



Our Early Years Provision

Reggio Emilia inspired practice

The child



Positive relationships
with parents



The teacher and the
environment



Aims	Our practice
A shared image of the child	We spend time coming to a shared understanding of our image of each child in regular meetings, transition days and communication with parents. We regularly share up to date information about each individual child's interests, and this provokes learning projects and opportunities. We contribute and build on their 'learning profile', regularly documenting experiences with photographs and observations of their work, thoughts and ideas to pass on and build on with all future key adults on their learning journey within our school.
Positive relationships with parents	We show parents that we value them and their contribution in their child's learning journey through joint contribution to online journals, home-link books and 'stay & play' sessions. We include parents in termly planning sessions and invite them in regularly to work on shared projects with their child. We create an environment where there is constant dialogue between parents and teachers and where they are welcome as partners in their child's learning journey.
Relationships with the community	We understand our place in the community and we help children become aware of this through powerful purposeful projects. We hold regular 'stay and play' sessions to invite new parents and younger members of the community into our setting. We organise and support parent working parties, parent workshops and grandparent lunches, so that they may be involved in their child's learning community. Our children know and understand the community they live in and understand their valuable place within society, regularly contributing to community events and supporting others.
Creativity	We give children enough time and opportunity to develop their creative expression across all areas of learning. This demonstrates that we value the different 'languages' of expression that children use. Children's work in progress is well presented and displayed. Natural resources and our outdoor spaces encourage creativity and expression. We encourage, and manage, opportunities for risk and challenge.
Environment	Every space has a purpose and it is clear why each space is arranged the way it is. The environment is the third teacher and we often change the layout of our room to reflect the changing interests and needs of our children. Children have lots of opportunities to experience textures, smells and sounds. We make good use of learning opportunities outdoors, including forest school sessions, and in all weathers.
Time	Each day has a pattern to enable routine, which is flexible enough to give children enough uninterrupted time to become involved in activities that interest them. Children can return to 'work in progress' later in the day. We encourage children to spend time thinking about what they have done and we help them remember things that have happened. We spend time on planning and carrying out long-term projects to help children refine their ideas and consolidate their learning.
Teaching & Learning	We give children lots of opportunities to develop their ideas and knowledge about the world around them. We value asking questions, having conversations and listening to other points of view. We plan to ensure that we follow children's interest and build on what they know.
Documenting children's learning	Our use of 'Tapestry' enables us to focus closely on the process of learning. We pay attention to, and record, the detail of children's interactions, capturing the exact words the children use to describe their thoughts and ideas. We use this to celebrate children's learning and help parents feel connected with their child's learning.
Reflective Practice	All staff make time to share and discuss observations, and we view ourselves as active learners. Ongoing professional development is part of the culture in our setting and we value time to network and share best practice with other schools and professionals to enhance our provision.

The Importance of Parents

Parents are the child's first teacher. In the process of learning, the teachers, parents and child are viewed as collaborators. In the Reggio approach the parent is viewed as an essential resource to the child's learning.

A network of communication exists between the children, parents and teachers of Reggio. These three protagonists work together to create the spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and co-construction of knowledge. They work together, interacting toward a common purpose: the building of a culture which respects childhood as a time to explore, create and be joyful. The exchange of ideas between parents and teachers is vital in creating a more positive and productive learning environment.

Teachers take into account the needs and desires of the parents and strive to help them in bettering their child's education. Parents are welcomed into school to work with their children on termly projects and networking with other parents and are supported by our school community.

Community

Relationships in the community are an important role in children's education. They present unique knowledge in various cultures, special talents, intergenerational relationships, and a sense of belonging.

Reggio schools were founded and supported by a community that wanted to provide a new way of learning for children. Reggio inspired schools still maintain that tradition by creating an environment where there is constant dialogue between parents, teachers, and the community. There is an expectation that teachers are active participants within the community and work to provide community members with information and updates of what is occurring within the classroom. Community celebrations, lunches and workshops cement this bond.

