



Shrivvenham
Church of England Primary School

All things are possible for one who believes

EYFS Policy

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Mission

We ensure our children learn in a nurturing environment where we value everyone as individuals, care for one another and foster positive emotional growth and well-being. Through our broad and balanced curriculum, we inspire, motivate and challenge our children to become independent and confident learners, maximising intellectual, social, physical and spiritual development. We put Shrivenham School at the heart of village life, actively encouraging partnership with parents, the Church and the wider community.

Vision

Shrivenham School gives everyone the opportunity to believe in themselves, others, and God. Through our values of love, hope and courage, everyone at our school will flourish, fulfil their unique potential and positively contribute to the community.

'All things are possible for one who believes' (Mark 9:23)

Values

LOVE

Love is the core value that underpins all that we do at Shrivenham CE Primary School. Jesus demonstrated his unconditional love during his time on earth indiscriminately, and as followers of Jesus we aim to walk in his footsteps.

We show love to everyone by putting others before ourselves. By working together as part of a strong and supportive family, we can all achieve more - socially, emotionally and academically.

HOPE

Hope is a core value for our church school because we share in the joy that comes from the belief that there is always hope and all is never lost. Hope is an attitude of mind that we develop through faith in God and each other.

In our school this helps us to keep going even when things get hard and when we face new challenges. Together we can turn hope into reality.

COURAGE

Courage is a core value for our church school because God asks us to be brave in the face of hardship. The book of Joshua reminds us to stand against injustice and to be the best we can be when things are difficult.

At our school, we have courage to stand by our beliefs and are committed to what is right and true.

Early Years Curriculum Intent

‘All things are possible for one who believes’

(Mark 9:23)

At Shrivenham CE Primary School we aim to make every day full of wonder, excitement and challenge, equipping today’s children for tomorrow’s world. Every child within Shrivenham’s Early Years family is recognised and valued as a unique individual.

Reading is seen as essential to all learning and is central to every aspect of our curriculum. The ability to learn is underpinned by curiosity and making connections. We provide opportunities for the children to develop as independent, confident learners with high aspirations. Their journey through school will be underpinned by Christian values and inclusive to all, with a focus on developing moral, spiritual, social and cultural understanding. The school provides an inclusive environment where learners are supported to achieve their potential.

The Early Years curriculum is crafted to ensure knowledge and skills are progressive. It provides our youngest learners with memorable experiences, which aim to raise aspirations and create a sense of pride. Community interaction is an essential part of our curriculum and values the opportunities for children to make a positive contribution to this. Children will leave the Early Years at Shrivenham with a sense of belonging, confidence and skills to make decisions.

Early Years Curriculum Implementation

At Shrivenham we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. This is made up of **four overriding principles** which our early year’s education is based upon:

- **Unique Child** – Every child is unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** – Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- **Enabling Environments** – 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 carers.
- **Learning and Development** – Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early year’s provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The curriculum provides a play-based and experiential learning environment, combined with focussed teaching and basic skills, to ensure children make rapid progress before moving onto Year 1. The children in both Pre-School and Reception are provided with ample opportunities accessible in our indoor and outdoor provision.

They engage in planned, focussed activities as well as self-initiated and free flow activities. The learning experiences within our Early Years are linked to the seven areas of learning and development within the EYFS. These areas are split into three prime areas and four specific areas. The three prime areas are those which the

children should develop first and are considered most essential for the healthy development and future learning of our children. These include:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Communication and Language** – involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical Development** – involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

As children grow and make progress in the prime areas, this will help them to naturally develop skills within the four specific areas. These are:

- **Literacy** – the early teaching of literacy involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematics** – the early teaching of mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and describing shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the World** – this involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive Arts and Design** – this involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Children benefit from meaningful learning across the curriculum and staff plan resourcefully for opportunities for communication, sustained shared thinking and physical challenge to build on existing skills taking into account the Characteristics of Effective Learning.

Rich first hand experiences (inside, outdoors, visitors and school trips) to widen experiences, awe and wonder are used to enhance our provision. Exploratory learning and thinking creatively including problem solving across all areas of learning. New vocabulary and concepts through reading will excite and engage all learners which includes staff modelling standard English and asking high quality questions.

Curriculum will promote and support children's emotional security and development of their character enabling children to take risks in a safe and secure environment. Supporting children to be active and to develop physically including giving clear messages to children why it is important to eat, drink and exercise as well as to be kind to others.

Early Years Curriculum Impact

Experiences and learning will be revisited and demonstrated through being deeply engaged in play. Our children will grow to be confident, competent lifelong learners and good citizens.

The children at Shrevenham experience a smooth transition between Pre-School, Reception and beyond. Effective communication and collaboration ensure the children leave the EYFS with a solid foundation of learning of which to build upon.

We use learning journals across the EYFS, supplemented with exercise books in Reception, which evidence to the children and their families the successes of the children throughout their time in Early Years.

