



Shaftesbury
CE Primary School



Welcome to Reception



2025-2026

What is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)?

The EYFS curriculum sets standards for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old. Children develop quickly in the early years and at Shaftesbury CE Primary School, we aim to do all we can to provide the children with the best possible start to their learning journey. We place great importance on ensuring children are happy and healthy. We establish this by providing an environment in which the children can learn and develop within the Christian values of Koinonia, courage, creativity, respect and friendship. We strive to ensure that every child feels safe, loved, inspired and ready.

EYFS Curriculum:

The EYFS curriculum comprises of seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

These are called the **prime areas**:

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



Four areas help children to strengthen and apply the prime areas.

These are called the **specific areas**:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design



Our curriculum incorporates learning through play, learning by adults modelling, by observing each other and through guided learning and direct teaching. It is also important to highlight that our plans are flexible, to allow us to respond quickly to children's new interests and/or needs.

Weaving throughout the EYFS curriculum at Shaftesbury Primary, are three **Characteristics of Effective Learning**.

- **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

What can I expect?

Our reception children will have a broad and rich learning experience as they progress through the EYFS at Shaftesbury Primary, in order for them to become successful learners. We work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners, who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their various starting points. Learners will develop knowledge and skills that prepare them for their next steps in learning. We strive to understand and follow children's interests and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps. Our indoor and outdoor environment is built to support learning, to allow children to revisit, rehearse and consolidate their skills and to ensure all children make at least good progress from their starting points.

By the end of reception, we expect our children to succeed in meeting our curricular goals and therefore succeed in meeting the end of reception goals. These goals are defined as the Early Learning Goals (ELGs).

Below you will find some examples of the type of experiences your child may encounter throughout their reception year, in each of the seven areas of learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is **crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives**, and is fundamental to their cognitive development.

Through adult modelling and guidance the children will learn to:

- Work and play co-operatively, taking turns with others.
- Form positive relationships and build friendships.
- Show an understanding of and be sensitive to the needs and feelings of themselves and others.
- Be confident to try new activities, show independence, resilience and perseverance.
- Understand right from wrong and behave accordingly.
- Give focussed attention to an adult and follow simple instructions.
- Set and work towards simple goals and be able to wait for what they want.
- Manage their own personal needs and how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating.
- Take part in the 'Scarf' PSHE scheme of work in school.



Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's **back-and-forth interactions** from an early age, form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a **language-rich environment** is crucial.

Throughout the year, communication and language is developed through:

- Reading frequently to the children and encouraging them to listen to, share and learn to retell stories, including the use of story maps, actions, props, role-play and story language.
- Learning new poems and rhymes by heart.
- Responding to stories and taking part in discussion around what they have heard. Asking and answering questions to develop their thoughts and ideas.
- Learning and using new vocabulary in a range of contexts.
- Sharing first-hand experiences with others through circle time and class discussions.
- Communicating effectively with one another through play.
- Scarf PSHE, circle time, assemblies, group discussion, EYFS Christmas production.

Physical Development:

Physical activity is **vital** in children's all-round development, enabling them to **pursue happy, healthy and active lives**.

Throughout the year, physical development is supported through:

- Opportunities to develop children's **core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness**, co-ordination and agility, through play and the use of large and small apparatus, both indoors and outdoors.
- Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the use of small tools, to develop **proficiency, control and confidence**.
- Indoor and outdoor PE lessons, including using the 'Storycises' and 'Squiggle Whilst you Wiggle' gross and fine motor programmes.
- Exploration through play using resources such as:

Bikes and scooters

Balls, beanbags and hoops

Sand and water play

Playdough

Threading and weaving

Cutting with scissors

Tweezers

Small and large construction sets

Balancing equipment



Literacy:

It is crucial for children to develop a **life-long love of reading**. Through the use of high quality texts, we celebrate stories and strive to develop a passion for reading in every child.

In order for your child to develop their skills in reading and writing, it is important that they are able to listen and respond to others for short periods of time.

Throughout the year, literacy is taught through:

Reading and Writing

- **Preparing** your child for reading and writing. This involves taking part in a range of multi-sensory experiences; including: speaking and listening games and many fine and gross motor activities.
- Direct teaching of **phonics**. We follow a systematic, synthetic phonics programme called **Read Write Inc.** This is delivered on a daily basis, to teach and support the children with learning to read and write.
- **Phonics books**. Your child will bring home a book to read matched to their phonic ability. Until your child is able to read simple words, they will bring home a wordless book. We encourage you to support your child to use the pictures within these books to make up their own story using language such as 'Once upon a time'.
- **Literacy lessons**. We enjoy listening to, learning and retelling stories. Role-play and acting out stories together. Drawing story maps and using actions to aid retelling. Sequencing stories and using story language. Making up our own stories and re-reading favourite tales.
- **Writing**. Children are supported to develop their pencil grip and to take part in mark making activities. There are opportunities for the children to write for a range of purposes such as: labels for pictures or models, captions, lists, instructions, speech bubbles, simple sentences and stories across the year.
- **Non-fiction texts**. We learn how to find information from non-fiction texts and create our own sets of instructions and fact files.
- **Rhyme of the week**. Every week we learn a new rhyme, which the children take home to share with their family in their Rhyme of the Week book.
- **Share a Story**. Every week your child will bring home a new book from our library to share at bedtime. We encourage you to read and re-read the story together across the week, in order for your child to become familiar with the story and immersed in rich story language.
- **Reading and writing** opportunities are always available in the indoor and outdoor learning environments, to encourage the children to read and mark make independently.



