



ROYAL MILE PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAY AND LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Created: March 2026

Next Review Date: March 2028

1. RATIONALE

PRINCIPLES OF OUR CURRICULUM

The curriculum is 'the totality of all that is planned for children throughout their education.' (Building the Curriculum 3). It includes:

- the ethos and life of the school (including nursery)
- the eight curricular areas: Expressive Arts, Literacy, Health and Wellbeing, Mathematics and Numeracy, Religious and Moral Education, Sciences, Social Studies and Technologies (Early Level, Curriculum for Excellence)
- inter-disciplinary learning through experiential play
- opportunities for personal achievement within and out with school

Our curriculum rationale is articulated from our ongoing self-evaluation. Through asking, 'What do we want for our children?' and 'What are we going to do to achieve it?' We are bringing into focus our pedagogical aims.

2. Our Vision, values and Aims

OUR VISION



Our Vision

'We **SMILE** at Royal Mile because we **respect** ourselves, others and our world'.



We use Realising the Ambition, the CFE Early Level Es and Os and Benchmarks, local guidance and current research to inform our pedagogy, practice and provision. We are committed to upholding children's rights to play and learn and to ensuring our vision becomes reality for all our learners.

Our Values

We are;

Successful

Multicultural

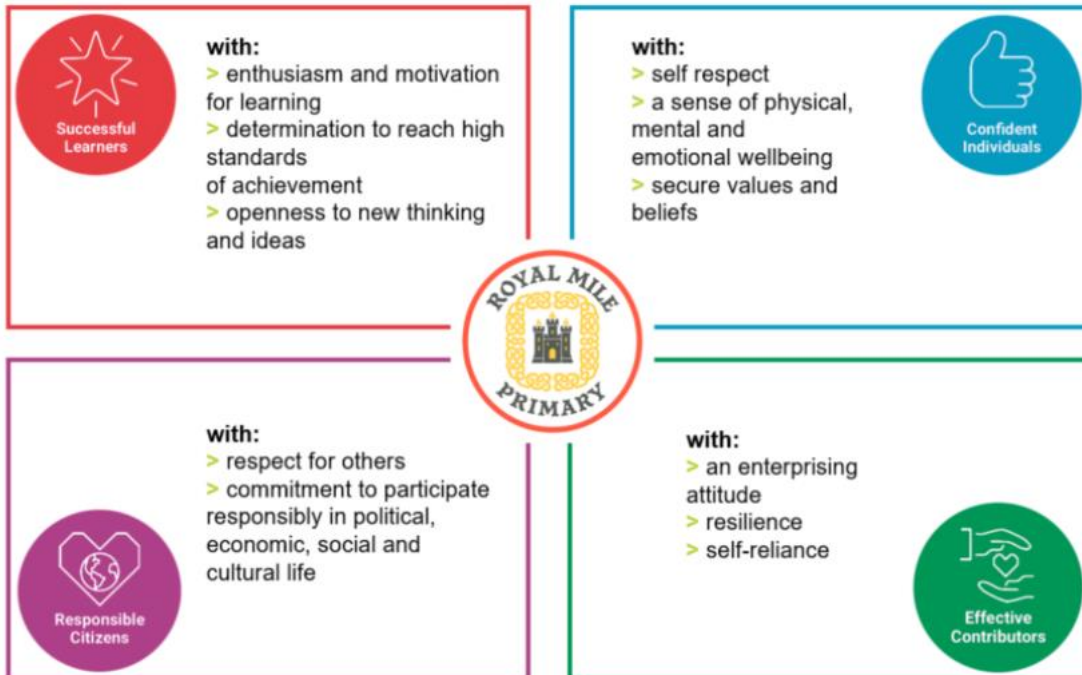
Included

Loved

Empowered



We aim for all learners to develop the capacity to become



3. CURRICULUM

THE PURPOSE OF THE CURRICULUM

The purpose of the curriculum is to develop children's capacity to become:

Successful learners with

- *enthusiasm and motivation for learning*
- *determination to reach high standards of achievement*
- *openness of new thinking and ideas*

Successful learners learning through play

'Through using their imagination and creativity, tackling new experiences and learning from them, and developing important skills including literacy and numeracy through exploring and investigation while following their own interests and identifying and working on their targets in play.'

