

# Shorne Church of England Primary School

(A member of the Aletheia Academies Trust)



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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## 1. Introduction

At Shorne Church of England Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, 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 endeavour to:

- inspire children through an imaginative and immersive curriculum, ensuring that the children are happy and enthusiastic to learn, that we foster and nurture the children's imagination and curiosity
- support children to become independent and self-motivated learners, encouraging the children to adapt their work, think critically and take risks with their learning
- support children in developing a good growth mindset, encouraging each and every child to try new things, work hard and push themselves to continue to achieve and to persevere whilst developing resilience
- encourage children to become curious about the world around them and practice the technique of Enquiry. Encouraging the children to develop problem solving skills, tackling any activity they set out to do.
- help children to become aware of the wider community, starting with their local community and providing opportunities to experience and learn about other communities and cultures further afield.
- value each individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child reach their full potential.
- create a free flow stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors.

## 2. Foundation Stage Curriculum

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

We use the '**Cornerstones**' scheme of work as a starting point to ignite the children's interest and love of learning. This scheme of work is based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of the curriculum.

We also follow the **Mathematics Mastery Scheme** which encompasses our growth mindset philosophy which is all pupils can achieve in mathematics – consistent effort and effective strategies are the main determinants of success.

**Phonics** is taught daily. We follow the Government validated 'Little Wandle' phonics scheme. Children will have opportunities to apply their phonics skills in both reading and writing activities appropriate to their developmental and academic level. Children also have 'Talk for Writing' sessions based on the Pie Corbett model and research. This enables all children to learn stories and build up a bank of stories which they enjoy retelling.

**Reading** is taught through phonic strategies in teacher modelling and through the home / school reading scheme. Reading through phonics assists with the decoding of words. However, learning words in isolation does not develop the children's understanding and appreciation of stories. Therefore by reading with adults and listening to stories we strive to develop the children's enjoyment of books. The reading books are linked to the children's level of development. We use the Big Collins Reading scheme which is affiliated to the Little Wandle phonics scheme we follow.

### 3. Areas of Learning and Development

All 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. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas. They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS.

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 four specific areas are:

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

The curriculum is delivered using a play based approach as outlined by the EYFS. During child initiated activities, early years practitioners question the children and play alongside them to further develop their learning. During planning, practitioners reflect on how children learn best and this is reflected in our classroom practice. Children's 'next steps' in learning are identified and acted upon to further develop their learning.

### 4. Observations and Assessment

Foundation Stage staff use observations of the children as the basis for planning. Practitioners observe children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys. Observation and assessment of children's development and learning form part of our daily practice. We record our observations using the **Evidence Me software**.

During the first few weeks the teacher observes and plays alongside each child assessing their level of development in each of the seven areas. These observations are then matched against the information sent from the child's pre-school setting to establish the needs of each child. This information is put onto a colour coded spreadsheet which identifies at a glance where each child is currently working at within each area of the curriculum – either on track or not on track to achieve the ELG at the end of the year. At the end of the Reception Year the assessment data is fed into **Target Tracker** ready to continue into Year 1. We also complete the statutory **Government Baseline Assessment** in the child's first 6 weeks of entering school. This data is then sent to the LA.

These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children. Each child's level of development is recorded against the Early Learning goals as **Expected** or **Not Expected**. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Within the Trust the Early Years team has met and decided the criteria as to whether a child is on track or not to achieve the ELG at the end of the year. There are a set of criteria that the children must reach for each area of the curriculum. In order to be on track to achieve the ELG at the end of the year the children must achieve the criteria set at each milestone – On entry to school, December and Easter. This assessment allows practitioners to identify targets and move children's learning forward.

Tracking grids are updated on entry, in December, Easter and at the end of the academic year. This provides a summary sheet for each child which feeds into the whole-school assessment and tracking process. At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis.

## 5. Parental Involvement

Parents/carers are invited to meet with the class teacher three times a year and also receive end of year reports. These reports are based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. We do have an open door policy at Shorne, encouraging parents to maintain a positive partnership with school and take an active role in their child's education.

We aim to involve parents as much as possible, inviting them to activities such as reading café's, sharing afternoons, craft afternoons and stop and play sessions in class.

## 6. Health and 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 policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. For the full Trusts policies and procedures, please refer to the MAT Health and Safety document.

**Healthy school meals:** our children when they enter Reception are entitled to a free school meal and are provided with this. The school meals are carefully catered and follow a healthy food model.

**Healthy snacks:** Daily free fruit and water is readily available. Parents need to sign up for the milk scheme in schools if they wish their child to have milk in school. This is actively encouraged and parents are informed of this verbally via new entrants meetings and through information sent home.

**Accidents and First Aid:** There is a trained Paediatric First Aider on site at all times. All first aid cupboards are clearly labelled and regularly updated. All accidents are recorded and parents/carers informed. If a more serious accident occurs, e.g. significant bump, scrape or graze, parents/carers will have a phone call home to inform them of anything that has happened before the end of the session.

**Fire alarms:** A fire alarm practice is organised at least once a term and all of these are timed and recorded. We have set fire doors throughout the setting and the caretaker carries out regular safety checks.

**Child Protection and Safeguarding:** We have a very clearly set out safeguarding policy, which is available on our website and the School Office.

## **7. Inclusion**

We value all children as individuals, 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 identifying children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

## **8. Transitions**

Children attend introductory sessions to Reception Class to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a book all about starting school, full of photographs and information about their new class in a photographic child friendly form. The Reception teacher visits each child at their nursery setting in the summer term before the children start.

The children start school in September on a part time basis initially. In the afternoons the teacher meets with parents/ carers to discuss settling in and any worries or concerns. There is also a coffee afternoon where information is given on the teaching of phonics / reading which enables the parents /carers to support their child at home.

The **Early Years Action Plan** focuses on transition and establishing links with the local pre-school to ensure transition is even better.

### **Transition to Key Stage 1**

The children are integrated and orientated within the school from the start. This is evident through their confidence and involvement in whole school activities such as collective worship, lunchtimes, break times and whole school activities. They feel part of the wider school community. The children recognise and respond to places and adults within the school.

Children are prepared to cope with the demands of Year 1 in the Summer Term. They have the opportunity to visit their new teacher and new classroom. Foundation Stage practitioners will provide sufficient information and data – both in written form and verbal to allow the Year 1 teacher to plan for class and individual's progression.