As a team, we carry out regular internal moderation sessions and also ensure that staff attend external meetings and training to ensure that we feel confident with our judgements and that these judgements are consistent with a range of other settings. Assessment starts with careful observations which are then used to inform planning. Learning and teaching is thus effective when children feel a sense of belonging, curiosity and competence showing resilience and tenacity.

By monitoring assessment procedures regularly, we can effectively demonstrate what learning is taking place and how each child is progressing in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Progress toward the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception Year will ensure a positive disposition to learn. The progress of our children from their starting points regardless of ability is strong and celebrated.

“Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender.....Children are born ready, able and eager to learn. They actively reach out to interact with other people, and in the world around them. Development is not an automatic process, however. It depends on each unique child having opportunities to interact in positive relationships and enabling environments”. (Development Matters in the Early Years Curriculum)

Within this document, the term Early Years is used to describe children who are in our Pre-School and Reception Classes.

INTRODUCTION

The Early Years curriculum extends from birth to the end of the reception year. Entry into our primary school is into our Pre-School for two, three and four olds or at the beginning of the school year in which the children are five into our Reception classes. (compulsory schooling does not begin until the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday). The Early Years are vital in preparing children for later schooling. It is the Early Learning Goals that set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Reception Year. Children joining our school have already learnt a great deal. Many have been learning in our Pre-School or one of the various educational settings that exist in our community.

AIMS

At Shrivenham CofE Primary School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby 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 value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EY curriculum '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.'

PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced EY curriculum, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out

EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation 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 at the end of the Reception year. All the 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.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

As a Pre-School team we write plans for learning based primarily on the children's interests which offer experiences in all seven areas of learning.

As a Reception team, we write long term and medium term plans using the EY curriculum based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. These plans are reviewed regularly by the EYFS Lead. Please see our plans for more details. These plans then inform our short-term planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses. Our Reception teachers teach across both of our Reception classes in the afternoons to ensure the children receive exactly the same input and outcomes. We operate a free-flow approach across both classrooms to operate as one department and give our children a wealth of play based opportunities.

Practitioners working with the youngest children in Pre-School will focus strongly on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively, and become ready for school. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as the children move through the Early Years at Shrivenham School and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group, small group and 1:1 times which increase as they progress through the EY with times for a daily phonics session using 'Letters and Sounds'. This can be seen in Pre-School and Reception. In Reception, daily group reading supports our children's progress by allowing them to read books with sounds they have learnt.

In Reception we follow the 'Can Do Maths' curriculum with a daily Maths input.

The curriculum in Pre-School is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EY curriculum. 'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults. During children's play, early years practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out in both Pre-school and Reception.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Pre-School

As part of our Pre-School practitioners' daily practice, we are observing and assessing the children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We have termly focus children where we complete short observations to provide clear next steps. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and

discuss children in our care. All achievements are collated in a personal Learning Journey. We assess three times a year across the Prime Areas/Literacy and Mathematics to track progress and support any children with school readiness.

Reception

As part of our daily practice in Reception we are observing and assessing the children's development and learning to inform our future plans. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discuss children in our care. Specific teacher led activities are planned for to enhance progress and these are collated in the children's Learning Journey. We assess three times a year across all seven areas of learning to track progress and support any children with year 1 readiness.

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 stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food, following set procedures when children become ill/have an accident.

Please see our separate policies and procedures on Health and Safety, Safeguarding; Supporting children with Medical Conditions.

INCLUSION

We value all our children as individuals at Shrivensham, 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 so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate policies on Equality and SEN.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS AND WIDER CONTEXT

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families. We recognise that parents/carers 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 the children. We do this through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school.
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher/key adult before starting school;
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress in our settings and allowing free access to the children's 'Learning Journey' folders (Pre-School & Reception) or children's exercise books (Reception).
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher/key person if there are any concerns. There are meetings for parents each term at which the teacher and the parent discuss the child's progress. Parents of the children in Reception receive a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year.

- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between child, school and parents: Creative mornings, Class assemblies, invitation on school trips, Sports Day etc.
- Providing space in the children's 'Learning Journey' for parents to leave comments relating to the children's achievements.
- All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. At our school the EYFS teacher acts a 'Key Person' to all children in EYFS, supported by the Teaching Assistants.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including other nurseries/pre-schools and child-minders. Children attend introductory sessions to both the Nursery and the Reception class to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners. They receive a small booklet containing photos and complete an 'All about me' sheet. Reception children start full time in September.

In the final term in the Reception class, the Year 1 teacher will meet with the Early Years staff and discuss each child's development against the Early Learning Goals in order to support a smooth transition to Year 1. This discussion helps the Year 1 teacher to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Admissions Policy,
- SEN Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Health and Safety policy,
- Equal opportunities policy,
- Safeguarding policy.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of all adults working within the Early Years to ensure this policy is followed. It will be reviewed in line with the review cycle set by the governors and all stakeholders will be part of that review.