



Sholing Infant School

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Approved By: Headteacher

Date: September 2023

Start Date: September 2023

Review Date: September 2024

“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.”



Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE, 2023



Aims

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) follows the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (DFE, 2023) and is supported by the guidance set out in Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (DFE, 2023). This is planned and delivered by committed practitioners who fully understand the curriculum requirements. Practice in the EYFS is underpinned by four themes.

A Unique Child + Positive Relationships + Enabling Environments = Learning Development

These themes ensure that our practice supports children to enjoy, achieve, grow up safe, be healthy, make a positive contribution and understand economic well-being.

Our 4 early years themes	What does that mean for us?	What does it look like in our school?
A unique child 	Every child is a confident learner from birth, who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition that the child comes first • Individual ‘Learning Journey’ records • Support and challenge for all children • Making personal choices in their learning journey • Safe, secure environment
Positive relationships 	Creating strong, secure and caring relationships with all our children alongside respectful and open partnerships with parents and carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative meetings with parents before school begins and throughout the year • Individual school based or home visits • Parent contributions to Learning Journeys • Parents evenings and school reports • Open door policy • Working with other professionals and agencies beyond school • Highly trained staff trained in all aspects of the new EYFS framework, including the safeguarding requirements, ensuring that all adults know how to keep children safe and to recognise and report concerns.

<p>Enabling environments</p> 	<p>Our high quality learning environment both indoors and outdoors stimulates, supports and challenges children. Our adults and resources within the environment are key in supporting the learning and development of each child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rich variety of stimulating, high quality resources inside and out • Outdoor and covered areas with all areas of the curriculum available everyday • A recognition that, despite the limitations of the school site, children need lots of access to natural materials and resources • Clear, accessible well organised learning areas that promote independence and exploration • Individual Learning Journeys for each child
<p>The importance of 'play' in the Learning and Development</p> 	<p>Children learn in different ways and at different rates. Play underpins all development and learning for young children. It stimulates, entices and motivates children to explore and learn in fun ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exciting and enticing learning topics, including current interests of the children • Carefully planned activities • Supportive adults who can meet the learning & development needs of each child • Enriching resources • Hearing and responding to each child's voice • Play based approach, active and engaging

Through the EYFS our practitioners aim to deliver individualised learning and care for our young learners giving them the best possible start in life. Our learning environments are well planned providing opportunities for pupils to work both inside and outside. We believe in offering exciting, enriching and educational opportunities within our environments. These areas encourage and support our pupils' independent skills, curious thinking and perseverance. Throughout the day practitioners provide opportunities for both child initiated, directed child initiated and teacher lead learning. We place a high value on structured and unstructured play.

We aspire to develop the individual qualities of all pupils whatever their gender, race, or belief, building on what they know and can do, and work hard to ensure that all pupils feel confident, secure, safe, valued and special. We ensure that we evaluate our practice and environment in line with our current cohorts and therefore, review our practice in-line with pupils who may need extra support or have special educational needs and any individual specific needs. We do this through planning, moderation and year group meetings. We believe strongly that every child has the right to have access to the full curriculum. We have a disability equality scheme and accessibility plan.

Context and Organisation

Sholing Infant School is a three form entry school with an admissions number of 90 pupils. Our pupils are split into three Reception classes with an Early Years Leader who oversees the stage. Each class comprises of a Class Teacher or full time equivalent and a full time Teaching Assistant. The stage also has access to Higher Level Teaching Assistants responsible for the delivery of Speech and Language interventions, and Emotional Literacy Support (ELSA).



The school day begins at 8:45am and pupils are encouraged to join in with 'Fiddly Fingers' fine motor activities until the bell goes at 8.55am signaling registration time. Pupils participate in a variety of lessons throughout the morning, including phonics, reading, fine motor skills and handwriting. Over the course of the week pupils will also complete a literacy morning session (including reading and writing opportunities), two Maths morning sessions, and two writing morning sessions, which include a teacher lead input and adult directed task, and adult set continuous provision activities. We also have 3 story and singing slots and a mental Maths slot timetabled per day. Over the course of the year our timetable evolves to include daily English and Maths lessons in preparation for Key Stage 1.

Lunchtime starts at 12pm and ends at 1pm. Lunchtime supervisors rotate the children between eating their lunch in the activity area and time to play outside in the Early Years Playground.

Afternoons run from 1pm-3pm and include a short teacher lead input based on an area of learning, including Communication and Language, Personal Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Expressive Arts and Design, and Understanding the World. Pupils then have the opportunity for continuous provision both inside and outside of the classroom environments, including adult lead and child initiated opportunities across all areas of the curriculum. Reception is made up of 3 classes of 30 children, and we work together across the whole year group during continuous provision sessions. During this time the children can explore areas across the whole environment, working wherever their interests take them, including classrooms, the tent and the outdoor garden. Our outdoor area is securely fenced and provides a safe learning environment where pupils can develop their independence skills and enhance and extend their learning. We believe that outdoor play is vitally important to a child's development and therefore encourage access to it every day in safe weather conditions. All areas of learning are represented across the tent and outdoor environment, and staff and pupils have access to a wide range of resources that can be used to enhance learning and develop their own interests.

Arrangements for admission

We work closely with all of our feeder pre-schools and settings in order to provide effective transition into school. Upon allocation and acceptance of school places through the Local Authority Admissions Team, the Early Years Leader will then contact all feeder settings and will hold an initial telephone conversation to discuss every individual pupil and their needs and interests. The Early Years Leader will arrange to visit our main feeder settings, and settings where pupils would benefit from an early opportunity to meet a member of school staff (this may be the Early Years Leader or the school SENCO), and will liaise with settings to help arrange class lists, ensuring that there is a balance of boys and girls, Autumn, Spring and Summer births, EAL pupils and pupils with any additional needs across all three classes (See Admission Policy for full induction process). We encourage parents to follow our staggered intake to ensure the best settling period for their child. However, every parent is entitled to a full time school place for their child.

Our Expectations: Partnership with Parents

We strongly believe that parental involvement is key to our pupils' successes. Upon joining our school community, we have a 'Home- School Agreement' which all parties sign to say they will adhere to for their families' time at Sholing Infant School, including respect for our school ethos, and expectations of working together to provide the best possible outcomes for our children. This also includes the expectation that pupils will be punctual and will have good or better attendance.

Partnership with parents begins very early on in the induction of our new children. On acceptance of a school place, parents are provided with an information letter detailing all transition activities. We hold introductory meetings for our new parents where they are introduced to the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher, Early Years Leader, SENCO and the Chair of the Governing Body. We then hold 3 preschool sessions and 1 transition morning for pupils so that they can meet other children



in their classes and so that we can begin to get to know their parents too. All pupils are provided with a 'Starting School Pack' before the summer holidays which includes further information for parents, a social story, laminated name writing and numeral formation cards, and a small gift such as a book or teddy bear to welcome the child to school.

Parents receive a home visit from the class Teacher and Teaching Assistant before their school starts school.. The home visit gives the staff the opportunity to meet the child in the comfort of their own surroundings and talk to the parents about their child. This is focused on their likes and dislikes, home life, allergies, toileting issues, medical conditions etc. Additional home visits may be arranged with the Early Years Leader/Class Teacher/SENCO if necessary, prior to the child's start date (See home visits policy). The same philosophy is adopted in the school meeting, however, a family may choose this option if a child is particularly nervous about starting school. In cases where there are safeguarding concerns raised by preschool settings, home visits are strongly encouraged in order for school staff to gather further information about the pupil and their home environment and develop positive relationships with parents from the outset, offering support where needed.

Parents are encouraged to attend our 'Stay and Play' sessions in September before their child starts school, and relationships are developed between parents and school staff throughout the year through daily contact at school drop off and collection times. We support and encourage our parents to be actively involved in their child's learning, and provide information about what they can do at home, such as daily reading and phonics practise, and completing small homework tasks that are provided such as weekly phonics and handwriting practise, and holiday homework projects.

The Early Years Leader runs parent workshops during the Autumn Term to help parents understand the expectations for their child and ways that they can support learning at home. This includes a welcome meeting, communication, language and play, phonics, reading, writing and maths. Curriculum letters are shared with parents every half term, detailing the key aims of the term and what learning will be covered, and ways that parents can help at home. Parents are encouraged to practise their child's reading a minimum of 5 times per week, and are provided with phonics sheets to support what their child has been learning in class as well as an appropriate decodable book closed matched to their child's reading ability.

