

Early Years Foundation Stage

Shilbottle Primary

Fun, Respect & Friendship



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

2017

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Additional policies:

Outdoor policy

Play policy

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY 2017

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage**
- 3. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework**
- 4. Active Learning through Play**
- 5. Assessment and Record Keeping**
- 6. Planning**
- 7. Parents as Partners**
- 8. Admissions and Induction**
- 9. Equal Opportunities**
- 10. Staffing, Equipment & Resources**
- 11. Staff development & support**
- 12. Links with the community, other agencies & settings**
- 13. Special Educational Needs & Disabilities [SEND]**
- 14. Safeguarding and**

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 are critical in children's development. Children develop rapidly during this time – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Foundation Stage is about developing key learning skills such as listening, speaking, concentration, persistence and learning to work together and cooperate with other children. It is also about developing early communication, literacy and numeracy skills that will prepare young children for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum".

Margaret Hodge MBE (2000)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Shilbottle Primary children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. Children may be invited to join the reception class [as pre-reception] before their official reception year, subject to availability of places, if they turn 4 in the autumn term.

Early Years education is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their schooling. It is a holistic education that encompasses all learning and development.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at Shilbottle Primary.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of practitioners working in the EYFS setting, including teaching and non-teaching adults.

2. Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage

In the EYFS setting at Shilbottle Primary we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

"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" (DFES 2007)

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special.
- Ensuring that no child is excluded or disadvantaged.
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates - physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know that they are valued by the practitioners looking after them.
- Fostering and nurturing children's self-confidence and self-esteem through their developing awareness of their own identity and role within the community.
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways.
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes.
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously.
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions differ to their own.
- Understanding the importance of play in children's learning and development.

- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn.
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development.
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of environments, inside and outside.
- Working in partnership with the children, parents/carers and other practitioners
- Remembering Every Child Matters to Us

The learning environment we provide aims to stimulate and extend the natural curiosity and desire to learn in young children. Practitioners will take on the roles of listener, advisor, observer and organiser to encourage discussion, reflection and development. This will give the children the opportunity to reflect on their learning from past experiences or to store information for future development. An environment rich in language builds the foundations for developing vocabulary and linguistic structures for thinking.

3. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework

Teaching in the EYFS setting at Shilbottle Primary is delivered in accordance with the Government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (2012). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates'.

The curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

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

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas.

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

Educational programmes which practitioners deliver in the setting must involve activities and experiences from the following seven areas. These are:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding of the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

These Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centered curriculum which allows children to make lots of links between what they are learning. All Areas of Learning and Development are given equal weighting and value.

At Shilbottle Primary, we believe that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. We believe that the EYFS

framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1, although those children identified as exceeding in Reception class may access aspects of the Year 1 NC in the summer term of Reception.

4. Active Learning through Play

At Shilbottle Primary we recognise that young children learn best through when they are active. We understand that active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods. Therefore, we believe that Early Years education should be as practical as possible and our EYFS setting has an ethos of learning through play.

We recognise the importance of children's play. It is an essential and rich part of their learning process, supporting them in all areas of development. Play is a powerful motivator encouraging children to be creative and to develop their ideas, understanding and language. Play is also flexible and able to suit the preferred learning style of the child. It can provide multiple ways for children to learn a variety of different skills and concepts.

In the EYFS setting at Shilbottle Primary practitioners provide both structured and unstructured play opportunities inside and outside. These activities are designed to engage children in practical, first-hand experiences which will support children to discover, explore, investigate, develop their personal interests and areas of curiosity, and help to make sense of the world around them as they begin to understand specific concepts. Play opportunities are also set up to provide children with opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge, demonstrating their skills and level of understanding.

In providing these active learning opportunities through play we understand the central position of play within the EYFS framework. This is essentially a play based curriculum and pedagogy as the provision of play opportunities underpins its delivery within settings.

5. Assessment and Record Keeping

Ongoing assessment is an essential aspect of the effective running of the EYFS setting at Shilbottle Primary. Regular, planned and focused assessments are made of children's learning and individual needs.

