

Shurdington CofE Primary

Be the **BEST** we can be, through love.

Believe **E**njoy **S**ucceed **T**ogether

'Love God and love your neighbour as you love yourself.'

Matthew 22, verses 37 and 39.

Early Years Policy

Shurdington Church of England policies are written in the spirit of Christian values

Our Aims

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.”

Statutory framework for the Early Years 2021.

At Shurdington C of E Primary School we foster an inclusive ethos that promotes flexibility within the curriculum to provide a learning journey that reflects individual needs. We pride ourselves on building relationships with the whole family to ensure we have a positive impact beyond the classroom.

We promote vital skills to support children to develop empathy and kindness, through positive teamwork and problem solving. This enables children to feel happy at school, which, in turn, fosters confident learners who are physically and emotionally ready to learn. Our children have pride in what they do and the resilience to keep going. We nurture independent skills and thinking, encouraging curiosity, creativity and risk taking. Through hard work and self-reflection, we grow children who are brave enough to ask big questions.

We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and give them the support that enables them to achieve. 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.

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings.

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.**

PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support.
- Work in partnership with parents, agencies and within the wider context.

- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are both adult-initiated and child-initiated
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment both indoors and out.

The EYFS Curriculum

We provide an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning which enables the children to achieve and exceed the Early Learning Goals.

Each of the seven areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three **prime** areas are:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

In the Early Years, we focus learning around children's interests. The provision is informed by our observations and conversations with children. Next steps in learning are based upon our observations of children's independent practice, rather than adult supported learning.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with time for a daily phonics session using 'essential letters and sounds', as well as, teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy, including shared reading and writing.

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS document.

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities.' We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years'

practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children's understanding further with a constant focus on extending language.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we think carefully as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice. We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out. This environment develops and changes as the children progress throughout the year.

Characteristics of Learning

Pupils are further supported through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning, discussed below, and encouraged to achieve to their highest potential to 'be the best that we can be'.

Playing and Exploring - Engagement

Through play children develop, extend and reinforce their learning experiences. Play and exploration is supported and nurtured by skilled staff and the provision reflects the pupils' needs. Access to learning experiences and resources are carefully planned and monitored to extend and consolidate play and learning.

Active learning - Motivation

We provide and promote an Active Learning approach and believe "Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods."

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfactions as they take ownership of their own learning.

Creating and thinking critically - Thinking

To develop active learning, and creative and critical thinking a range of methods and resources are used. Staff support pupils in extending their skills in play situations and making connections between different experiences and environments. Children engage in many different activities and begin to actively think about what they are doing. This helps them to develop an awareness of their own thinking and learning.

The Environment

Our Reception class provides a stimulating, nurturing and multi-sensory environment which supports the children's individual motivations, interests and needs. It provides a purposeful space where children feel happy, secure and engaged. Our environment is language-rich and we provide open-ended play opportunities where children are actively encouraged to work together to develop communication, language and social skills. Our free-flow areas allow children in Reception to access the indoor and outdoor learning environment throughout the day. Throughout the environment the children are supported, guided and challenged by responsive adults to follow their interests, ask questions and develop their thinking.

Observation, assessment and planning

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support (DfE, EYFS, 2021, p.18).

Assessment is an essential part of the learning and development of children in Reception. It involves practitioners observing children to understand their level of achievement, interests and learning styles, and to then shape learning experiences for each child reflecting those observations.

On entry to Reception we carry out baseline assessments for each child. This includes the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts Reception. Baseline judgments are formed through a series of observations of children's interactions and play. We record our observations in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place regarding each child. These judgments are moderated internally. As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future provision.

Tapestry is used to evident children's learning and captures their journey throughout the year, this includes examples of learning in all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Summative assessment data is collected and recorded on our school data program, (Insight) at the end of each term. This provides a summary of progress for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking processes. We record each child's level of development to be emerging, developing and secure in the Birth to Five Matters ranges. Regular phonic assessments are also completed in line with our validated scheme, essential letters and sounds. This provides crucial information to support individual interventions to ensure all children are making at least the expected progress in Reading and Writing.

Children with specific needs are supported through 'My Plans/My Plans+'. These plans identify targets which enable the curriculum to be further personalised around the needs of the child and provides specific guidance from professional outside agencies. EHCP targets are reviewed annually.

We use our early years progression of skills document as a start to our planning, this informs a critical path that reflects the children's interests and extends their learning in all areas. We use essential letters and sounds to plan and deliver phonics. Literacy is based around a text or from an interest and Maths planning is supported by NCTEM and the White Rose Mastery Maths scheme.

Transition

A successful transition is the key to supporting children when moving to their stage of school life.

Transition into school

Information will be sent to parents/carers once a school place has been offered, this will include an invitation to a meeting led by EYs lead to welcome families to our school. Stay and play sessions and a transition morning or afternoon will be available for children in the summer term prior to starting school. Nurseries/pre-schools will be contacted and visited by class teacher or SENDCO if appropriate. In the autumn term, home visits will be offered and children will start with a part-time timetable.

Transition into Year 1

During term 6, Year 1 teachers will visit Apple Class to read stories, the children will have the opportunity to explore the Year 1 classroom and there will be times when the outdoor learning spaces will be shared. Children will write a

letter to their new teacher and will create learning for a display in their new classroom. During the autumn term, there will be times when outdoor area will be shared, the organisation will mirror that of the Summer term in EYFS with focused adult directed activities. The phonics scheme will be continued into Year 1 and the organisation for Guided Reading will remain the same.

This policy was agreed by the Board of Governors in Nov 22 and will be reviewed before Nov 2023.

Signed Signed

Headteacher Chair of Governors