Sherbourne Fields School

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Parent/Carer Information Booklet

The Foundation Stage at Sherbourne aims to support the develop each child to ensure they reach their full potential by offering a 'principled played based approach to learning and development'.

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The Early Years Curriculum Framework

Throughout this booklet you will find information regarding the areas of learning that are fundamental in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Sherbourne Fields School

Children in the EYFS learn through; play and exploration, through being active and creative and by using critical thinking skills. All learning takes place across all environments home, school, indoors and out.

The learning activities that are provided for our young children will underpin the skills and knowledge they need to work not only towards the Early Learning Goals but also their longer-term learning as they move through primary, into Secondary Education and onto their lives beyond school.

The EYFS teacher plans and delivers activities ensuring the seven areas of learning and development are incorporated. Each area is important in a child's development and opportunities for the children to experience and show; engagement, motivation and thinking are always embedded. The children's interests and strengths are carefully considered and we pride ourselves on incidental learning which often takes place e.g. when it starts to snow or a cobweb has been spotted in the outside area.

Although our curriculum is clearly set out we are very flexible in the approaches and resources used to meet your child's unique needs to ensure they access exceptionally high-quality provision in supporting effective learning as well as developing their personal growth, mental health and well-being.

We hope you find this booklet helpful but if you have any queries or questions please contact us at school.

Areas of Learning and Development

Learning and development is broken down into **7** areas taught through a themed approach;

3 Prime Areas



- **Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)**

  Developing children's positive sense of themselves and others. Form positive relationships and respect for each other, develop social skills and learn how to understand and manage their feelings, understand and demonstrate positive behaviours and have confidence in their own abilities.



- **Physical development (PD)**

  Opportunities for children to be active and interactive in order to develop their gross and fine motor skills along with control, co-ordination and confidence. Children will take part in weekly hydrotherapy/swimming sessions. Children will also develop their understanding of the importance of physical activity and how to make healthy lifestyle choices. Children are also supported to develop their independence, life-skills and personal care skills.



- **Communication and language (C and L)**

  Providing children with opportunities to experience a Total Communication environment and ensuring they develop their communication skill talking or non-talking with confidence and independence. Children are supported to develop their auditory skills and when and appropriate their reading and writing

4 Specific Areas



- **Literacy (L)**

Developing children's ability to link sounds and letters and begin to read, mark make and write. Children are given access to a wide variety of reading materials (labels, books, poems, letters, posters etc.) to ensure a love of reading is developed from an early stage of development.

Phonics is taught in EYFS from the start – children are introduced to teaching/learning activities which develop their auditory skills. When the children are competent and confident in this area they will begin to access formal phonic lessons using PPSEN. (please see the Phonics leaflet for more information)



- **Mathematics (M)**

Supporting children to develop their early maths skills through counting, understanding and using verbal/written number names, completing simple addition and subtraction and using the language of shape to describe objects and pictures.



- **Understanding the world (UW)**

Guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about other people, places, technology and the environment. Children are supported to show respect and tolerance of others.



- **Expressive arts and design (EAD)**

Enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas in a creative way. The activities may also include opportunities for Open Theatre sessions, art, music, dance, role-play and design.

Themes for EYFS

The themes are planned across the yearly cycle to provide a broad and functional curriculum which allows the children to generalise their skills across the different areas of learning and their different learning environments. Each half term you will receive an overview of the curriculum aims to enable you to fully support your child's development at home.

Term	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Topic	Welcome to School	This is me	Plants and Growing
	Food		
	Cultural and Religious Festivals	People who help Us Vehicles and Transport	Animals and Where they live

Characteristics of effective learning and enhanced provision

Throughout the Early Years environment there are spaces set up to support child-initiated learning. These areas can be indoors or outside and use a wide range of resources to encourage the characteristics of effective learning as well as supporting physical and sensory needs. These might include; slides, climbing frames, cars, malleable play, natural objects, mark making tools, imaginary and role play items, musical instruments and quiet spaces.



The Early years class also make use of the wider school learning environments e.g. therapy suite, sensory room, swimming pool, forest school area, gardens, library and the pet courtyard.

Teaching and Learning



Child Initiated Activities

Child-initiated activities are a vital part of early childhood education, providing children with the freedom to choose their own resources and decide how to play. This approach fosters independence, creativity, and self-reliance. Some key aspects of child-initiated activities are:

Freedom to Choose: *Children decide what to play with, how to play, and with whom, allowing them to express their individuality and interests.*

Supportive Environment: *Adults can join in and follow the children's lead, ensuring they have the space to explore and learn on their own with developing confidence.*

Developmental Benefits: *Activities support emotional, cognitive, and social skills development, as children engage in imaginative play and practice taking turns and cooperating.*

Engagement: *Child-initiated play is highly engaging, as children are drawn to activities that capture their curiosity and interest.*

Learning Opportunities: *It provides opportunities for children to learn through first-hand experiences, enabling them to explore and learn from their own thoughts and ideas.* Incorporating child-initiated activities into daily routines lays the groundwork for functional learning and growth.