A record of each child's progress in all areas of their learning is kept by retaining and filing their assessment data.

- Parents are key to the initial assessments of their child, this is through the contact sheets completed prior to entry.
- The main EYFS assessment method is through practitioners' observations of children in different teaching and learning contexts, including both adult focused activities and child initiated play.
- Observations take place on a daily basis (both formally and informally) - Practitioners make time to carry out planned observations of individuals and groups of children regularly. They also make spontaneous observations in order to capture significant moments of children's learning.
- Observations are recorded in different formats although observations on the iPad (Tapestry) and photographs are heavily used. All practitioners are involved in observing children.
- Practitioners use observations to support their developing knowledge of individual children. It informs them of children's abilities, needs, interests, play schemas and learning styles. Observations are evaluated, children's learning priorities are identified and relevant learning opportunities are planned to support children to make the next steps and progress.
- Other methods of assessing children in the EYFS setting include engaging alongside children in their play, annotation of children's written work, talking with children about their task or play and in Learning Journeys.
- Learning Journeys record children's progress over the academic year in all Areas of Learning and Development of the EYFS framework. Samples of children's work are gathered, along with photographic evidence and observations.
- Home – School books are also used for evidence.

- Baseline assessment is carried out using the EYFS BASE assessment ideally during the children's first two weeks upon entering the setting. Judgments made on children's development in the EYFS are based on practitioners' evidence of children's behaviour observed independently and consistently in their self-initiated activities across all areas of learning and development.
- Parents are invited to attend parent nights throughout the year to discuss their child's progress.
- Parents with children in reception will receive a written summary reporting their child's progress to be emerging, expected or exceeding based on the EYFSP. This individual report is generated through SIMS or Target Tracker
- Moderation activities run by LA and cluster groups are attended. The EYFS also moderate internally.

There is continuous monitoring and assessment of each child's development using the EYFSP. The EYFS Target Tracker is updated (on the computer) half termly by the class teachers to track individual progress. This provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements. The programme is also used to generate the annual reports within EYFS.

See the school assessment policy for additional information.

6. Planning

The EYFS framework provides a long term plan to follow by ensuring that all Early Learning Goals are covered throughout the academic year.

Medium term planning is created with all early years practitioners involvement and takes into account the individual children's learning and developmental needs.

- Progression and continuity is paramount in the EYFS. There are regular discussions about children, activities, planning and change. Some resources are shared for example, the topic boxes for outdoor play.
- The children experience a range of teaching styles – whole class, small groups, individual learning, teacher led, teacher initiated, child led and child initiated. These styles encompass all areas of learning and are used both indoors and out.
- The children have access to the outdoors through their classrooms.
- Planning is linked to the EYFS curriculum in FS1 [pre reception] & FS2. During the summer term the Reception class may work towards some elements of the Y1 curriculum.
- The school actively encourages a creative curriculum and children are offered the opportunity to become more independent by making choices and select their own resources.

All Areas of Learning and Development are planned for and available to access within the setting. The learning opportunities provided include a range of adult focused and child initiated activities indoors. The setting also makes use of the outdoor environment whenever possible.

Educational visits within the local community and further afield are also planned to support children's learning within the classroom. For example, The House of Objects, The Alnwick Garden, Blue Reef Aquarium, Woodhorn and the beach.

Links with other school policies

- The EYFS is an integral part of the whole school and therefore the school policies are written to include this stage.

7. Parents as Partners

At Shilbottle Primary we recognise the importance of establishing positive relationships with parents, as highlighted by the EYFS framework. We understand that an effective partnership between school and

home will have a positive impact on children's learning and development. So, practitioners endeavour to encourage the regular sharing of information about the children with parents.

We value the role of parents as children's primary educators. Through questionnaires and informal chats at the beginning and end of the day, practitioners encourage parents to share their unique knowledge of their child, providing further insight into the child as an individual (e.g. characteristics, interests, experiences, likes, dislikes). This supports practitioners in establishing interesting and stimulating learning experiences, responding to children's needs and interests.