Confident Individuals with

- *self-respect*
- *a sense of physical, mental and emotional wellbeing*
- *secure values and beliefs*

Confident Individuals learning through play

'Through succeeding in their activities, having the satisfaction of a task accomplished, learning about bouncing back from setbacks, and dealing safely with risk.'

Responsible Citizens with

- *respect for others*
- *commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life*

Responsible citizens learning through play

'Through encountering different ways of seeing the world, earning to share and give and take, learning to respect themselves and others, and taking part in making decisions.'

Effective Contributors

with

- *an enterprising attitude*
- *resilience*
- *self-reliance*

Effective contributors learning through play:

'Through playing together in leading or supporting roles, tackling problems, extending communication skills, taking part in sustained talking and thinking, and respecting the opinions of others.'

PLAY

Our curriculum is firmly rooted in play and is highly responsive. We have structured our day to ensure that there are long periods to allow play to develop and learning to deepen. All staff have a very good understanding of how children learn and develop and use this daily as they interact with children and plan for their learning. They also have a good knowledge of national curriculum guidance and under the leadership of promoted staff, use this to plan and evaluate learning experiences. Adults and children work together to co-construct the learning and environment, children's voice is captured and utilised, staff know children well and use this knowledge when interacting with children in play, to effectively support and extend their learning.

LITERACY

Our Literacy learning is delivered through the Literacy Rich Programme. In Primary 1 we focus on Blocks 1, 2 and 3, with one block taught each term to ensure progression, consolidation and depth of learning.

Throughout all blocks, teacher input is carefully planned to introduce, model and reinforce key literacy concepts. This includes focused sessions on initial sounds, where children receive both whole-class teaching and targeted group interventions. These interventions offer revision or initial exposure to sounds, supporting children at their individual stage of development.

Across the learning environment, children encounter a wide range of mark-making opportunities, embedded intentionally in all areas of play. Whether indoors or outdoors, materials and provocations encourage children to explore writing for purpose, experiment with symbols, and develop fine-motor control in meaningful contexts. A literacy-rich environment underpins all provision.

Print, labels, story prompts, displays and high-quality texts are woven through play spaces to immerse children in language and support early reading behaviours. Weekly visits to the school library further strengthen children's engagement with books, offering regular opportunities to borrow, explore and enjoy stories with their families. We ensure texts reflect the diversity of the children in the classroom. This integrated approach ensures that literacy learning is active, playful and responsive, enabling children to develop confidence and competence as early readers and writers.

NUMERACY

Play is at the heart of our numeracy and mathematics curriculum, ensuring children develop early mathematical understanding through meaningful, hands-on experiences. Daily SEAL sessions provide quick, individual check-ins on key skills such as counting forwards and backwards, number recognition, and early calculation strategies. These assessments inform next steps and allow staff to tailor support responsively. Our structured teaching follows the CEC progression pathways, delivered through planned blocks of numeracy and mathematics across the year. Each block builds on prior learning, offering clear progression while allowing children to revisit and consolidate concepts through guided teaching and playful exploration.

Mathematical thinking is intentionally embedded within play opportunities across the environment. Children encounter number, pattern, shape, measure and capacity in authentic contexts—for example, comparing quantities in the water tray, exploring balance and weight in construction, or using informal units to measure during role play. These experiences allow children to apply taught skills independently, make connections, and develop confidence as young mathematicians. This integrated approach ensures that numeracy and mathematics are not isolated lessons, but a continuous, playful thread woven throughout the day, supporting deep, meaningful learning.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Health and wellbeing is embedded throughout our curriculum, ensuring children feel safe, connected and ready to learn. Each day begins with a morning welcome, providing predictable, nurturing interactions that help children settle and build strong relationships. Consistent routines throughout the day support security and independence, while our Buddies system strengthens social confidence and peer support. Across the year, children experience planned blocks of direct teaching aligned with our yearly Health and Wellbeing plan. These include PE, Emotions Talks, RSHP, Zones of Regulation, Building Resilience and shared nurturing snack experiences. These sessions introduce key concepts explicitly, which children then explore and apply naturally throughout their time in class. The learning environment is designed to promote emotional safety and self-regulation. A dedicated calm area, co-created with the children, offers a quiet, comforting space for reflection or rest. Individual needs are supported through regulation activities, such as personalised lunch arrangements or access to a calm box, helping children recognise and manage their emotions. Our use of the Visual Support Project enhances independence and reduces cognitive load. Room visuals, clear timetables, and consistent visual cues help children understand expectations, navigate transitions, and communicate their needs confidently. Through this integrated approach, health and wellbeing become a continuous thread woven through play, relationships and environment—supporting every child to feel secure, regulated and ready to thrive.

OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING IN NATURE

Outdoor learning is a core part of our curriculum, offering rich, playful experiences that deepen children's understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. In Terms 1 and 4, children engage in planned Outdoor Learning Blocks with a focus on exploring emotions and colours, understanding safety and rule-following, and investigating living things in their natural environment. These blocks provide structured opportunities for discovery while allowing children to learn through curiosity, movement and imaginative play. Our outdoor provision also supports children in developing a sense of global responsibility. Through playful, hands-on experiences linked to the Global Goals, children learn about caring for the planet, with a particular emphasis on reduce, reuse, recycle. Activities such as sorting materials, repurposing loose parts, and caring for outdoor spaces help children build early environmental awareness in meaningful, age-appropriate ways.

Children regularly take part in trips that make the most of the amazing amenities around us on the Royal Mile. From outdoor learning in Holyrood Park to museums such as the National Museum of Scotland and Museum on the Mound. Exploring these experiences help

children connect with their community and develop curiosity through real life learning opportunities.

CREATIVITY

Creativity is a core element of our curriculum and one of our celebrated Learning Heroes, recognised and encouraged through clear success criteria that help children understand what creative thinking and expression look like in practice. Play is the primary vehicle through which creativity is nurtured, allowing children to explore ideas, experiment with materials and develop confidence in their own imaginative capabilities. Across the environment, children have daily access to block play, art resources, loose parts, and cardboard play, enabling open-ended exploration and problem-solving. These materials support children to design, build, represent and invent, fostering flexible thinking and resilience. Our house corner is intentionally resourced with loose parts, fabrics and open-ended materials, encouraging children to create narratives, roles and scenarios that evolve through collaborative play. Creativity is also embedded through planned experiences across the curriculum, ensuring it is not confined to one area but woven throughout learning. Using rich texts such as the “It’s not a box” and “Oi Frog” book series, bring joy and humour to inspire creativity. Approaches such the “we are” display series emphasise collective identity, shared storytelling and the co-creation of ideas, helping children see themselves as active contributors to the learning community. This integrated approach ensures that creativity is not an isolated skill but a continuous, playful thread running through every aspect of the curriculum—supporting children to think imaginatively, express themselves freely and approach challenges with curiosity and confidence.

RICH REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES

Real-life experiences are a vital part of our play-based curriculum, helping children make meaningful connections between their learning and the world around them. Daily routines such as nurturing snacks provide opportunities for social interaction, independence and healthy habits, all embedded within a warm, relational environment. Children engage in a wide range of community-based experiences, including visits to the Edinburgh Science Festival, local picnics, the Museum on the Mound, the National Museum of Scotland, and regular local walks. These outings enrich play by offering authentic contexts for curiosity, exploration and problem-solving, allowing children to bring new knowledge back into their classroom play. Real-life learning continues through Food Technology, where children take part in shopping, food preparation and cooking activities. These experiences build practical skills, early numeracy, language development and confidence, all within playful, hands-on contexts. Our Everywhere Bear further strengthens home–school connections. Each week, a child takes home the bear and accompanying diary, sharing real-life experiences with their family and bringing these stories back into class to inspire play, talk and writing. Throughout the year, children also participate in special events such as a Ceilidh, Author Visit, meeting a Commonwealth gymnast, our Assembly Showcase, the Nativity, and Stay and Play sessions with families. These experiences celebrate community, culture and creativity, giving children rich material to explore through imaginative play. Together, these opportunities ensure that real-life learning is not occasional but a continuous, playful thread woven through the curriculum—helping children understand themselves, their community and the wider world.