



## Early Years Foundation Stage Policy September 2024

<b>Governors' Committee Responsible:</b>	Learning & Pupil Welfare Committee
<b>Nominated Lead Member of Staff:</b>	Gemma Beswick
<b>Status &amp; Review Cycle:</b>	Annual
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	September 2024

### Introduction

*"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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up."* ('The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.' DfE March 2021).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. Our Nursery has a maximum of 24 children in each session. Children attend either 5 full days (30 hours) or 2.5 days (15 hours). Children can be admitted into our Nursery in the term after their second birthday. Reception children join us at the beginning of the school year through a staggered intake.

### Our vision

In Early Years at Shalford Infant & Nursery School we want our children to be happy, confident and well-rounded individuals with an insatiable love of learning. We aim to create a safe, nurturing and enabling environment where all the children in our care feel valued and can thrive. We understand that every single child is unique and therefore we aim to ensure all teaching and learning is tailored to the needs and interests of the individuals in our classrooms. We want our children to be curious, seek challenge, show resilience and solve problems. We want them to be proud and celebrate all of their achievements, no matter how great or small.

### Our aims

We aim to:

- Support all children in making a smooth transition between home and school.
- Support all children in making a smooth transition from a Nursery/Pre-school setting into Reception.
- Support all children in making a smooth transition from Early Years to Key Stage One.
- Build strong and positive relationships with all the children in our care rooted in mutual respect.
- Ensure that all staff have a good understanding of how children develop and learn which is reflected in their teaching and interactions with children.
- Provide a range of different learning experiences and opportunities that excite, engage and motivate the children.
- Extend and develop children's learning through play by engaging in quality conversations that build

on children's ideas and interests.

- Carefully and effectively plan and adapt our curriculum to suit the needs of the individuals in our care, taking into account their starting points, experiences and progress.
- Support the children to reach the expected levels in the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year through careful planning of the curriculum.
- Identify, through observations, children's progress and future learning needs and share these regularly with parents and carers.
- Identify areas in which children need additional support and effectively plan and organise opportunities and interventions to support children in those areas.
- Provide learning opportunities that follow the interests of the children.
- Encourage children to be able to talk about and reflect upon their own learning.
- Ensure children have access to learning both inside and outside.
- Begin to teach the children our school values and support them in showing those values in their daily lives. The values taught in Nursery are: resilience, respect, kindness, honesty and responsibility. The values taught in Reception are: gratitude, cooperation, empathy, tolerance, courage and also includes the values taught in Nursery.
- Give children the opportunities to assess and take risks and to explore their environment in a way that is safe.
- For staff to be able to confidently talk about the children in their care.
- Regularly identify training needs for staff.

### **Overarching principles:**

There are four overarching principles that shape the teaching and learning in Early Years. These are:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children can 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 rates.

### **The unique child:**

At Shalford Infant & Nursery School we recognise that every child is unique with their own personality, interests and ideas. We understand that every child is a capable learner and recognise that children will develop in individual ways and at varying rates. We recognise that children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration assemblies and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

### **Positive Relationships:**

At Shalford Infant & Nursery School we recognise that relationships built on trust and with mutual respect are an important foundation to children's learning. We aim to build caring, supportive, respectful and professional relationships with the children in our care so that they feel valued, safe and listened to. We also aim to form positive relationships with parents and carers as we know that a strong partnership between home and school have a significant impact on children's learning and development.

### **Enabling environment:**

At Shalford Infant & Nursery School we recognise that the classroom plays a key role in supporting and extending children's learning and development. We know that children learn best in a classroom in which they feel safe and happy so we work hard to create an environment through positive relationships that enable this. We also ensure that the classroom environment has carefully selected resources that have 'earned their place' and enable children to achieve their next steps in their learning and reflects their growing interests. As a team we are regularly observing the children, identifying interests, and monitoring development and learning so that we can select resources and activities that extend children's learning.

## **The EYFS Curriculum:**

The EYFS Curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning and development that are inter-connected.

The Prime areas are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

The Specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive art and design

At Shalford Infant & Nursery School we will teach all of these areas in four different ways:

- Child-led, where children are accessing learning independently via continuous provision without the support of an adult.
- Child-initiated, where children are showing an interest or developing their own ideas and an adult enhances this through interactions with the children, idea sharing and resources.
- Adult-initiated, where an adult has an idea that engages children but then the adult may take a step back and observe what the children do next.
- Adult-led, where the adult has a set objective that they are teaching. This includes carpet sessions, group times and planned, adult directed activities.

## **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning:**

Underpinning the seven areas of learning are the three Characteristics of Effecting Teaching and Learning which identify some of the ways in which children learn. Staff will seek to observe, promote and assess these within learning.

**Playing and exploring** – Children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’

- Realise their actions have an effect on the world, so they want to keep repeating them.
- Plan and think ahead about how they will explore and play with objects.
- Guide their own thinking and actions by referring to visual aids or by talking to themselves while playing.
- Make independent choices.
- Bring their own interests and fascinations into their play.
- Respond to new experiences.

**Active Learning** – Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy themselves.

- Participate in routines and begin to predict sequences because they know routines.
- Show goal-directed behaviour.
- Begin to correct their mistakes themselves.
- Keep on trying when things get difficult.

