



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy #theJSway

September 2024

Introduction

At John Shelton Community Primary School, we are committed to providing a high-quality early year's education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning.

We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework which clearly states:

'All children deserve the care and support they need to have the best start in life. Children learn and develop at a faster rate from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives, so their experiences in early years 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 provide the foundation children need to fulfil their potential.' Statutory Framework 2024

When parents and carers choose John Shelton, we want them to be confident that we will keep their children safe and help them to thrive giving them the best possible start to their education.

Our Aims in Early years are to:

- Create a happy, caring, secure and fun environment for all children.
- Encourage confidence, independence and a desire to learn.
- Focus on the development of every child as an individual, valuing and building on their previous experiences and responding to their needs.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Develop in children an enquiring mind, an interest in learning and an enthusiasm for the next stage of school life.
- Provide good foundations for later learning.
- Encourage good oracy skills, social relationships, developing self-esteem and respect for others.

Within the EYFS there are four guiding principles which shape practice in early years. These are:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At John Shelton we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration/sharing times and reward stickers, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

In our Nursery and Reception classes we believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence.
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively.
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued.
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping, their language and communication skills.
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action.

It is important to us that all children 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. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent from secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with children and their families.

Parents and carers are the children's first educators, and we are committed to working in close partnership with them in order to enable each child to achieve their potential. We highly value the contribution that parents and carers make and seek to maintain an effective partnership between home and school by:

- Demonstrating that we value and respect the role of the parents/carers as the first educators by listening to accounts of their child's development and any concerns and aspirations they have.

- Ensuring that parents and carers are provided with detailed information prior to admissions enabling them to feel confident about the transition process.
- Ensuring arrangements for settling in are flexible enough to give time for children to become secure and for practitioners and parents to discuss children's circumstances, interests, skills, and needs.
- Welcoming parents and carers into the classroom to support and enrich learning opportunities.
- Ensuring parents are kept well informed about the curriculum and school life.
- Offering parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress and allowing free access to their child's on-line learning journey through class Dojo.
- Providing the opportunity on Dojo for parents and carers to contribute relating to their child's achievements.
- Arranging a range of activities throughout the year that encourage collaboration between children, Nursery and Reception and parents and carers, e.g. open mornings, workshops, stay and play sessions and themed days.
- Sharing information regarding child's progress and achievements and how parents and carers can support the next stage of learning.

All staff involved in the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. In both nursery the children are organised in 'family groups' to provide quality time for adult: child interaction.

Enabling Environments

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their development and learning and interests, before planning and challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

The EYFS learning environment is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, be quiet and rest. The environment is set up in learning areas where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The foundation stage has two separate outdoor areas and access to our forest. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children opportunity to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 7 areas of learning.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning outcomes equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Features of effective teaching and learning in our school that relate to the EYFS are:

- The partnership between staff and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement.
- The understanding that staff have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching.
- The range of approaches used provides first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication.
- The carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the ELG throughout the EYFS.

- The provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional abilities.
- The encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self- management.
- The support for learning with appropriate accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities, and equipment.
- The identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through the plan, do and review process.

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum is planned in accordance with the ‘Educational Programmes’ set out in the Statutory Framework (2024). The Early Years Foundation Stage is a curriculum from birth to five years old. The learning outcomes are split into seven areas of learning (3 Prime and 4 Specific) which are:

Prime

Personal Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

Communication and Language

Specific

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding of the World

Expressive Arts and Design

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Through play and practical experiences children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first hand experiences, talk, books and equipment. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The school fosters and develops relationships between home, school, and the local area in order to make links stronger for the good of the community as a whole. Children are encouraged to learn to work, share, take turns and co-operate with others. They are encouraged to be independent and make choices for themselves. They are also encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Children are enabled to become confident and develop a positive self-image.