We have three parents' evenings throughout the year and complete annual individual reports assessing all 17 Early Learning Goals at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. These meetings provide parents with the opportunity to formally discuss their child's progress, although any concerns are addressed with parents throughout the course of the year. Parents are also invited into school to attend some celebration events throughout the school year, such as for whole school celebration assemblies of pupil achievement, at the end of a topic, or for our Christmas Nativity performances.

We regularly seek parental feedback on their child's interests and views through the use of google forms, which we then use to inform our future planning. Parents are encouraged to comment with their child on their favourite parts of the topic and what the parent feels that their child has achieved. Parents also have the opportunity to contribute to their child's learning journey evidence by sharing achievements away from school, through 'wow moment' slips that are sent home regularly. School staff help parents to identify key skills to watch out for and give ideas and examples throughout the year to encourage all parents to contribute. These suggestions also boost parent's confidence in their own ability to contribute to their child's Learning Journey. We work in partnership with the whole school to ensure a smooth and effective transition between the key stages, particularly as pupils move from the end of the EYFS into Key Stage 1.

Our Expectations: Staff and Pupils

We expect our staff to ensure that pupils feel valued and to know that they are part of the whole school community, such as through shared assemblies and becoming part of the school council in



the Summer Term. We have high expectations of pupils' behaviour (see behaviour policy) and help pupils to develop appropriate attitudes to learning and school life, such as through the use of our whole school 'Golden Rules' which support our school ethos and curriculum values. Our curriculum will provide the tools with which the children can develop lifelong learning characteristics; We aim to develop **independent** learners who enjoy opportunities to be curious, to explore, problem solve and be **creative**. Children will learn to be **resilient** in the face of difficulties; **reflective** in celebrating their successes and not afraid to make mistakes and build upon them. Children will develop **confidence** to question and try new things and will be **aspirational** about where their learning could take them both within school and beyond.

The Early Years Team participate in regular Team meetings lead by the Early Years Leader, and this is an opportunity to provide CPD as well as to review practice and share ideas, which are then used to inform Teachers in their Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time. Teachers also meet with their class Teaching Assistant(s) weekly to discuss planning for the week ahead. All practitioners are encouraged to share their observations of the children and ideas for ways to enhance learning and provision, and a collective team ethos is embedded in order to provide the best possible provision for all pupils.

We are committed to staff development through comprehensive professional development. Early Years Teachers have two performance management meetings per academic year and the Early Years Teaching Assistants also have performance management targets which are reviewed with their line manager. The Early Years Leader regularly participates in professional development opportunities provided by the Trust and the Local Authority, and this information is then shared with all other team members. Practitioners are encouraged to attend CPD opportunities where possible (for example, completing the 'New to Early Years' training provided by the Trust), and the school operations manager also keeps a training record of any training lead by an outside provider for all school staff (e.g. First Aid, Safeguarding, Fire Safety, Prevent and Early Years specific training).

Monitoring is used to provide an overview of the continually developing Early Years provision at Sholing Infant School. Evaluation of the main findings informs future action planning, target setting and INSET sessions based on school needs. This is to ensure the highest standards of provision. Monitoring and evaluation is carried out in a variety of ways including:

- Data analysis: cohort, class, individual and vulnerable groups
- Action planning that is led from the data findings and feeding into the School Development Plan
- Weekly Early Years Team meetings lead by the Reception Leader
- Scrutiny of children's work, Learning Journeys and planning
- Internal moderation and moderation with other schools within our Trust
- An Enabling Early Years environment that reviews systems and routines where necessary
- Lesson observations and drop ins of teaching and learning including Teaching Assistants
- Performance management of Teachers and Teaching Assistants
- CPD for Early Years TAs

Monitoring and evaluation is not only the responsibility of the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Early Years Leader, but of any teacher who is responsible for subject leaderships; all teachers are expected to have a strong overview and understanding of how their subject is represented and taught within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Early Years Leader works in collaboration with subject leaders to ensure that progression and provision is clear across each subject area, and keeps staff up to date of any changes to Early Years legislation and guidance.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and Curriculum

Our children follow a broad and balanced curriculum with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework underpinning all practice. The learning and development of the Early Years Foundation



Stage are set out into Prime and Specific areas. The three Prime areas all closely link with one another and are central to all the other areas of learning and development. They represent the earliest stages of development and are critical for influencing later successes in life. It is essential for children to acquire these skills by the age of five as they become more difficult to acquire later on and may hold a child back in other areas of development.

