



**Shrewton**  
**CE Primary School**

# **Early Years**

## **Foundation Stage**

### **Policy 2022-2024**



**‘Powered by love; we believe, achieve, grow’**

## Introduction

“An astonishing capacity for creative power is built into our genes, ready to unfold. Our innate capacities of mind are nothing less than miraculous, and we are born with a driving intent to express this capacity.”  
- J.C Pearce, *Magical Child*, 1971

At Shrewton CofE Primary School we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life in order for them to fulfil their potential. Children rapidly develop in unparalleled ways in the early years; their experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. Therefore, we recognise and greatly value the importance that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays securing a child's foundations for future learning and development.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

‘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 EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, all children join us in the September after their fourth birthday. There is a period of transition to settle them into school life which is personalised in collaboration with parents.

Our Reception class curriculum reflects the seven areas of learning and development set out in the national Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (this governs educational provision in all early years' settings). All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected - none can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skills across these areas of learning. They have a balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences in shared play 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 of learning are particularly crucial for children to achieve positive outcomes in later life and building their capacities to learn.

These three 'Prime Areas' are:

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

If these essential building blocks are not in place, then it is understood that the further areas of learning cannot be effectively developed.

Educators support children in four further 'Specific Areas', providing opportunities for children to broaden their knowledge and skills, and through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The four 'Specific Areas' are:

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

"Early Education is about every aspect of a child's development. It is about more than imparting knowledge. It is about providing a wide range of experiences and opportunities so that every area of development receives attention."

*Ofsted report, Teaching and Play in the early years, July 2015*

In addition to these seven areas, 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.

## Principles of EYFS

The EYFS is based on four principles, which form the basis of our aims and provision:

1. A unique child
2. Positive relationships
3. Enabling environments
4. Learning and development

### 1. A unique child

"You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees or the stars;  
you have the right to be here."

*- Desiderata, Max Ehrmann, 1927*

At Shrewton CofE Primary School we recognise that every child is born a competent learner who can be resilient, resourceful, responsible, reciprocal and reflective.

We understand that children develop in individual ways, at varying rates, and that their attitudes and dispositions to learning are undoubtedly influenced by feedback from others. We use a variety of strategies to enable positive attitudes towards learning to develop. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best and seek to unlock their talents and interests during their time with us, and take into account the range of life experiences our children have had when preparing their learning.

We meet the individual needs of children through:

- Monitoring children's progress continually and taking action where necessary to provide support so that they achieve all that they are able to at this stage on their journey;
- Delivering engaging learning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experiences and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Setting realistic and challenging expectations to meet the needs of all our children.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of each child is valued.

## 2. Positive Relationships

*"It takes a whole village to raise a child"*  
*– proverb of African origin*

At Shrewton CofE Primary School we recognise that children develop their resilience and independence from secure and loving relationships. Consequently, all staff aim to develop caring and respectful professional relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen.

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first, and most enduring, teachers and we value the contributions they have made and continue to make through:

- Talking to parents/carers before children start at our school (appointments are set up in the summer term to meet the Teacher and share information during home visits, allowing parents/carers to ask questions in a private situation);
- Opportunity for the children to spend time with their new Teacher before starting school officially (transition happens throughout the summer term);
- Inviting all parents/carers to an induction meeting before their child starts school where they are introduced to staff;
- Class teacher visits to children's pre-school (if they attend one) to discuss early information on achievements and needs to enable us to appropriately tailor provision;
- Offering open mornings or afternoons where families join us for learning experiences;
- Invitation to all church events, weekly family celebration worships and many other events;
- Termly Parents Evenings and daily opportunities for more ad-hoc catch ups;
- Home/school reading records to share this essential early reading development;
- Regular communication through Newsletters, via our Class page, and on the school's Twitter account and website;
- Providing the opportunity to add to our Tapestry online learning journal, where Information on progress and next steps is based on assessment through the year.
- A school report at the end of the year with formal completion of the Foundation Stage Profile.

In our inclusive school we believe that every child matters and all children and their families are valued within our community. We treat children and families fairly regardless of race, religion,

gender or ability. We have very clear policies on bullying and take discriminatory behaviour very seriously.

### 3. Enabling Environments

*"The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky"*

Margaret McMillan, Nursery education pioneer, 1925

At Shrewton CofE Primary School we recognise that the emotional and physical environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Our physical environment, the EYFS classroom, is organised to allow children to explore and learn independently, safely and securely.

We are very fortunate to have a wonderful setting both inside and out for our pupils to enjoy. The Reception classroom is open plan and is arranged so that there is a space for every child; this supports them to locate and choose equipment and resources safely and independently in their continuous provision, which drives their self-initiated learning. The EYFS children have access to the outdoor area throughout the day and we regularly explore our school grounds and community further.

Our outdoor area is simply a classroom without a roof and so reflects all seven areas of the curriculum. Nevertheless, being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in a different way and on a different scale to the indoor classroom. Therefore, it has resources such as sand and water, scooters, different writing opportunities, a mud kitchen, larger construction, and music and movement resources, and all as part of our continuous provision. They offer the opportunity for children to explore further, use their senses, be physically active and get a little messy! The exuberance they show when outside is a fantastic part of their learning experience.

Observation, assessment, and planning is continuous; it is the golden thread that pulls together all that we do in the EYFS. The children know this assessment and reflection is occurring and are respected to engage with the information being gathered through the observations by familiar adults. Consequently, our environment is continuously adapted in collaboration with the children for their evolving needs and interests.

