

Shipbourne School



EYFS Policy

January 2026

EYFS lead: Alison Holmes

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Shipbourne School, children join Reception in the year they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers, we enable the children to begin the process of becoming lifelong learners.

Ethos

We believe that children should come into school every day excited and interested to learn, play and make friends, and be ready to explore their surroundings, keen to develop their minds and understand the world around them. We aim for every child to grow individual and confident personalities, always willing to have a go. We will provide new, stimulating and challenging activities, which will make sure all children progress in their learning, whatever their starting point, reaching their full potential.

We have created a safe and healthy environment to engage enquiring minds, with a balance of learning through play and teacher-directed activities.

Aim

At Shipbourne 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, 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 flourish and grow.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Daily routine

- The day begins with fine motor skills activities and the children choose what they would like for lunch.
- Phonics lesson (teacher led)
- English input and short task
- Child initiated learning, in which the children have access to both indoor and outdoor play spaces.
- Snack and story time
- Shared reading (teacher led)
- Child initiated learning with a focus on maths.
- Lunch is eaten with their buddy in the hall.
- Afternoon sessions begin with an input with the year 1 children followed by a short task or time to choose their learning.
- Assembly and then story time.
- The day ends with the children collecting their belongings and being seen out from the classroom to waiting guardians.

Weekly routine

- Music once a week with a peripatetic teacher
- PE twice a week with Pure Sports

A unique child

At Shipbourne School we believe that there are no limits to learning. 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, 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 assemblies and house points, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of differences. All children at Shipbourne School are treated fairly, regardless of race, religion, or abilities. Children are treated as individuals and have equal access to all provisions available. All children are encouraged to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of individual children. Assessments take into account contributions from a range of perspectives to ensure that any child with potential special educational needs is identified at the earliest possible opportunity. Early identification of special needs is crucial to enable staff to support the development of each child. Concerns are always discussed with parents/carers at an early stage and the school's SENCO is called upon for further information and advice. Appropriate steps are taken in accordance with the school's Inclusion policy for SEN.

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;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules, and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (see Whole School Child Protection Policy).

At Shipbourne School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2025. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children;
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill;
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so;
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose;
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs;
- maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Parents as partners

We recognise that parents 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 teacher and teaching assistant visit children in their home setting and their nursery setting in the term before the child starts school;
- The children having the opportunity to spend time with their teacher, the other children in their class and their year 6 buddies before starting school during taster day sessions;
- Supporting children through the transition from pre-school to Reception with the children attending part time during the first week. This is also to support staff and parents in getting to know each other as well as the children;
- Inviting all parents to attend information events regarding the teaching of phonics (reading and writing) and how parents can support their children with this at home;
- Encouraging parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns;
- At least two parent consultation meetings with the class teacher;
- A formal written report to parents on their child's attainment and progress at the end of each school year;
- Written contact through a home school diary.

All staff involved with the EYFS develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

The learning environment

We have created an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident, secure and challenged. The EYFS classroom 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 classroom is set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Tinley class has use of an outdoor area. 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 children opportunities to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. Play-based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning, with a focus on high quality verbal interactions and the development of strong vocabulary for learning and communication.

Class structure

Teachers and teaching assistants provide the curriculum in Tinley class to a maximum of ten Reception children. This fits alongside the curriculum being delivered to the Year 1 cohort in the same classroom.

Areas of Learning

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

Through careful assessment and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's development levels are assessed. The balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. However, if a child's progress in any prime area gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child. This may also include a discussion with the SENCo in order to access Special Educational Needs support.

Both medium and long term plans are written using the EYFS Curriculum guidance and programmes and based around Curriculum Maestro units of learning in conjunction with Year 1 themes. These plans are reviewed by the Headteacher and then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remain flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses. Children have whole group and small group teacher-led sessions which increase as they progress through the EYFS with times for daily phonics and shared reading sessions using FFT Success for All Phonics, and daily maths activities.

Assessment

All children are assessed within the first six weeks of starting school using the Baseline Assessment criteria. This assessment information will help to inform the future learning needs of the child and will compliment other observations and assessments made during a child's first weeks in school. Formative assessment continues throughout the year with staff observations and a range of learning outcomes used to inform

planning and pupil-focused support as required. Children are then assessed against all Early Learning Goals at the end of the Reception year.

Equal opportunities

All members of the school are treated as individuals. We aim to meet the needs of all, taking account of gender, ability, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, special educational needs, disability, and social circumstances. All staff are aware of the need for the curriculum to reflect cultural diversity and the need to prepare pupils for life in a diverse and multi-faith society.

Health and safety

There are clear procedures for assessing risk (see whole school Health and Safety Policy and Risk Register) which includes procedures for keeping children safe during outings and for any aspects of the environment or provision that may require a further risk assessment. In addition to this, a daily risk assessment is conducted of the EYFS (see EYFS risk assessment) and in the staff handbook, safeguarding and child protection policies, there is detailed information and procedures to ensure the safety of the children.

In line with the EYFS statutory framework 2025, we have a whole school medicines policy that stipulates there are effective systems in place to ensure that medicines and the systems for obtaining information about a child's needs for medication are kept up to date. Medicines will not be administered unless they have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist. Medicines are only administered to a child where written permission for that particular medicine has been obtained from the child's parent and/or carer. A written record is kept each time a medicine is administered to a child. We also ensure that:

- Fresh drinking water is available at all times;
- At least 187ml of fresh milk is offered daily;
- Children's dietary needs are recorded and acted upon when required;
- Children are encouraged to eat healthy snacks and drinks;
- A first aid box is accessible to staff at all times and a record of accidents and injuries is kept;
- At least one member of staff has undertaken paediatric first aid training;
- A member of staff with paediatric first aid training will be in the same room whenever a child is eating;
- There is an up-to-date Health and Safety policy and procedures which cover identifying, reporting and dealing with accidents, hazards and faulty equipment;
- There is an up-to-date fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy;
- Staff are expected to wear clothing that supports them in playing and engaging with children at floor level.

Transition

From Pre-school /feeder settings

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition:

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and to provide information on any concerns they may want to express;
- Parents are encouraged to complete a form detailing relevant information on entry. It is used during the Autumn term to support transition and to inform planning;
- The children are invited to at least two separate visits to their reception class.
- Members of staff from Shipbourne make visits to feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development (on track), or not yet reaching expected levels (not on track).

Monitoring and review

This policy was written by the EYFS lead, with reference to the EYFS statutory framework 2025, and reviewed by the Headteacher. Implementation will be continually monitored and reviews made at least annually. The following documents should be read in conjunction with this policy: Admissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, Staff Code of Conduct Policy, Supervision Policy and Child Protection Policy.