Prime areas of development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development



- Self-regulation
- Managing Self
- Building relationships

Here the children are supported to see themselves as a valuable individual who can build respectful and constructive relationships. They will be encouraged and supported in finding ways to express their feelings, show resilience and identify and moderate their emotions. We have a high focus on self-regulation and managing our feelings. Children are taught to respect the perspectives of others and their feelings and manage their own personal hygiene.

Physical Development



- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

We develop both gross and fine motor skills by planning and offering a range of activities to enhance physical control, mobility, awareness of space, and manipulative skills.

Communication and Language



- Listening, Attention and Understanding
- Speaking

Children are encouraged to listen attentively in a range of situation's, giving attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity, allowing them to become competent talkers. They are encouraged to ask questions to demonstrate their understanding and further develop different concepts. Children are exposed to a number of texts, rhymes and poems to build up a repertoire. They are introduced to different vocabulary which they are encouraged to use in different situations.

Specific areas of development

There are four Specific areas of learning, these help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

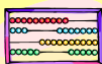
Literacy



- Comprehension
- Word Reading
- Writing

Here we develop early literacy skills through reading, writing and phonics activities.

Mathematical Development



- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Here we develop mathematical understanding with a focus on developing a solid understanding of the basics of number and numerical patterns, through practical activities and opportunities to solve problems and demonstrate understanding. We also develop pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measure.

Understanding the World



- Past and Presents
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

Pupils' find out about the world around them, other people, cultures and features of the natural and man-made world and about simple aspects of the past. This provides a foundation for later curriculum specific subjects of History, Geography, Science and Religious Education.

Expressive Arts & Design



- Creating with materials
- Being Imaginative and Expressive




We foster the children's creativity and imagination through exploring and using media and materials, acting, role play and small world play, dancing, singing, music, designing and constructing. This provides a foundation for later curriculum specific subjects of Art and Design, Design and Technology and Music.

Our curriculum is planned through a variety of different themes, each of which offer experiences in all 7 areas of learning. Themes are chosen taking into account the needs of our learners, our school context and pupils interests and abilities, for example, pupils complete an 'All about me' theme during Autumn 1 as they settle into school and get to know each other, and an 'Into the woods' theme in Autumn 2 in order to develop pupils' cultural capital and make use of our local environment. Children are encouraged to pursue their own interests daily through child initiated play, and are actively encouraged to share aspects of home life through our 'All About Me bag' class sessions and by taking home the class soft toy and completing a diary about the activities they have shared. As well as ongoing assessment, we also review our curriculum and environments annually in line with our new cohorts and any individual specific needs that a child has. We strongly believe that every child has the right to have access to the full curriculum, and our school SENCO is proactive

in providing support for staff with pupils who have additional needs in order to ensure that they are able to participate in all areas of learning and school life.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Through a 'head, heart, hands approach' our curriculum will provide the tools with which the children can develop lifelong learning characteristics; We aim to develop independent learners who enjoy opportunities to be curious, to explore, problem solve and be creative. Children will learn to be resilient in the face of difficulties; reflective in celebrating their successes and not afraid to make mistakes and build upon them. Children will develop confidence to question and try new things and will be aspirational about where their learning could take them both within school and beyond. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, these core values are linked to the Characteristics of Effective Learning and characters that the school uses to support these-

Characteristics of Effective Learning	Skills being developed
Creating and thinking critically "I use my head like Mouse" 	Thinking: Problem solving, creating own ideas, planning, selecting resources equipment, adapting & reviewing
Active Learning "I use my heart like Stickman" 	Motivation: Concentration, focus, persistence, enjoyment, effort, attention to detail, satisfaction in reaching goals
Playing and Exploring "I use my hands like the Gruffalo's child" 	Engagement: Finding out, having a go, being willing, connecting known ideas, pretending & taking a risk

Assessment

Assessment is vital in ensuring that children are encouraged to follow their own interests and are supported at their individual stages of development. We assess the children on entry to school during their first six weeks through the Government's Baseline Assessment programme. *"The purpose of the reception baseline assessment is to provide an on-entry assessment of pupil attainment to be used as a starting point from which a cohort-level progress measure to the end of key stage 2 (KS2) can be created."* (Standards & Testing agency, February 2020, DFE). This assessment takes place 1:1 with the class teacher, the activities are practical and last around 20 minutes. The children complete assessments in Language, Communication and Literacy, and Mathematics.

