



Policy for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Introduction

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage September 2014

This policy sets out the aims and objectives of the Foundation Stage at Shaftesbury Primary School.

Within this document, the term Early Years Foundation Stage is used to describe children who are in Nursery and Reception classes.

Aims

We have agreed to adopt the principles from the EYFS statutory framework 2014:

- Effective education requires both a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements
- Effective education requires practitioners who understand that children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially
- Practitioners should ensure equality of opportunity and that all children feel included, secure, valued and supported
- Early years’ experience should build on what children already know and can do, ensuring individual interests and needs are met

- Parents and practitioners should work in partnership in an atmosphere where there is mutual respect
- To be effective, an early years curriculum should reflect quality and consistency, being carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need; indoors and outdoors)
- There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan or initiate themselves. Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children informed by a knowledge of how children develop and learn
- Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process
- For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised
- Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires provision of high quality care and education by practitioners

Objectives

To achieve our aims we will:-

- Provide a stimulating, interesting environment which encourages learning through play and exploration, using all the senses
- Provide high quality teaching and facilitate high quality learning through exciting, first hand experiences
- Value and build on previous experiences
- Allow time for children to produce work of depth and quality
- Acknowledge that how children learn is as important as the content taught
- Provide a foundation for developing positive attitudes towards learning new skills ("I Can")
- Celebrate achievements in and outside of the class
- Deliver the curriculum using a variety of teaching strategies and cater for a variety of learning styles

- Use ongoing formative assessments to inform next steps that children require and to track individual progress
- Ensure assessment methods are succinct and ensure that opportunities for interaction between adults and children are maximised
- Ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements are met for all children

How our work is organised and planned

Arrangements for admission to Shaftesbury Nursery School are:

Parents are encouraged to apply for a place for their child by their second birthday.

Initially places are offered to children as soon as they are three years old.

Application forms for admission are available from the school office.

The school has adopted an Admissions Policy for the Nursery (Please see Appendix 1).

Admissions into Reception are dealt with by the LEA. The school support parents in meeting deadline dates and ensuring applications get sent on time for pupils who are currently on role in our nursery.

Session times & Behaviour

All children must be accompanied to and from school by an adult. No child is to be left unattended by their supervising adult until the teachers enter the playground with their TA and escort them into the building. At the end of the day once the teachers have handed over the child to the parent they are directly responsible even when on school premises.

Children are only released at the end of the day to a relative/carer or known adult. In the event that an adult who is unknown to the teacher collects a child their individual password will be requested prior to the child being released. We also encourage parents to send in a note that morning to let us know in advance if a child will be collected by somebody different that day.

For Nursery the morning session begins at 8.50am and ends at 11.50am and the afternoon session begins at 12.30pm and ends at 3.30pm. This ensures both sessions are equitable in time.

Session times may be adjusted at any time to suit the needs of a particular child and in consultation with staff and parents. This may also be to aid transition from one environment to another and where the child has not yet reached school age of five years. A reduced session may also be applied to safeguard the needs of a particular child or those within the setting where it is deemed a significant risk applies. This would be a temporary measure until advice is sought from outside professionals who may offer advice on further support and intervention required. The school will keep a regular log of behaviour (the key worker may be responsible for this if they have been assigned) and the school will also offer families additional support where appropriate or as requested.

For Reception, staff are out in the playground and available from 8.50am with the day officially beginning at 8.55am. Lunch time is 11.45pm to 12:45pm. The day ends at 3.15pm. In the first half of the autumn term Reception children are taken up for lunch 15 minutes early at 11.30 am to settle them before other children enter. Nursery children are offered milk and fruit during their sessions.

Reception children are offered fruit during the day free of charge and also have the option to purchase, at a minimal cost, additional fruit and juice at playtime. We encourage parents/carers to pay on a weekly basis.

We provide a hot, lunchtime meal for children in Reception. All school lunches are currently free of charge for every child.

Children may bring a packed lunch. We promote a healthy eating ethos within the school and advice on contents is available from staff.

Organisation of classes:

Children enter the Nursery once they are three and remain there until they enter Reception. After a child's fourth birthday they will transfer to one of the three Reception class the following September. There is only one intake in September and children will have their 5th birthday in that year.

In circumstances where a child is born after 30th June, parents have the option to withhold the starting date for school until the following September. The school must be informed in writing prior to the admissions list being sent out.

All groups are supervised at all times by at least two trained members of staff.

