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Shorefields School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Introduction

This policy reflects the values, ethos and philosophy of Shorefields School in relation to teaching learners at the Foundation Stage. It provides guidance on content, planning, teaching and assessment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Policy is a working document and as such it reflects both the practices that are carried out and those to which the school is striving.

The policy is agreed upon by the whole teaching staff and presented to the Governing Body. The document is available for interested parties.

Rationale

At Shorefields we have a designated class for Foundation Stage pupils. All pupils aged 3 - 5 start in this assessment base, although occasionally it may be more appropriate for a child with complex medical needs to be placed in a PMLD environment when starting school. Pupils are offered funded sessions according to their age; a 3year old may access one full day each week until the term they turn 4, when they will be offered two days each week. All assessments are completed in time for parents/carers to apply for an alternative full- time placement if more appropriate.

The term curriculum is used to describe everything children do, see, hear, or feel in their setting, both planned and unplanned.

Learners joining our school have already had a range of experiences from their parents/carers and other settings that exist within the community. The early years' education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- it builds upon what the learner already knows and can do
- it ensures that all learners have equal opportunities
- it offers structure for learning that has a range of starting points
- it has content that matches the needs of the young learners and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and out
- it provides a safe and stimulating environment in which the contribution made by each learner is valued
- it ensures that learners develop their self esteem and confidence
- it ensures that learners have fun and are challenged as they learn

Aims

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years' settings.

These are:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and

• **Children develop and learn in different ways and 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.
(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021 Introduction, paragraph 6)

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years' settings. All 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, the *prime* areas, are:

1. Communication and language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Providers must also support children in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive arts and design

. (Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021 page 8 1.4/1.5)

Implementation

Shorefields School implements a curriculum which is broad, balanced and relevant to the learners who attend the school. The curriculum must be responsive to national initiatives, whilst maintaining the flexibility to meet individual needs.

The EYFS curriculum is delivered primarily through termly themes, designed to develop pupil progress across all 7 areas of learning. Differentiated, individual objectives, based on assessment and EHCP outcomes, are addressed through a range of relevant child and adult led activities. A flexible approach by all class staff, enables our youngest pupils to explore, engage and learn in a nurturing environment.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are;

Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';

Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021 page 16, 1.15)

It is important that all staff recognise the need to work in a structured and consistent way to enable all learners to make progress. Staff are encouraged to have high but

realistic expectations for all learners and are given appropriate training and advice about structures and approaches used.

Equal Opportunities

The race, ethnicity and cultural background as well as the interests, strengths and needs of individuals must be considered in deciding on appropriate teaching content and strategies.

The entitlement of all learners to a full curriculum is acknowledged. Teachers will provide any other, adaptations, specific teaching techniques and specialist resources required to overcome individual learners' barriers to learning.

Teaching and Organisation

The EYFS class teacher is responsible for the class organisation and teaching style in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage, while at the same time ensuring that these complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school.

Learners are given the opportunity to work as a class, as part of a group or as individuals. The learning task or activity, the nature of the topic being studied and the resources being used will determine the choice of class organisation.

The more general features of good practice in the school that relate to the Early Years Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between staff and parents/carers recognising that parents/carers continue to have a teaching role with their children
- the understanding that staff have knowledge of how children develop and learn, and how this impacts on their teaching
- the range of approaches used to ensure that learners have first hand experiences across the curriculum
- that adults give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and communication skills
- a carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage
- the identification through observation and planning of the next step in children's learning
- opportunities to share with parents/carers
- careful planning of indoor and outdoor environments to provide a positive context for teaching and learning

Play in the Foundation Stage

Learners do not make a distinction between 'play' and 'work' and neither should adults working with them. Learners need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities.

However, we value the importance of well-planned play as a key way in which young children learn. It offers them opportunities to explore and investigate, develop skills, solve problems and make sense of the world.

Assessment

All nursery staff continually assess learners' current understanding and knowledge in order to ensure that appropriate learning targets are set by the class teacher. Annual targets are based on EHCP outcomes, by teacher initial assessment in the first term at school. Detailed assessments in the prime areas are submitted by the class teacher

for EHCP applications, if not yet awarded. The Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) may be appropriate for a few pupils at the start of their Reception year.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals (see Section 1). Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

(Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage March 2021 page 19/20)

A formal meeting will be held within six months of a learner joining Shorefields School. This is a multi agency meeting which includes parents/carers when aims and aspirations for the learner will be planned for. These objectives will be based on initial baseline EYFS assessments and EHCP outcomes if already awarded.

Please refer to the Shorefields Teaching and Learning Policy

Review of the policy

The policy will be reviewed in line with whole school procedures.