Parents are kept informed of what is happening in the setting through regular letters, reading records and informal chatting at the beginning and end of the day. This also gives suggestions of how parents can support their children's learning at home; consolidating and building on what has been covered in the setting. They may also receive these by email. Arrangements can be made for letters and brochures can be translated. Whole school newsletters are also sent home regularly.

- Parents are invited to attend parents' evenings during the course of the academic year. The first of these takes place during the autumn term (October) to allow practitioners and parents to discuss how children have settled into the setting. Another parent's evening takes place during the spring term (February) where practitioners will feedback on children's learning and development progress. Parents receive their annual written report in July.
- Other opportunities for practitioners to share children's learning, development and well-being with parents include Learning Journeys, end of year reports and assemblies where children's achievements are recognised.
- Parents are also invited to get involved with school life. Parental help is actively encouraged but helpers required an Enhanced DBS for Shilbottle Primary. In Reception parental help is requested from after October half term to allow children to settle into their new environment.
- There are opportunities for parents to help with activities such as educational visits and reading, as well as offering their particular skills (e.g. cooking, art, music) to support children's learning. Parents may be invited into the setting on other occasions such as open afternoons where children show them their work and special events.
- The setting has a friendly, open-doors ethos and practitioners are available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the day. Parents are always welcomed into school and encouraged to discuss and concerns they might have.
- In the term before children start Reception, parents are invited to a parents meeting, children are invited to a specific 'move up morning' in July, although they visit every Friday morning during the summer term. This allows parents to meet staff and for the children to become familiar with the classroom environment.
- Prior to the summer term meetings parents receive forms (data, medical, all about me, milestones & more) to complete and return which offer valuable insight into their child.
- Parents are encouraged to sign up to Class Dojo and Tapestry to support the learning of their child.

8. Admissions, Induction & Organisation of the EYFS (Reception)

- The reception class is the EYFS in Shilbottle Primary. There is an onsite independent Preschool which many of our children attend for FS1.
- The children in FS1 [pre reception] attend for a morning session (8:40 – 12 noon) which includes lunch. There is the possibility of an afternoon session for those eligible for 30 hours.
- Reception class follow the same routine as the school and start at 8:40 a.m. – they join the whole school community for playtimes, assembly and lunch, finishing at 3.00 p.m. Reception class have their own enclosed outside area which is accessible from the classroom.
- Pre reception admissions are organised through a school waiting list, although if this was oversubscribed the Local Authority Admissions Policy would come into play. Reception admissions

follow the local authority guidelines set out in the 'Admissions Policy'. Therefore children attending the preschool cannot be guaranteed a place in the reception class.

- Entry into the EYFS in reception is staggered over the month of September.
- The transition from preschool to reception class is greatly assisted through the shared time the classes spend together during the summer term. The preschool/FS1 children are introduced to communal areas of the school (dining hall, classrooms and school office) during the year to familiarise themselves with the wider school environment. This builds up a gradual picture of the different people around school that they will come in contact with and aims to relieve anxieties around moving into school.
- Formal introduction to the EYFS begins with an evening for new parents in the summer term. A class brochure covering all aspects of class routine and organisation is sent out prior to this evening to allow parents to digest some of the relevant information and prepare any further questions they may have. Parents are requested to complete information concerning their child prior to this evening so that the teacher has important details about each individual before they start in September.
- The evening provides an opportunity for parents to meet the teacher, classroom assistant and headteacher enabling parents to discuss particular areas of interest or concern around their child's learning and transition into reception class. This is also a chance for parents to familiarise themselves with the classroom and wider school environment.
- Uniform is made available prior to ordering from the school office to give parents opportunity to consider their child's needs. A selection of materials and resources used throughout the reception year are on display for the parents to look at and discuss with the available staff.
- 'Move Up' day in July day is when the whole school moves to their next class. Preschool children become 'reception' for the morning. Any children joining reception from other settings visit on this day.
- Children in pre-reception using preschool sessions will be collected after their lunch and taken by 'Friendly Frogs' staff to their room. Children in reception class are collected at 11.45 a.m. by the lunchtime supervisor with responsibility for reception class. Children benefit greatly from having a dedicated person during lunchtime who they can build a trusting relationship with as this time in the school day is often a challenging times for children early in the school year.
- Children are supplied with a water bottle and healthy snack every day (Healthy schools policy & Reception brochure). Milk is provided for all children under 5. The KS1 and EYFS benefits from the 'Five a Day' fruit scheme which supplies fruit daily to all foundation stage children.
- Throughout the day the children in the foundation stage will benefit from both the indoor and outdoor environment. This will comprise of a variety of activities including teacher led, child initiated, large and small groups.
- Throughout the school year trips related to topic work and places of general interest will be arranged (see School Visit Policy). Visitors will also enhance the children's learning opportunities.
- Emergency contacts and medical information is held on the school database. Prescribed medicines can be administered if a medical form has been completed (see Medicine Administration Policy)

