music. They listen to stories told by the teacher, create puppet shows and little plays; bake, grind flour and help prepare their daily snack. They plant and harvest and tend the gardens; weave, sew and use simple tools. Festivals, so significant in creating community, are a major part of kindergarten life, with parents joining in the celebration. The patterns and routines of the day run through the week and the year and many of the activities following the cycle of the seasons and the celebration of festivals.

The Early Years curriculum is based on the understanding that

- imitation and activity are the young child's natural way of learning;
- activities aim to develop gross motor skills, speech, awareness of others and self-regulation;
- collaboration in play, the sharing of food and other activities promote social development;
- experiencing the natural world and sharing responsibility for such things as the care of their environment, for cleaning and tidying and for the preparation of food fosters responsibility, respect and self-reliance;
- participation in the celebration of festivals inspires a sense of awe and reverence.

The Early Years curriculum includes the following foundations for effective learning:

- pre-literacy: songs, rhymes, stories, social engagement through play and at snack time, mark making and emergent, reading the pictures in books;
- gross motor skills: in dance and movement, outdoor play;
- fine motor skills: in play, sewing, finger knitting, baking, painting, drawing;
- pre-numeracy skills: counting songs, counting and measuring opportunities in play and snack preparation, exploring shape and numbers in drawing, crafts and play;
- science: experiencing nature in the outdoors, nature table, seasonal songs and verses, food preparation and seasonal cooking, colour spectrum through painting;
- technology: the use of simple hand tools in craft, woodwork and cookery;
- art: painting, drawing, model making;

- music: daily singing, use of instruments;
- eurythmy: weekly specialist led eurythmy sessions.
- pupils will be taught about online safety through storytelling and parental support

5-7 Curriculum

Children over 5 years old are of statutory school age, and should be attending kindergarten full time (in full time education). We recognise that they need a more challenging experience, including raised expectations from the adults in the setting, and a programme of work appropriate to their age (Key Stage 1 in other school settings). In a Steiner school 'formal education' begins in Class 1 at age 6-7 years. While there will be some activities and projects especially focused on these older children, it is the new expectations of the staff relating to how the older children collaborate and contribute in a more structured and reliable way to the kindergarten community which is vital. Teachers expect the children to show good progress. They provide support as children build on what they already know and can do, and take on progressive new tasks and challenges.

We have collated all of this into curriculum documents for those children of statutory school age which shows progression from the EYFS, differentiation, what we expect of the older children and what and how they will learn through the curriculum provided. The documents describing the curriculum for this age can be found in *appendix 2* and are available to view in the Kindergarten.

Parents will be kept informed of their child's developmental progress throughout their time in the kindergarten and will be asked to contribute to the observations and information about their child. (See child profiles for observations and assessment).

Kindergarten Policies and Documents

KG Behaviour Policy
(includes Anti-bullying, sexualised behaviour)
KG Sickness, Disease & Infection Control Policy
KG Intimate Care Policy (including nappies and toileting)
KG Off-site Walks Policy
KG Lost Child Policy
KG Safety and Security Inside and Outside
KG English as an Alternative Language Document
KG Keeping Children Safe Online Letter

Whole School Policies applying to KG

RWS Site Security
RWS Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
RWS Peer-on-peer abuse Policy & Procedures
RWS Health & Safety Policy and Handbook
RWS First Aid Policy and Procedures
RWS Supporting Children with Medical Conditions and Administering Medication
RWS Attendance and Punctuality Policy
RWS Late and Non-Collection Policy
RWS Fire Safety and Emergency Plan
RWS Whistleblowing Policy
RWS Equal Opportunities Policy
RWS Complaints and Conciliation Policy
RWS Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices