

October 2024

EYFS Policy

This document relates to

Shaftesbury Victoria School



Shaftesbury Education



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Introduction

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the [Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework](#). This policy should be read with the statutory framework.

The school's policies and procedures in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are also reflected within the general policy framework.

Aims

At Victoria School we aim to be a centre where successful learning and high levels of achievement prepare children and young adults for fulfilling future lives. We value the individual young person and believe that they must be at the centre of all that we do. We believe that successful learning comes from skilful teaching, an innovative and personalised curriculum and from a real partnership with families.

Victoria School is a place where everyone is respected and where everyone works at and develops good relationships and friendships. Our school must be a safe place for learning and fun, where we support children's emotional, social and spiritual development.

As outlined in the Statutory Framework *“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.”*

At Victoria School we adhere to the statutory guidance stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the four guiding principles that shape the practice in Early Years settings.

These include:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early

years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning.
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- 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.

Foundation Stage 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 pupils to achieve and exceed early learning goals. All 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.

These three areas are the prime areas:

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

Children are also supported through the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World

- Expressive Arts and Design

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

As a team, we write long and medium-term plans using the EYFS based on a series of themes each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. These plans inform short-term weekly planning, alongside observations, which remain flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

We focus strongly on the three prime areas, as a result of the children's SEND, 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 children move through the Early Years and grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

Children have whole group and small group times which increase as they progress through the EYFS, with times to focus on phonics using 'Phonics for Pupils with Special Educational Needs' and teaching aspects of mathematics and literacy.

The curriculum is delivered through a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS.

'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 adults. During children's play, early years' practitioners interact to stretch and challenge children further, adults understand the importance of modelling play.

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

We create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

At Victoria School, we aim to ensure:

- A clearly defined learning environment designed to allow and encourage children to extend and deepen their understanding of the early years' curriculum.
- An environment that facilitates independence, curiosity and hands on play-based learning.

- That continuous provision enables children to explore recent learning, practice new skills and follow their own interests.
- Staff enhance continuous provision through careful intervention.
- Carefully chosen and organised high quality resources and experiences are available for children to access independently across every area of their learning.

The environment, both indoors and outdoors, plays a key role in enabling and extending children's learning and development. Children have opportunities to explore the outdoor learning environment through free-flow. They have the same opportunities to access the curriculum outdoors and indoors. Focused teaching occurs outdoors and indoors and children have opportunities to interact with all members of staff.

Observation and assessment

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform future plans. Observations are recorded in a variety of ways. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and discussions take place.

Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their personal learning journey. Parents are invited to attend a parents' evening on at least two occasions during the year. Within the final term we provide parents with a report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. Parents have an opportunity to discuss these judgements with the teacher in preparation for the next curriculum pathway. We continue the EYFS curriculum through to Year 1 and Year 2 if this is in the best interest of the child.

For every child starting Nursery or Reception, a baseline assessment is completed in their first four weeks of school. At the end of Reception, we use the Early Learning Goals to judge whether a child is 'Emerging', 'Expected', or 'Exceeding' in all 17 areas of learning.

Safeguarding and 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.

Safety and welfare of all children 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.

As part of the school's policy framework, we have policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the EYFS Statutory Guidance (2017).

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 or have an accident.

- Children enjoy daily fruit and are encouraged to drink water throughout the day.
- Free school lunch is available to children.
- Risk assessments are carried out when children go on a school visit in line with our Educational Visits Policy.
- Transition is carefully planned from Nursery to Reception and EYFS to the next curriculum pathway.
- Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the autumn term to gather and exchange important information that will help children settle well into Nursery or Reception.

Inclusion and equality

We value all our children as individuals. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of the individual child and supports them at their own pace and according to their individual Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

All children receive quality first teaching on a daily basis and activities are differentiated accordingly. In addition, where identified children are considered to require targeted support, intervention programmes will be implemented. Teachers and all support staff plan programmes together and monitor progress of these children, with support from the Early Years Lead.

Staff development

Teachers are expected to keep up to date with subject knowledge and use current materials that are available in school or online.

Training needs are identified as a result of whole school monitoring and evaluation, CPD and through induction programmes. These will be reflected in the School Improvement framework. The Early Years Lead will arrange for relevant advice and information, such as feedback from courses or newsletters, to be disseminated. Where necessary, they will also deliver or organise school-based training.

Additional adults who are involved with intervention programmes will receive appropriate training that may be school-based or part of external or central training.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers, Early Years Lead and teachers monitor the EYFS. Having identified priorities, the Senior Leadership Team and Early Years Lead construct an action plan that forms part of the School Improvement Plan. This forms the basis for any monitoring activities and will clearly identify when, who and what is to be monitored and how this will take place.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned and time is 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 nurseries and childminders. Children attend introductory sessions to Foundation 1 to develop familiarity with the setting and practitioners.

In the final term of EYFS, the teachers in the next curriculum pathway will meet Early Years staff and discuss each child's development to support a smooth transition to the next pathway. This discussion helps these teachers to plan an effective, responsive and appropriate curriculum that will meet the needs of all children.

From Nursery – Reception

Our aim is to ensure children have a smooth transition from Nursery to Reception. Home visits support with this transition. Important induction information is shared with families, and staff find out about the needs and interests of the children that will help them to settle well in to our Reception class.

As well as home visits, we adopt a staggered approach to starting school. Children spend two hours in school for two days this builds up to half a day. After two weeks we have all children in full time. During this time lessons are focused on learning names, class rules and adapting to new routines. A transitional timetable is in place for the first half of the autumn term.

Reception – Year 1

We work very hard to prepare our children for the next curriculum pathway at the end of their Early Years journey, this begins in the second half of the summer term. Time will be allocated to prepare the children for the more formal approach, where there is less free flow and individual choice of activities. Activities are still very

practical and play-based and will be adjusted to the needs and interests of the children.

All transitions are supported with personalised Social Stories to aid understanding of the upcoming change.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Policy Ownership

Name	Version
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Early Years Foundation Stage Policy	V1.1
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Date published	Date for next review
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November 2023	November 2024
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Approved by	Date
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V1.0	November 2023	Chrissie Nelson	Created
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V1.1	September 2024	Helen Barnes	Updated branding
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Appendices

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Admissions Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Educational Visits Policy

Suspensions and Exclusions Policy

Staff Code of Conduct

EYFS Statutory Framework