Small groups working with students, volunteers or parent helpers are always supervised by members of staff.

Outdoor play:

The outdoor play space is securely fenced and provides an ideal, safe, play space where children can develop their physical skills and learn to share with others in structured and informal play.

Outdoor activities are planned with, and are given as much thought and importance as the indoor activities - in accordance with the EYFS framework. All children are encouraged to participate in outdoor and physical activity daily. Outdoor provision encompasses all strands of the EYFS framework and curriculum.

Outdoor play is a very important part of children's development. Children will go outside to participate in all weathers and parents will need to ensure that they are suitably dressed. During off site visits or trips parents will be informed of additional requirements for clothing that is needed in advance such as wellington boots for trips to the park in winter.

Whole school activities:

The Nursery and Reception classes join together for some assemblies and school events later in the year and when it is appropriate.

The Reception classes begin to participate in assemblies later on in the Autumn term.

Children have access to the school library, PE equipment, the Eco garden, a range of ICT equipment and cooking facilities.

Information for Parents and Carers, and Opportunities for them to join our activities.

The following information is provided for parents:

Before admission to EYFS:

"Information for Parents" is a booklet (Appendix 2) provided for parents who are interested in applying for a place at our school. The prospectus contains information about our Early Years provision. Parents are also welcome to make an appointment for a tour around the school prior to their application for a place at the school.

Each parent has a meeting with the Early Years co-ordinator before their child is admitted. They will also be invited for 'stay and play' sessions with their Early Years providers or parents in the summer before starting school. This may also include an invitation for lunch in order to aid transition into a new setting.

Once the children are settled in the Nursery and Reception parents are invited in for sessions with their children in order to promote various aspects of the curriculum such as reading, phonics and mathematical development. These will be organised according to specific needs within the cohort but usually commence at the start of the spring term. These usually start with one session a week, first thing in the morning so that parents can accompany their children into class for a short time.

Information on emergency contacts and medical conditions must be provided prior to the child starting school. This will include a child's NHS red book for nursery admissions which must be presented during interview. This information is regularly exchanged throughout the year so any changes can be updated. Passwords are held for all pupils in the EYFS for added security. A child will not be released unless we have been given prior warning such as a written note or telephone call along with the password being given on collection.

After admission:

In Reception children will begin the year with two weeks of half day provision in order to assist their transition to full time school. This enables the teaching staff to also have smaller groups so they can assess the children's starting points and get to know them well. Each child will be either allocated a morning or afternoon session and be able to stay for lunch together on the second week.

Children who start our school as mid-phase entries, have a 2-week settling in period which may be flexible and adjusted to their needs. Parents are encouraged to join educational visits within the community. Parents are encouraged to share their skills and interests with the children. They will be encouraged to come into school and join parent time sessions for reading and other activities. Open afternoons are also held during the year. We aim to ensure that parents and carers have a good understanding of the curriculum that their children will be part of and methods used in school in order to maintain consistency between the two settings. Teachers will often showcase phonics and numeracy teaching for this purpose. Curriculum documents and newsletters are also displayed for parents to read on the school website.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

What will the children be learning and when? How is the curriculum organised? What is the progression of teaching and learning?

The term curriculum is used to describe everything children experience in their setting, both planned and unplanned.

The curriculum for the early years forms the first stage of our whole school curriculum. It includes opportunities for:

- Playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’ approach
- Active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

The **EYFS framework** aims to make a number of improvements:

- Reducing bureaucracy for professionals, simplifying the statutory assessment of children’s development at age five.
- Simplifying the learning and development requirements by reducing the number of early learning goals from 69 to 17.

- Stronger emphasis on the three prime areas which are most essential for children's healthy development and well being. These three areas are: Communication and Language; Physical Development; and Personal, Social and Emotional Development.
- For parents, a new progress check at age two on their child's development. This links with the Healthy Child review carried out by health visitors, so that children get any additional support they need before they start school. (Parents are requested to bring this evidence and their child's development book to the pre-interview meeting prior to starting school. This is in order to ascertain a child's particular needs and ensure that they are met once starting school.)
- Strengthening partnerships between professionals and parents, ensuring that the new framework uses clear language.

There are seven areas of learning and this is what is reflected within the Foundation Stage setting.

These areas can overlap which allow children to make meaningful connections which they can apply to self-directed and adult focus learning opportunities. It is through providing high quality provision that children will thrive, being self-motivated and fully engaged in real learning which fosters positive relationships and progression.

