

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy



"We aim high in our hearts and minds as we blossom in God's garden."

1.Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile - Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of their Reception Year. At Shocklach Oviatt C. E. Primary School we have Nursery and Reception provision within Foxes Class. Nursery children join the school the term after their third birthday and Reception children the September following their fourth birthday. Also within Foxes are our Year 1 pupils.

We believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives and at Shocklach Oviatt C. E. Primary School we greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

2.Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. Across the Foundation Stage, we will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Shocklach Oviatt C. E. Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and next steps and helping each child to progress. We will use a variety of assessment methods including on-going short and long observations, adult and child led activities and the use of the Tapestry, the online Learning Journal.
- Develop positive relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers and the benefits of sharing both successes and concerns with them.

3.Learning and Developing

The EYFS Curriculum

Our curriculum for the Foundation Stage reflects the learning aims and objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in all Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected and none can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across these areas of learning. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for children to develop effectively and to give them the best chance of obtaining a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year. 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.

The three Prime areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language

- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

4.Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

5.Planning

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum provides the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage. The planning is based upon themes / topics and/or discrete phonics, maths and other directed teaching. The themes / topics are those that the EYFS team have identified as a vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning and also to respond to the individual needs, achievements and interests of the children.

6.Assessment

During the first term, the EYFS team work together to assess the ability and complete the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This assessment allows us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual and/or groups of children. This first baseline assessment also takes into account any other records we receive from previous settings, parents and childminders.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30 June in that term, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1.

The level of development children should be expected to have attained by the end of the EYFS is defined by the early learning goals (ELGs). The ELGs are not be used as a curriculum or in any way to limit the wide variety of rich experiences that are crucial to child development, from being read to frequently to playing with friends. Instead, the ELGs support teachers to make a holistic, best-fit judgement about a child's development, and their readiness for year 1. When forming a judgement about whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, teachers draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. This is sufficient evidence to assess a child's individual level of development in relation to each of the ELGs.

7. The Learning Environment

Our indoor and outdoor classroom areas are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, be creative etc.

Children have access to both the inside and the outside environment at various points in the day which is known to have a positive effect on the children's development. The Early Years Foundation Stage pupils have their own outdoor area with sand or water, climbing equipment, bikes, writing opportunities, mud kitchen, construction and role play. Spending time outdoors offers opportunities for exploring and learning things differently to when pupils are indoors and gives things a different perspective. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

8. Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

In both Nursery and Reception children are invited to taster sessions before their official start date. Staff are on hand to meet and greet parents with their children and answer any questions they might have.

Parents of all new children will be invited to an Induction Meeting. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- To go through the school handbook
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Answer any questions parents might have about starting school
- Explain the arrangements for starting school.
- We also try to visit any settings that are sending children to us.

When children begin their Reception Year in the September, we find that it is best for all children to start at the same time. We encourage parents to bring their children for full days from day one.

Throughout the Year we aim to build up their involvement in whole school life helping them to become familiar with many of the teaching and support staff working in other classes. They will have taken part in the Special Mention Worship as well as sharing the lunchtime hall with the other pupils. However, this is flexible and will be adapted to suit individual needs.

9. Safeguarding & Welfare

At Shocklach Oviatt C. E. Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children.

Intimate Care

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure that most children are able to carry out themselves. However, depending on a child's age and stage of development, they may need some support, for example dressing, wiping their bottom after using the toilet and changing underwear following an accident. We actively encourage parents to start helping their children become independent with these tasks as soon as they start in Nursery. Every child has the right to privacy, dignity and a professional approach from all staff when meeting their needs and it is important that staff and parents work in partnership to give the right support to an individual child.

Eppi Jones

Review date – March 2025