The school also completes its own baseline assessment activities to provide a well-rounded picture of what each child can do on entry to school. These combined assessments allow teachers to make judgements about whether each child is 'on track' or 'off track' for the 3-4 year old observational checkpoints of Development Matters in the 3 prime areas of learning and in Literacy and Mathematical Development on entry to school, which is then used to inform future provision and to track pupils progress. We continue assessing the children against the curriculum statements taught each term using a range of formative and summative assessment methods throughout the year. These include:

- Ongoing observational assessments recorded in the pupils' individual learning journey



- Annotated samples of work
- Annotated photographs
- Individual writing and mathematics books
- Assessment tasks such as phonic sound and decoding checks
- Weekly reading records
- WOW moments (parent contributions from home)
- Practitioners knowledge of the child

Bromcom is used to track pupils' summative progress and is updated termly, judging whether pupils are 'on track' or 'off track' in their development of the three Prime Areas, Literacy (including word reading and writing) and Mathematical Development. The Early Years Leader and Head Teacher closely track all key groups through the year, including gender, EAL, SEND, PPG, FSM and Summer born pupils. Pupils who are assessed as being 'off track' are monitored closely, with the use of a review document to highlight any child who is 'off track'. Pupil progress reviews are undertaken termly with the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher and the SENCO, and appropriate interventions and changes to provision are agreed in order to help close gaps in pupil development.

At the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Reception teachers have to provide a summary of every child's attainment against the Early Learning Goals. This is known as the EYFS Profile. Each pupil is assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals and whether these have been met, and whether they have achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD). This judgement is made using teacher knowledge of the child, evidence provided through the pupils work and within their individual learning journey, and from assessment activities carried out during the year. This information is shared with parents on an individual pupil basis, and is also analysed and used to inform the Early Years Action Plan and School Improvement Plan for the following year. Data is also shared with the trust and with the receiving Year 1 Teachers to ensure that a smooth transition takes place between key stages.

Legal Responsibilities

From September 2008, the Early Years Foundation Stage became statutory for all schools and Early Years providers. This was reviewed in 2021 and a revised curriculum was put in place in September 2021. There are a number of standards set out in the 'Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance' with the most recent update being produced in July 2023 which our school adheres to, ensuring that our provision is of a consistently high standard. These standards cover the learning and development and welfare requirements, and are reviewed in line with each new publication.

Child protection

Safeguarding pupils within our care is of the highest priority. We endeavour to make all of our pupils feel safe within their environment and we build strong relationships from the very beginning of their time at school. Our first theme 'All about me' supports children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development to develop their skills to be happy, confident learners who can settle into school quickly in an environment in which their individual needs are met. Our pupils are taught to behave in ways that are safe for themselves as well as others (See behavior and Relationships policy). We teach pupils about possible dangers, ways of keeping safe, and about personal hygiene to prevent the spread of illness and disease. Children are taught about trusted adults and sharing their concerns and worries. They are taught the 999 number in the event of immediate danger. All staff who come into contact with the children have the relevant qualifications and safeguarding checks. All new Early Years staff are asked to sign to confirm their understanding of their obligations under the requirements regarding 'disqualification by association'.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989 and 2004; and in line with the subsequent advice and guidelines, including the 'Working



together to safeguard children' documents (2018) and our responsibilities with regard to the Prevent Strategy (2015 and updated in 2021).

The aims of this policy are:

- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and feel confident to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, the school, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children.
- To be extra vigilant for children with SEND
- To develop a structured procedure within the school that will be followed by all members of the school community in cases of suspected abuse.
- To ensure that all adults within our school who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability. This includes other community users of our facilities.
- To ensure staff are aware of the Prevent Strategy and able to protect children and young people who are vulnerable or at risk of being radicalised.

Please see the school's Safeguarding Policy for additional information.

Supporting policies

- Disability policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Home Visits Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Staff member responsible for Implementation and review

Head Teacher, Early Years Leader and Early Years Team