The prime areas are:

Communication and Language

Listening and attention, understanding and speaking.

Physical Development

Moving and handling, health and self-care

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-confidence and self-awareness, managing feelings and behaviour, making relationships

The specific areas are:

Literacy

Reading and writing

Mathematics

Numbers, shape, space and measures

Understanding the World

People and communities, the world, technology

Expressive Arts and Design

Exploring and using media and materials, being imaginative

Our curriculum is planned through a series of themes and topics, each of which offer experiences in all seven areas.

Our planning covers themes (over about half a term) and core aspects (such as book experience, outside play activities, free exploration of natural materials and opportunities for early mark making which leads on to a more formal writing style when a child is ready). We also take part in whole-school special themed weeks across the year. We strive to ensure that the Characteristics of Effective Learning (COEL) are enabled by offering high quality resources that are well organised and accessible to all. The themes can be accessed on the Parent Notice board or via the EYFS Newsletter.

Teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants plan together to provide a linked series of activities over each term, week and day.

We plan a mixture of directed and free choice activities and children's choices are carefully recorded to ensure a balanced programme. We also repeat more structured activities that have been guided by adults in groups during the morning so that children may respond to them with their own initiative independently in the afternoon.

We regularly use our observations to plan activities that are child initiated and child led. We understand the importance of planning from the children's own interests and use our observations to enable us to do so.

Children newly admitted have free choice of activities during most of the session for a settling in period. This free programme is gradually directed by staff as children settle in to their new environment, so that as they approach transfer to Reception and Key Stage 1, they are prepared well for the transition.

Children entering YR 1 continue their EYFS learning journey where necessary to ensure all Early Learning Goals are met by the end of the Autumn term. Effective transition is of paramount importance to us in order to promote rapid progress and ensure a secure and happy environment for all pupils. Children who do not achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception Year are highlighted to their Year One teachers so that they build on their existing skills and ensure no gaps are presented. Equally, transition meetings will take place where all pupils requirements are discussed.

Parental Involvement

Parents are partners in children's learning. We value their opinions and the information they can give us to gain the widest picture of the whole child and their capabilities. We endeavour to involve them as much as possible.

Information for parents is included in the 'starting school' booklet (See Appendix 3 and school website). The following opportunities for contacts with parents are:

- Parenting classes and other training
- Support for bi-lingual families and those who do not speak English
- Support and advice for parents of children with special needs
- Parent help in school activities
- Parental involvement in homework activities such as shared reading
- Parent time in the nursery and in Reception weekly
- Open afternoon sessions
- Child profiles are available to parents at all times.
- Parents are invited to contribute to their child's profile through the use of 'Golden books' and 'Wow moment' slips
- Our family support worker is available for meetings and works with families to support them in a variety of ways

- Daily opportunities to speak before and after school with teachers and teacher assistants who are outside in the playground.

Assessment and record keeping

How do we know how well the children are doing? Baselines, assessment, recording, reports, records of achievement, moderation, portfolios

Assessment procedures

We use the EYFS framework and national baseline procedures. We use the Development Matters framework as a basis for assessing and tracking within Child Profiles which is also based on the EYFS framework.

Our assessment procedures are:

All evidence is collected through regular observations.

- i) Evidence is collected on a daily basis using '2simpleprofile' software. Also samples of work are placed into the child's 'special book' in the Nursery which the children use regularly as part of our AFL routine.
- ii) After 15 sessions in the nursery the child's outline baseline measure is taken and added to profiles. Each child will have an assessment profile with a tracker and this will start to be highlighted and inform individual target setting. Targets will be displayed and changed half termly in each classroom of the EYFS including the nursery. When these are achieved they will be dated and added to profiles or special books. They will encompass all areas of the curriculum but focus particularly on the Prime areas in the nursery.

The children's profiles are added to regularly by key workers once these are appointed to individual pupils. During the first half term staff concentrate on building relationships with all children and only later in the Autumn are these appointed based on careful observations of how children communicate and respond to individual

staff. In Reception children's progress is formally assessed termly where ongoing profile evidence contributes to judgements. Final assessments in Reception are carried out in the final term alongside the EYFS lead practitioner.

Equal Opportunities/Special Educational Needs.

All children are given equal access to all areas of the curriculum, regardless of race, gender, religion and home language. Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Need will have a Learning Support Assistant and an Individual Education Plan in place.

Review and Evaluation

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This policy will be reviewed/updated in July 2018