Mathematics

Developing a **strong grounding in number** is essential so that all children develop the necessary **building blocks** to excel mathematically. Children should be able to **count confidently**, develop a deep understanding of the **numbers to 10**, the **relationships between** them and the patterns within those numbers.

Mathematics is taught using the White Rose Maths resources for early years and includes the following concepts:

Number and Numerical Patterns:

- Counting objects, actions and sounds.
- Subitising—being able to recognise the amount without counting.
- Matching, sorting and comparing.
- Counting to 10 and beyond.
- Composition of numbers to 10 and beyond.
- Exploring and comparing size, mass and capacity.
- Exploring and creating patterns.
- Combining groups. Adding more. One more.
- Taking away, one less.
- Number bonds to 10.
- Doubling and sharing.
- Even and odd.
- Exploring and comparing length and height.
- 2D and 3D shapes—spatial reasoning. Matching, rotating and manipulating shapes.



Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to **make sense of their physical world and their community**.

Throughout the year, understanding the world is developed through:

- Discussing and identifying our families and what we enjoy doing as a family. Identifying similarities and making comparisons between families.
- Learning about festivals such as Diwali, Christmas, Chinese New Year and Easter.
- Using stories, photographs and objects to help understand the past.
- Exploring the local environment and making observations of its features, plants and animals.
- Learning about life in other countries through stories and non-fiction texts.
- Noticing the changing seasons and changes in living things.
- Encouraging a love of the outdoors

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports **their imagination and creativity**. It is important that children have regular opportunities to **engage with the arts**, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of **media and materials**.

Throughout the year, expressive arts and design is developed through:

- Creating pictures using a variety of resources with different textures e.g. felt, sequins, chalk, paint, glitter and sand.
- Mixing colours for a purpose.
- Using a range of tools and materials for junk modelling, painting, collage, messy play, drawing, tracing and colouring.
- Learning a range of songs, poems and rhymes, moving to music, creating musical patterns using percussion instruments and tapping out simple rhythms.
- Learning about music from other countries and cultures.
- Role-play and drama.
- Making props for role-play.
- EYFS Christmas production.
- Inventing stories together.
- Learning to explain the process they have used when creating.



The Importance of Learning in the Outdoor Classroom

We are very lucky to be developing our outdoor classroom area within the school grounds. Within this natural environment, the children will develop their confidence and self-esteem through many hands-on learning experiences such as: building dens, taking part in treasure hunts, making tools, planting, digging, exploring and climbing.

All of the activities in the outdoor classroom will be play based, initiated and led by the children. There will be lots of large and small resources to spark ideas and to encourage the children to use their imaginations.

Working in the outdoors in this way, improves the children's independence, confidence and team work skills. This is a valuable opportunity for the children in early years to explore the natural environment, as well as develop their gross and fine motor skills. Research has shown that outdoor exploration can have a positive impact on children's academic progress and their personal, social and emotional development.



How can I help my Child?

At Shaftesbury Primary, we welcome your partnership in supporting your child with their journey through the Early Years Foundation Stage.

By working together, we can lay the foundations to your child's life long learning. You can help at home by playing board games, reading a variety of stories, singing nursery rhymes and counting and exploring numbers and shapes.

We operate an open door policy. There are several opportunities throughout the year where you are invited to come into school to share in your child's learning. If you have any queries, please feel free to come and talk to your child's teacher at any time.

Reception Baseline Assessment

The reception baseline assessment is a short and simple check of a child's early literacy, communication, language and maths skills when they begin school. The reception baseline assessment is carried out in all state funded primary schools in England.

When carrying out the assessment, your child will work one-to-one with a teacher or learning support mentor, during the first 6 weeks of them starting school. They can answer questions verbally or by pointing or moving objects. The assessment has been designed to be inclusive and there are modified materials available – this means it is also accessible to children with SEND or English as a second language. The teacher may pause and restart the check if they feel a child is distracted.

The tasks are carefully designed to check early maths and early literacy, communication and language skills. You do not need to do anything. Your child is unlikely to even know that they are doing an assessment when they are completing the tasks.

The assessment provides a better starting point to measure the progress a school makes with their pupils throughout their whole time at primary school, between reception and year 6.

The results will be used at school level to measure the progress of the year group from primary education to year 6. Individual results or scores for each child are not kept.

For more information, please follow the link below:

[2023 Information for parents: reception baseline assessment \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-2023)