Adult Directed Activities

Carefully planned and structured activities aimed at encouraging the children's development across all areas of learning through a range of purposeful and engaging activities.
These activities are designed to provide clear instructions, set rules, and create a supportive environment for learning and development.



Individual Learning Targets

Together with parents/carers a termly target is set. This target will be specifically aimed to develop something very specific for that child not linked to their curriculum learning e.g. using a fork, initiating play with a friend, eating a wider variety of foods etc. The target will be set and review during the Learning Conversation held between class teacher and parents/carers each term. Activities and approaches incorporated into the child's routine to allow for the skills to be developed and generalised.

Additional Opportunities



Forest School

Every child will take part in Forest School sessions. They will experience learning a variety of skills and knowledge in the outdoor using natural resources.



Open Theatre

Every child will take part in a weekly Open Theatre session. External practitioners come to the EYFS classroom to support the children in taking part in sessions. Open Theatre uses non-verbal physical drama to support the development of interaction, communication, creativity and a feeling of connection.



Trips

The children will get opportunities to take part in trips to enhance and support their learning experiences. E.g. visiting the fire station when they are learning about people who help us or going to the local shop to buy food. These experiences allow the children to generalise their understanding in real life situations.

Your Child's Progress and Achievements



Learning Journals

Each child has a journal which is used to record any small steps of progress and achievements your child makes these are recorded through photographs, logging of observations or discussions and any pieces of work your child produces e.g. pictures, cutting and sticking, mark making. These journals are available for you to see at Learning Conversations, Annual reviews and Open evenings. If you would like to see them at any other time please ask and we will arrange this for you.



Learning Conversations and Annual Reviews

You will be invited to attend a termly meeting with your child's class teacher. During this meeting progress towards targets and in general will be discussed. The learning journal will be shared. New targets can be set and any help or support you may need at home can be discussed.

Once a year a meeting will be held to review your child's EHCP. The class teacher will send you a report prior to the meeting with the progress your child has made against their EHCP targets detailed. You will have opportunity to share your view in a report and in person at the meeting. Our EHCP co-ordinator will send the dates through to you and the meeting can be held face to face, on the phone or via Teams; whichever way is most convenient to you and your family. Any professionals working with your child will also be asked to contribute to the meeting.

Home/School Communication



We use an app called 'My Child At School'. Daily communication will come to you directly from the class team and you can respond back using the app. You will also receive regular communication from the school office regarding events, training and other School activities.



Other professionals

We work very closely with a range of professionals and if your child has a professional they are allocated to we take their advice and strategies on board and ensure they are incorporated into your child's learning and/or their daily routine. We will work towards any targets that are set by other professionals e.g. Speech and Language Therapy.



Progress measures

The early learning goals (ELGs) are used to measure children's progress at the end of the reception year. The ELGs are mandatory.

At Sherbourne we use 'Birth to 5 Matters' as our assessment tool. This incorporates all the ELGs but starts from age 0 which allows us to measure the smallest steps of progress. There are 6 ranges in 'Birth to 5 Matters'.



Celebrations of Achievements

It is essential for us that our children feel valued and their progress and achievements great or small are very important to us. Each term we have a Head Teachers assembly this is where children from across the primary phase are nominated by teachers to receive a certificate from Shivaun. You will be invited in to see them receive their award and the rest of the phase joins to ensure the child know how special their achievement is.

Your Part in Your Child's Development and Progress

For your child to achieve their potential and make continued progress it is essential that we work together as a team. We value your understanding and knowledge of your child.

We ask that you;

- *always read the curriculum overviews that we send home – these will contain ideas about what you can do at home to support the learning going on in school.*
- *Always read the home/school diary when child gets home and complete your section of the diary for the next day.*
- *If your child is given a reading book, take the time to share the book with them and record this in their reading record.*
- *Check your e-mails from us – we will regularly send out updates about events at school including work shop opportunities and community events.*
- *Contact us if your child is going to be absent/late – you can leave a message on the school phone or use the parent communication app.*
- *Ensure your child has everything they need for the day e.g. swimming kit/towel, lunch, splints etc. You will get a copy of their timetable to help.*
- *If your child uses a dummy or a bottle we ask that you try to reduce this as much as possible. We will support you in this but we know from experience and research the use of these can greatly impact on speech development.*
- *If your child uses a screen, consider stopping or at least reducing the time they access this. Again, research has shown the use of screens by young children has a massive negative impact on their communication, learning, physicals/sensory and interaction development. Screen use also disrupts healthy sleep patterns and can cause negative behaviours. We will support you in this if needed.*