Our long term planning is based on a range of age appropriate lively topics that supports the early learning goals for the end of their time in Reception. Our 'Cornerstones Curriculum' makes suggestions for the termly activities and skills taught, and the class teacher plans weekly to ensure individual needs are met for our pupils.

### 4. Learning and development

*"The more that you read, the more things you will know*

*The more that you learn, the more places you will go"*

*-Dr. Seuss, The Cat In The Hat*

At Shrewton CofE Primary School we recognise that all children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development and understand that they are interconnected.

Teaching and Learning styles are relevant across the whole school not just in EYFS. We have a policy that reflects our practice throughout Shrewton CofE Primary School. The following are particular features of EYFS but will be echoed elsewhere in school:

- The partnership between parents/carers and previous settings with our teachers, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of wellbeing and achievement;
- A recognition that teachers have an understanding of how young children develop and learn, and how this affects their interactions and provision;
- A range of approaches used to provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- A carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals;
- Provision for children to take part in experiences that build on and extend their interests, as well as develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- Encouragement for children to talk about and reflect on their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- Support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor spaces and resources;
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents/carers.

*“Play is the highest form of research”*

*-Einstein*

Play is recognised as an integral part of children’s development and well-being, and so is respected as an essential part of the EYFS curriculum. Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make concrete sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for boundaries. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods; they communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems; they express fears or re-live anxious experiences in an emotionally and physically safe setting. Children learn best through physical and mental challenges and active learning opportunities provide these.

## **Assessment within the EYFS**

*“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all”*

*-Aristotle*

During the first few weeks of the school year, educators assess the experiences of each child using observations and activities while engaged in a balance of child-initiated and adult-directed learning. These assessments allow us to identify patterns and developmental needs for groups of children within the cohort, as well as for individual children. This first /baseline assessment also takes into account any other records we receive from previous pre-school settings, parents and carers.

The 'Foundation Stage Profile' is the nationally employed statutory assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the pupils' Foundation Stage and to summarise their progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. We record each child's level of development against the 17 areas of learning as 'Emerging' or 'Expected'. Observations and assessment of each individual pupil is on-going with the information gained being used to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, Teacher and Teacher Assistant knowledge of the pupils and photographic evidence. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the Teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement.

We create an overview of each child's journey in curriculum exercise books and in an online 'Learning Journal' which is shared with parents/carers, asking for their contributions also. This includes photographs, observations, children's work and comments from Teachers and Teaching Assistants. It is a lovely record of this first school year and demonstrates their achievements and progress throughout.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, the Teacher completes the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile' for each child. The profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a clear picture of a child's development, knowledge, understanding and abilities, as well as their progress against expected levels. It highlights the child's strengths and progress, their developmental needs, as well as details of their characteristics of effective learning. This information furthermore helps to inform the Year 1 teacher for each child's needs and next steps.

Children's learning and dispositions are continuously assessed and our provision reflects the needs and interests of our individual children. More information on this curriculum is available in a parent friendly handbook and can be found online at:

[https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/09/4Children ParentsGuide Sept 2015v4WEB1.pdf](https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/09/4Children%20ParentsGuide%20Sept%202015v4WEB1.pdf)

## Transition

“Now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read:  
which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.”

- C.S. Lewis, *Chronicles of Narnia*, 1956

Starting school can be a challenging 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 their family, and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

The reception class children have many opportunities to spend time with their new Teacher before starting school officially. Parents/carers of all children starting in the next academic year are offered a home visit, and are invited to an induction meeting in the summer term to meet their child's new Teacher and have the opportunity to learn more about the EYFS curriculum.

This is an opportunity for us 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/carers might have about starting school;
- Explain the arrangements for starting school in September;
- Talk to the parents/carers about the school and Government expectations at the end of the EYFS.

When children join the school in September, we find that it is best for most children to attend school for half days in the first few days; they then attend school full time for the following week. We actively encourage independence from the start however, asking that children come into class independently from the playground as a whole class with the teacher.

Furthermore, and as the year progresses, our teaching and provision will shift as appropriate in order to prepare children for Key Stage One at the end of the Reception year.

## Safeguarding & Welfare

‘Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met,  
and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.’

- *Statutory Framework for EYFS 2014*

At Shrewton CofE 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 2014:

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- To promote good health;
- To 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;
- To ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- To 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 and help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We encourage children to take assessed 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. (More information can be found in the school's safeguarding policy)

## Healthy Eating

All children in Reception are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given free milk for our under-fives (milk can be paid for children who are five years old plus). They have access to tap water at all times. School dinners are provided for free for all children in Reception and menus are sent out regularly for parents/carers to see and choose from.

## Intimate Care

Most young children are able to carry out their necessary daily self-care tasks independently before they enter Reception, and we actively encourage parents/carers to start helping their children become independent with these tasks. However, they may need some support, for example dressing and changing underwear following an accident, and so 'intimate care' is defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene.

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/carers work in partnership to give the right support to an individual child. The number of staff required for intimate care will depend on each child's situation and their unique needs. As legally required, the member of staff helping the child will notify another member of staff when they are going alone to assist a pupil, and must ensure another member of staff is in the vicinity and visible or audible.

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of those working with EYFS pupils to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Headteacher and the EYFS lead will monitor EYFS provision. The Governing Body will also be part of this process.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following whole school policies:

- Behaviour
- Intimate Care
- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Special Education Needs and Disabilities SEND
- Teaching Learning and Assessment

Review: September 2024