See Admissions Policy for more information.

9. Equal Opportunities

All practitioners at Shilbottle Primary have a responsibility to maintain positive attitudes to diversity and difference, ensuring that inclusive practice is delivered in the EYFS setting.

All children, irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion, and social circumstances, have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development within the EYFS setting at Shilbottle Primary.

See Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

10. Staffing, equipment and resources

- The EYFS is part of the whole school and the Headteacher has overall responsibility.
- In Reception there is a full time class teacher and classroom assistant.
- The Reception class teacher is the EYFS co-ordinator
- External support (staff, equipment and resources) is available through the LA, school trips and visitors to school.
- The EYFS have access to a wide range of resources which support learning in the 7 areas. The reception class has an interactive whiteboard. The EYFS also has access to the climbing trail and wider school environment.

11. Staff development and support

- All staff (teaching and support) have the opportunity to attend courses which are relevant to or identified as necessary for professional development / personal interests.
- All staff are involved in staff training, inset days and twilight sessions.
- ITT students are offered the opportunity attend relevant trainings and meetings.
- Every teacher is involved in performance management and support staff have professional discussions where training needs are identified.
- Effective practice is shared
- Teaching staff receive PPA time

12. Links with the community, other agencies and other settings

- We recognise that children have had a variety of experiences before starting school. Some children have been at home; others have attended playgroups/preschools, LA maintained nurseries or day nurseries. If appropriate the class teacher will contact previous settings to gain more information about the children.
- It is recognised that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage often have a variety of professionals working with them and their families. These include speech therapists, health visitors, occupational therapists, educational psychologists, visual impairment agencies, CAMHS and staff supporting children with learning and behavioural difficulties. It is important that foundation staff have links with these agencies to ensure continuity for the children. (ECM: The Common Core)
- Information about local groups and community activities / events is displayed in the school notice board. Local church leaders and members of other faith groups visit the EYFS. The wider community is invited to a variety of school events.
- Regular contact is made with other early years settings and schools through visits, cluster meetings and professional development courses. A preschool meets daily on the school premises and share the outdoor area.

13. Special Educational Needs

- If staff members have concerns about children they will speak to their parents /carers as well as the school SENDCo to, where necessary, refer children to the relevant agency and implement an additional needs plan. All children in FS1 [pre reception] are screened for language development [Early Talk Boost]. In Reception, children receive their hearing and visual screening by the school nurse.
- At our school we believe in the early identification of children with special educational needs. This means that there may be an above average number of children receiving interventions in the EYFS and KS1 but this corrects itself in KS2.

See SEND policy, SEND information report and school data for further information.

14. 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 Shilbottle Primary, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2017.

- 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.

Keeping Safe

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. (See Shilbottle Primary Safeguarding Policy).

Good Health

All children are provided with a healthy snack each day as well as being given the choice of milk. They have access to water at all times.

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. In most cases, intimate care is to do with personal hygiene and it is good practise for the school to inform the school nurse of all children requiring intimate care.

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 work in partnership with parents to give the right support to an individual child. No intimate care is to be given without the express written permission of the parent or guardian of that child and all parents and guardians will be asked to provide that permission when their child joins reception at Shilbottle Primary.

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'. 'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.' Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.
- **Active learning** - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- **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.

"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.