Physical Development

Children are given opportunities to move to music, use equipment, develop, and practice their fine and gross motor skills. They develop an increasing understanding of how their body works and what is needed to be healthy. This is done in both indoors and outdoors and by working with a wide range of resources.

Communication and Language

This covers all aspects of language development and provides the foundation for literacy skills. Children’s developing competence in speaking, listening, and understanding is focused on. We aim to extend and enrich the children’s vocabulary through story time, rhymes, role-play, and group

discussions. Children are encouraged to share their own experiences through speaking and acting out events in imaginative play and talking about their own ideas. They are encouraged to take part in class activities such as working with puppets, participating in music sessions, and saying rhymes and singing songs together.

Literacy

We have a variety of resources for the children to use to help them develop early English skills. Children are encouraged to use the mark-making areas indoors and outdoors independently, but they also take part in teacher-led activities. These activities include shared reading, phonics sessions and small group reading and writing. The pre-writing work encourages correct pencil control, left/right orientation, and letter formation. Children have the opportunity to develop their writing skills in accordance with their age, ability and competence. We encourage children to treat books and other resources with respect and they are given many opportunities to listen to stories told by the staff.

Mathematics

We aim for children to achieve mathematical understanding and a firm foundation for numeracy through practical activities and using and understanding language in the development of simple mathematical ideas. Pre-number work is covered through nursery rhymes, stories, and activities. Children are given the opportunity to learn about number, shape, space, position, pattern, time, and measurement. This gives them the deeper understanding of skills and knowledge to become mathematicians.

Understanding the World

All children are given opportunities to solve problems, investigate, make decisions, experiment, and explore. They will learn about living things, their environment, the world around them and the people who are important in their lives. Children are also given opportunities to develop computing skills and to work with and use modern technology.

Expressive Arts and Design

We provide opportunities for all children to explore and share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through a variety of art, design, technology, music, drama. Movement, dance, and imaginative play activities. Children are given opportunities to make paintings, drawings, collages, models and use basic musical instruments. Children also learn new songs and rhymes and enjoy singing them with each other. Colour recognition is taught, naming colours, mixing paints, sorting, and matching through various times during the year children are given the opportunity to participate in school productions and assemblies.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the Characteristics of Effective Learning, the three characteristics are:

- **Playing and Exploring (Engagosaurus)**– children investigate and experience things and events around them and ‘have a go.’
- **Active Learning (Motosaurus)**– children concentrate and keep trying if they experience difficulties, as well as enjoying what they achieve.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically (Thinkosaurus)**– children have and develop their own ideas, make links between different experiences, and develop strategies for doing things.

Learning Through Play and teaching in EYFS

‘The EYFS is about what children learn, as well as how they learn. Effective practice is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other and through adult-guided learning.’ Statutory framework 2024

At John Shelton Community Primary School, we do not make a distinction between work and play. Children learn through purposeful planned play activities and staff will decide when child-initiated or adult-led activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We ensure that there is a balance between adult led and child-initiated activities across the day. We believe that even during child-initiated activities the adults’ role and interaction with the children is essential as this helps to build the children’s understanding and so guides new learning. The role of the adult is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the children are doing, either through participation in the children’s game or encouraging the children to participate or complete a task with the adult. The children are taught through a number of different strategies that are both Early Years based as well as direct teaching and other more investigative learning approaches.

Well planned play, both indoors and outdoors, provides key opportunities for young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. We recognise the importance of adult support and secure environment in the role of effective play.

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

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support thinking and help them to make connections by showing a genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas, and asking open questions (Sustained Shared Thinking). Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the setting to extend their learning. Our members of staff work as ‘Facilitating Learning’ when engaging with children’s play, they move thinking and learning to the next level through questions, role modelling and/or partnership learning. The children also come together at least three times a day for class based or group learning which focuses on key skills and knowledge including the teaching of Phonics for Reading and Writing and Mathematical Skills.

