



Shawlands Primary School

Policy

Early Years Policy
REVIEWED ANNUALLY

Reviewed: Autumn 2020

SHAWLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL
Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Statement

“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
Department for Education 2012*

At Shawlands Primary School we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development; however we also see this stage as important in its own right.

The EYFS caters for children from three to five years of age. At Shawlands Nursery children join in the term after their third birthday. We offer both 15hrs and 30 hrs places.

At Shawlands Primary School children join the school as full time pupils in September working in FS2. This is also referred to as their Reception year.

Aims

It is every child’s right to grow up safe, healthy and enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic well-being. We aim to help all our children, including our youngest children, achieve this, supported by EYFS.

Principles

The Early Years education we offer is based on the following principles from the EYFS, which are grouped into four distinct yet complementary themes. These four themes are further explored throughout the policy.

- **A unique child**
Recognising that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- **Positive relationships**
Recognising that children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person; we are keen to promote positive relationships between adults and children in the school, and between the children themselves.
- **Enabling environments**
Recognising that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning; we want the learning environment to promote a positive attitude to learning.
- **Learning and developing**
Recognising that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates

A UNIQUE CHILD

Child Development

We recognise children develop in their individual ways and at varying rates. We place equal importance on every area of development: physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social and emotional.

Inclusive Practice

We believe that every child matters and we give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of their range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes to diversity and difference and use that influence to challenge stereotypical ideas and to help children learn to value diversity in others. We try to use a range of resources to reflect diversity. For further information see our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Keeping Safe

We recognise that young children are vulnerable and we see it as essential to protect their physical and psychological well-being. Our Welfare Requirements document gives full details of our philosophy of safeguarding.

It is the responsibility of every member of staff within nursery and reception to be aware of how many children are present. A quick head count takes place at intervals during each session in FS1 and FS2. Parents are made aware of the need of supervision of children at all times especially of their responsibility to ensure their child's arrival and departure is noted by a member of staff.

Health and Well-being

We recognise that health is integral to a child's all round well-being. When any concerns arise we seek advice as necessary. We are well supported by the school INCO, first aiders, and other appropriate outside agencies e.g. speech and language therapists, educational psychologist.

We ask that children are to be toilet trained wherever possible but will work with families to support this if it isn't the case.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Respecting Each Other

We base our interactions with the children and their parents on caring professional relationships and try to respect the feelings of all involved. Parents are encouraged to speak to the class teacher/foundation staff before/after school if they have any concerns or questions. The teacher/foundation staff greet the children at the door and so any significant issues are able to be discussed at the start of the day if necessary.

Parents/carers as Partners

We recognise that parents/guardians are the child's first and most enduring educators. We place a high emphasis on the partnership between parents and our school. We believe it is important to have a two way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. We aim to do this through:

- an induction meeting with new parents in the term before their child starts school
- encouraging parents to complete home/school admissions booklet
- home visits for children starting FS1 only

- Sending home letters informing parents of the learning that will be taking place (newsletter) We also inform parents/carers about individual learning (for identified children) via letter or verbal communication.
- offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress
- encouraging parents to talk to their child's class teacher/foundation staff if there are any concerns
- reporting on attainment, progress and effort to parents at the end of the year
- a range of activities that support the involvement of parents (e.g. visits, assemblies, workshops)
- greeting children and parents/carers at the door

If a child is unable to attend the Foundation Stage, we request that we are notified of the reason for the child's absence (on the first day)

Supporting Learning

The adults employed to work with the children in our Foundation Stage areas have age appropriate training and expertise.

We have two/three intakes of nursery children per year, where the class teacher is supported by another member of the foundation team to help the children settle into a school routine. To make transition from FS1 to FS2 run smoothly, the staff within FS1 liaise closely with staff in FS2. This enables a smooth and happy transition. There is one intake into the Reception class.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

Observation and Assessment

We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage primarily takes the form of observation, involving the teacher and other adults, including parents, as appropriate.

At the end of reception the class teacher completes the EYFS Profile for each child. All children in the Early years are tracked throughout the year using the Early Excellence Tracker. This is monitored through moderation each year. The results from reception are sent to the LA (Local Authority) for analysis at the end of the summer term. The LA returns these assessments and we use them to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort of children. We are able to use this information to modify the teaching programme for individual children or groups of children. This assessment information is also used to predict attainment levels for year 2 SATS.

Assessment information is shared with parents at parent consultation meetings and in the annual report, sent home in the latter part of the summer term, which reports on their child's progress in each area of learning in the latter part of the summer term. Parents/carers with children in nursery are given up to date pictures showing where their child enjoys playing and this is accompanied with a short report about their child. Staff within nursery record observations, pictures etc. detailing what the child enjoys, does, says within nursery.

For further details see our assessment policy.

Planning

We believe that good planning is essential in making the children's learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. Effective learning builds on and extends on what the children already know and can do. Our planning is a combination of both adult and child initiated and shows how the principles of the EYFS will be put into practice. It is based on observations made of the children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning and provide relevant and interesting learning experiences for the children.

Planning is undertaken in two main stages. Firstly we have a long term plan which outlines what learning will take place and how we intend to implement it.

Secondly, each week a short term plan is written identifying specific objectives, activities, differentiation, deployment of adults and resources.

Supporting Every Child

Children with special educational needs are given support as appropriate to enable them access to the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

Individual education plans are written for those children who require additional support. The class teacher also liaises with the SENCO for further support.

For further information see our Inclusion Policy.

Learning Environment

“A rich and varied environment supports children’s learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.”

Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first-hand experience. We also aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident, and are challenged to develop their independence.

Activities are planned for both the indoor and outdoor learning environment; children have the freedom to move between these two environments throughout the day. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe this encourages independent learning.

We try to use materials and equipment that reflect both the community that the children come from and the wider world.

We use ICT to support the children in their learning e.g. interactive whiteboards/ipads and laptops/computers.

The Wider Context: Transitions, continuity and multi-agency working

Children who are starting in the reception class are invited to visit the school, their new classroom and teacher in the term before they start at the school.

An induction meeting is held in the same term to introduce parents/carers to the school and reception class procedures. At this meeting a booklet is given to parents about school routines along with a document pack to be completed and returned to school before their child starts.

Home visits are undertaken before admission to Nursery support a smooth transition.

The reception class teacher and the year one teacher work closely together to ensure a smooth transition between the two classes.

- children have opportunities to visit their new class
- the reception and year one teacher meet together to discuss the individual needs of children
- EYFS Profile information is shared with year one teacher

The class teacher works alongside other agencies as children’s needs require extra support e.g. speech and language therapists and specialist teachers.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPING

Play and Exploration

We do not distinguish between play and work. We support children's learning through planned play activities, and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We feel it is important for the adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves.

Active Learning

We want our children to be engaged learners. We do this by trying to make their learning as active as possible e.g. visits, visitors.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

We encourage our children to be thinkers from a young age. Higher level questioning is often used to extend our more able children.

Areas of Learning and Development

We deliver the EYFS which is made up of seven areas of learning and development, three of these areas being prime areas.

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

With the other four being the specific area of learning:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation, and are all very important for children to develop as a whole. We aim to deliver all these areas through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. These areas form the basis of our planning.

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this Early Years policy. The governing body does this by:

- Appointing a governor responsible for Early Years who works alongside the nursery and reception class teachers to evaluate Early Years provision within the school
- Monitoring the progress of pupils of minority groups and comparing it to the progress made by the other children in the class.