

The Shade Primary School & Pre-School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Teaching and Learning

Key Person

Parents as Partners

Policy owned by Kennett & The Shade Advisory Body	
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Chair Signature:	J Humphrey



Aim

At The Shade Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage '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.' (Statutory Framework 2012)

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 stages and rates

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, 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 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 adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Have a key person approach in Pre-School to develop close relationships with individual children
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out.



Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.

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

Three 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 areas are the **prime** areas:

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.

As a Foundation Stage team, we devise termly plans using the EYFS based on a thematic approach, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans then inform our short-term daily planning, alongside our observations, which remain flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Pre-School will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and develop 'readiness for school'. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through into Reception and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds', 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. '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, practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect 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.

Indoor provision

- We create defined areas for different play activities, thus supporting the children in all seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- We use the available space creatively and flexibly to provide opportunities for the children's imaginative play, movement and large-scale play activities.
- We create opportunities for children to access equipment and materials independently, and choose for themselves, by using low-level open-storage shelves and boxes.
- We encourage the children to care for their environment by making some cleaning equipment (brushes, dustpans, cloths) available for them to access and use independently.

Outdoor provision

- We have daily opportunities for children to play outside, providing open space where they can run, as well as using fixed or other play equipment.
- We ensure that there are areas of shade and shelter.
- We use the outdoor environment to offer a wide range of learning opportunities for investigation and exploration, thus developing all seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared with parents. These ongoing observations are measured against the developmental matters bands and used to inform the EYFS Profile at the end of the Reception year. The child's progress is reviewed every term and is discussed with parents.



Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Inclusion

We value all our children as individuals at The Shade Primary School, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Parents as Partners and the wider context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/inviting members of the community into our setting.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child. Children attend introductory sessions to Pre-School and Reception to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

In the final term in Reception, the respective teacher and Year 1 teacher liaise to discuss the individual children, their needs and analyse the assessment data to inform planning.



Parents as Partners

Aim

We aim to work in partnership with parents based on establishing trusting and respectful relationships with a two-way flow of communication to meet the child's needs and achieve the best possible outcomes for all.

In the EYFS, working in partnership with parents is a key principle of effective practice.

Implementation

- We welcome and value all our parents and children.
- We recognise that when parents and staff work together, we can enhance the child's learning.
- We have clear systems for ongoing dialogue through; informal/formal conversations at the beginning/end of the day, during the settling-in period and through the use of Learning Journals which are sent home weekly.
- We ensure information is accessible to all parents, e.g. parents with English as an additional language (EAL). We have close links with our local Children's Centre to facilitate translation if required.
- We hold a meeting with parents/carers before their child is admitted. We obtain relevant admission forms and ensure all information is kept up to date.
- Prior to admission we arrange an introductory visit for the child to attend with their parents.
- We ask parents to complete a 'Child Profile' to provide information about the child and their family.
- We operate a key-person approach to establish close relationships with the parent and child, talking openly with parents to meet the needs of the child and to pass on information on about home, new interests or share concerns.
- We actively seek parental contributions to the assessment process, including contributions to the child's learning journey, which we send home each week to build up a picture of what the child is learning.
- We report progress and children's achievements throughout their time with us. In the Autumn and Spring term we have a parent meeting to talk about the child's progress, and together discuss the child's needs and learning priorities. In the Summer Term we send out a written report.
- By working closely with parents we can identify and support those children who have specific needs, or those who are in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding. If a child is recognised as needing additional support in the setting, parents are consulted throughout the process.
- We seek to enhance parents understanding of teaching and learning in the Early Years, by inviting parents to attend relevant workshops, including phonics and reading to support the continuity and progression of children's learning between the setting and home.
- Parents automatically become part of the school community and can join the PTFA to organise events to support the school.
- Parents are asked to sign the home-school agreement when they start at The Shade Primary School and adhere to the Schools policies and procedures throughout their time at the school.
- We actively seek parental views, for example through questionnaires. If a parent raises a concern or complaint, the complaint procedure is followed.



SETTLING IN AND KEY PERSON

Aim

We want every child to feel safe and confident here at The Shade Primary School to give every child the opportunity to thrive. We create a welcoming environment where children settle quickly, providing individual care to the child by working closely with parents.

We recognise that for some children and parents, starting a new setting can be a worrying time. We make sure we have robust settling in procedures and a key person approach for us to get to know the child and parents, giving them the reassurance to feel safe.

As outlined in the EYFS: 'Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with parents.' (EYFS, 2012, p.18)

Implementation

We start the settling in process before entry as we recognise this as a crucial time to build relationships and establish a two-way dialogue.

- We provide parents with all the relevant information before a child starts through a series of visits. We explain the settling in process to parents however, we are flexible to meet the parent's and child's needs. We recognise that different children have different ways to be settled/the length of the process may be different, but we work with the parents to devise a strategy together.
- Opportunities are available for the child, with the parent to visit prior to starting. This occurs towards the end of the Summer Term for children moving into Reception and in the weeks leading up to starting Pre-School for all new starters. This visit provides an opportunity to get to know the staff, talk about the individual child, any particular needs and familiarise themselves with the setting.
- In Pre-School each adult has a small group of children with whom they spend time and get to really know personally and build these close relationships. They provide the care, individual attention and support that the individual child requires. In Pre-School the key person greets the child at the start of the morning session and at the end of the morning the key person can tell the parents about the child's session.
- The key person meets that child's needs – e.g. personal needs (toileting); providing comfort if they are upset; supporting them with their independence skills (dressing, undressing); supporting their behaviour.
- The key person is the main point of contact with the child's parents by liaising and talking with them about their child. The key person also takes responsibility for the child's learning journey, they carry out observations of children which is regularly shared and progress discussed. Together with the other early years staff, observations are shared in order to plan for the child's next steps. Reports are also produced and shared with parents.
- Any children who attend after school care and/or breakfast club are cared for by early years practitioners.