The Image of the Child

When learning is the product of the child's guided construction rather than simply the teacher's transmission and the child's absorption, learning becomes individualized. Most important, teaching becomes a two-way relationship in which the teacher's understanding of the child is just as important as the child's understanding of the teacher.

The Reggio philosophy sees children full of potential, competent, curious, capable of long term sustained learning (Project work) when it is a topic they are interested in. Children construct their own knowledge through a carefully planned curriculum that engages and builds upon the child's current knowledge, recognising that knowledge cannot simply be provided for the child. The curriculum, often emergent in nature, is based on the interests of the children. Work is presented and appreciated. By documenting the children's work through photographs, video, written word, displays, etc., teachers tell the story of the children's experiences.

Every child has their own portfolio, using Tapestry, consisting of artwork, photographs, information related to developmental milestones and more. Lesson plans, project boards and 'daily highlights' explain the work of the children, and communicate the life of the school to the community at-large. This is valued and built on throughout the child's time at school.

Participation begins even before the children have started school, through a comprehensive transition programme. Parent contact is gradually reduced so that the child gains confidence in the new environment. The integration period is considered extremely important, not only for the child but also for parents and teachers, as it is at this stage **that a relationship of collaboration and trust is built.**

The Curriculum:

There is a big difference between what a child is capable of doing and what a child is willing to do. You cannot teach someone who does not want to learn or someone who does not believe he or she can learn. If we want to promote the hunger for learning, then we should create environments in which students and teachers feel safe to venture beyond what is already known—environments that reflect our values and celebrate students and teachers as uniquely creative individuals.

Alongside explicit teaching of key skills such as phonics and maths, staff deliver an emergent curriculum through project work. Project work gives children an opportunity to discover and explore an area of interest in detail. Project based work may last a day, a week, a month, or even longer as long as the children have an interest in the topic. Teachers are thoughtful about introducing a broad range of opportunities, from art, to music, to early language, maths, science and nature experiences, in support of the project. By exploring projects of the children's interest in great detail, children are excited by the learning experiences. This enthusiasm for knowledge, combined with the ability to experience project work in detail, will foster a predisposition for "life-long" learning.

The Environment

The Reggio Emilia belief is that the environment acts as the third teacher in a child's learning. Children need to be in beautiful, open, orderly spaces where materials in the space have a purpose. The environment changes and develops throughout the year responsive to the needs and interests of the child. Each learning space should stimulate exploration, engagement, discovery, curiosity, and a sense of wonder. The Reggio Emilia philosophy also has an emphasis on nature. Elements of nature are brought into the classroom and the outside environment is as important as the classroom. Children regularly learn in our Forest school.

Staff as active researches and networkers.

Once a week, teachers are given time to come together as a group so that they can share their analyses and hypotheses with the rest of the staff. The key to these meetings is dialogue. As with the children they teach, conflict of ideas and opinions is considered to be not only a positive contributor to learning but also a fundamental factor. Project work is discussed and there is a continual exchange of reflections and of opinions.

No way. The Hundred is there

The child is made of one hundred.

The child has a hundred languages, a hundred hands, a hundred thoughts, a hundred ways of thinking of playing, of speaking.

A hundred. Always a hundred ways of listening of marveling, of loving, a hundred joys for singing and understanding, a hundred worlds to discover, a hundred worlds to invent, a hundred worlds to dream.

The child has a hundred languages (and a hundred hundred hundred more) but they steal ninety-nine. The school and the culture separate the head from the body.

They tell the child: to think without hands, to do without head, to listen and not to speak, to understand without joy, to love and to marvel only at Easter and at Christmas.

They tell the child: to discover the world already there and of the hundred they steal ninety-nine. They tell the child that work and play reality and fantasy science and imagination sky and earth reason and dream are things that do not belong together. And thus they tell the child that the hundred is not there.

The child says: No way. The hundred is there.

Loris Malaguzzi (founder of the Reggio Emilia approach)