**Creating and thinking critically** – Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

- Take part in simple pretend play.
- Sort materials.
- Review their progress as they try to achieve their goal. Check how well they are doing.
- Solve real problems.
- Use pretend play to think beyond the ‘here and now’ and to understand another perspective.
- Know more so they feel confident coming up with their own ideas and make more links between those ideas.
- Concentrate on achieving something that is important to them and becoming increasingly able to control their attention and ignore distractions.

## Learning through play and continuous provision in the EYFS:

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.” (‘The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.’ DfE March 2021).

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise essential skills, build on ideas and learn how to work collaboratively with others through understanding and creating rules, sharing and listening to ideas and managing their emotions and behaviour. The children will have the opportunity to think creatively, investigate and problem solve independently and with their peers. Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength.








### Observation, assessment and planning:

The planning within the EYFS follows each class’ annual curriculum map which identifies the objectives that are being focused on every term or half term. These plans are used by the EYFS teacher as a guide for medium term and weekly planning, however the teacher may alter these plans in response to the needs (achievements and interests) of the children. This will be indicated on weekly planning.

At Shalford Infant & Nursery School we use ‘OPAL Starting Points’ to identify children’s starting points. This Baseline Assessment is completed within the first six weeks of children joining the setting and it gives information about how the individual has settled, their interests, strengths and next steps based on their most recently passed milestones. This is then shared with parents during the first set of Parent/Teacher consultations. The information that we gather from the ‘OPAL Starting Points’ Assessment also feeds into our weekly planning in Early Years so that we are able to ensure children can further develop their strengths and work on their next steps.

Once the Baseline assessment is completed, each month there will be ‘Spotlight children’ who are approaching their next set of milestones. The staff team will spend time observing these children in their play and learning and an ‘OPAL Spotlight’ is completed at the end of the month which will be focused on supporting the child’s development and identifying what is next for them.

Everyday that we are interacting and engaging with the children in our care, we are carrying out observations that allow us to understand more about where a child is in their development and helps us to build a picture of their skills, knowledge and understanding. At Shalford Infant and Nursery School we have chosen to record these observations on labels that can then be stuck on a child’s individual ‘Record of Observations’ sheet. This allows all staff the chance to record an observation in the moment and share with that child’s Key Person. The observations on labels will always include the date, child’s name and a brief summary of what was observed. They will also have a coloured mark to show which Area of Learning the observation relates to.

Colour codes for observations and planning		
Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)	Purple	
Communication and Language (C&L)	Yellow	
Physical Development (PD)	Red	
Mathematics (M)	Blue	
Literacy (L)	Green	
Understanding the World (UW)	Orange	
Expressive Art and Design (EAD)	Pink	

Twice a half term (minimum) an observation of each child will be shared using the online journal software, Tapestry. These observations will show significant learning moments (WOW moments) and are made accessible to the parents who are able to leave comments on their child’s learning and progress. Parents are also able to record observations of their children that can be seen and commented on by staff. In Reception, the children also have a learning journal folder where paper copies of independent learning and adult-lead learning activities are stored.

At the end of the school year, those leaving Nursery and those finishing the Reception Year get a written report sharing their child's learning and progress. In Reception this includes sharing children's achievements against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

### **Inclusion:**

In our school we strongly believe that all children are unique and are valued. We strive to give all of our children every opportunity to achieve regardless of ability, ethnicity, race, culture, religious affiliation, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. We ensure we take into consideration individual children's life experiences and needs when we are planning their learning.

In the EYFS, we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children, so that most achieve the ELGs by the end of the key stage. Some children progress beyond this point. We help them do this by planning to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We aim to meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build on and extend the children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a variety of teaching strategies that are based on children's learning styles and needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children, and to help them to learn effectively.
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment, in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources that reflect diversity, and that avoid discrimination and stereotyping.
- Inspiring our children to learn from each other and through the whole school community.
- Monitoring children's progress, and providing support from outside agencies as necessary.
- Teaching our school values that encourage respect, tolerance and kindness.

### **Parents as partners:**

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating their children. We work closely with families by:

- Offering home visits to new Nursery children and children who are joining Reception from another setting. We also speak to children's Nursery and Pre-school setting for those starting in Reception year.
- Giving children and families the opportunity to meet their class teacher prior to starting school through Stay and Play sessions.
- Holding 'Meet the Teacher' and 'Curriculum Meetings' to share important information with parents and carers.
- Sharing children's learning through Tapestry and reading comments and observations from parents and carers.
- We have an 'Open door policy' where we are happy to meet with parents to discuss their child's learning and any concerns.
- We make ourselves available before and after school at 'pick up' and 'drop off times' for any queries, arranging of meetings and information sharing when needed.
- We hold Parent/Teacher Consultations during the Autumn and Spring term.
- Arranging school events that parents and carers are invited to, such as, Christmas performances, Easter concerts. Sport's day.
- We often invite parent helpers on school trips.
- At the end of each half term in Reception parents are invited in to see their child's Learning Journey folder.
- Holding family learning sessions where parents are invited to see lessons and spend time learning with their child.
- In Reception, teachers and parents leave comments regarding their child's reading.

At our school, the Reception teacher acts as the 'Key Person' for all of the children in their class. In Nursery children are assigned a 'Key Person' and they keep the Class Teacher informed about the learning, development and next steps for their 'Key Children' through regular meetings and conversations.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy is monitored by the Head Teacher, The EYFS Lead and the Governing Body, and will be reviewed in annually.

### **This Policy links to our Other Policies on:**

- Assessment policy
- Behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Equalities policy
- Feedback policy
- Health and safety policy
- Intimate care policy
- Values Policy