Planning

The planning within EYFS is based around our developed curriculum, children’s needs, next steps in learning and their interests. Long term planning is planned for by the EYFS team and carefully selected stories lead the theme or topic. Medium- and short-term plans are planned for by the nursery and reception teams who have a good understanding of their children.

Through careful planning we aim to:

- Provide a carefully structured curriculum, building on and extending children’s knowledge, experiences, skills, and needs.
- Provide a wide range of well planned, purposeful, challenging activities that utilise the children’s interests and build upon previous knowledge and skills.
- Support and develop children’s involvement and concentration in order for them to learn effectively.

- Present activities in many ways and use a range of teaching strategies.
- Develop self-esteem, confidence, and independence in their ability to learn.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment where each child is valued and where racial, religious and gender stereotypes are challenged.
- Monitor children's progress identifying area of concern and taking action to provide support.
- Give opportunities for self-assessment and reflection.

Assessment and Recording

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified next steps for rapid catchup. Assessment in EYFS take the form of informational observations, standardise assessments for example phonics and all the adult's professional knowledge of the children.

As each child enters the Foundation Stage, we use our professional judgement to assess if the children are working 'on track' across the EYFS prime areas of learning in nursery and in reception the prime areas plus Literacy and mathematics. Within 6 weeks of the child starting, they will be given a 'baseline' assessment. Within Reception the children complete Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) which is a statutory requirement.

At the end of the year, we assess the Reception Class children against the 17 EYFS Profile Early Learning Goals, stating whether they are EMERGING, EXPECTING or EXCEEDING. This is reported to parents/carers and the local authority.

During the year there are formal opportunities to feedback information to parents and carers through parent consultations in the autumn and spring term. Towards the end of the academic year a written report covering the seven areas of learning will be given to parents and carers and they are invited into school to discuss this with their class teacher.

Welfare and Safeguarding Arrangements

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe, secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.' (Statutory Framework for EYFS 2024)

At John Shelton Community Primary School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with what is stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2024.

We aim to:

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence and independence.
- Promote good health; both mentally and physically
- 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.

It is important to us that all children in 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. Within the EYFS we have 2 members of the team who are pediatric first aid trained. Staff are regularly trained and updated through whole school training regarding child protection.

Admission Arrangements

We have a Nursery offering 15 hours, 30 hours and 2-year-old funded and paid places for five days a week. We also have a 30-place full-time Reception class. Parents and carers may register their children for Nursery from the age of 1 and a half onto the school's admission list. Children are admitted through Coventry City Council to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday and attend full-time.

Our admissions procedure for both Nursery and Reception follows the Coventry City Council's School Admission Policy, a detailed copy of which can be obtained from our school office or on the Coventry City Councils Website.

Children who attend our Nursery are NOT guaranteed a school place when they reach school age. Places in our Reception class must be applied for through Coventry City Council.

Transition

We believe that smooth transition from home to Nursery, from Nursery to Reception and from Reception to Year One are vital. Transition is carefully planned for, and time given to ensure happy children and 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 nurseries and child-minders.

We have a clear action plan for transition, and this is adapted each year to meet individual children's needs and cohort needs.

Home School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the school and parents and carers to work closely in an equally partnership.

We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- Holding formal parent consultations throughout the year.
- On Class Dojo uploading weekly class stories to show the learning that has taken place over the week which parents and carers can add to and make comments about learning.
- Send home a class buddy which the child can add to their diary.
- Update class pages on the school website ensuring the curriculum overview along with other documents sent home are available.

- Hold workshops for example 'Read Write Inc'
- Holding 'Stay and Play' sessions where we invite parents and carers into school to take part in themed activities.
- Operate an 'open door' policy that allows parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Equally, if staff have concerns about the progress or behavior of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss this.
- Parents and carers are invited into school to watch productions such as nativity's, national nursery rhyme week performances.
- We use schoolcomms as our first form of communication, in addition to this we use social media, the school website and class dojo to keep families as up to date as possible with school life.

Reviewed and agreed: September 2024

Next review: September 2025