SHREWSBURY HOUSE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1865

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS) POLICY

Policy owner:	Head of Younger Years
Approved by:	Executive Head
Date of last review:	September 2026
Next review:	September 2027

1. Rationale

The Early Years Foundation Stage:

"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 for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education.

1.1 Early childhood is the foundation upon which children build the rest of their lives. It provides a framework for care, learning and development. At Shrewsbury House School, we believe that all children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to set in place solid foundations which will enable them to flourish throughout their school life and into adulthood. It is, therefore, vital to consider the EYFS as preparation not only for the next stage of the education process, but for life.

1.2 The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and Early Learning Goals relate to children from birth to five years of age, or the end of the Reception year, post a child's fifth birthday. Children at Shrewsbury House School will be provided with the experience that will support them in reaching these goals at the appropriate time.

1.3 All children begin school life with a variety of experiences and learning. It is the privilege of practitioners working in the Early Years setting to take on the task of building upon and extending this prior learning and experience. This is done through a holistic approach to learning. High quality, well-resourced, integrated early education all contribute to a positive development in all seven areas of learning. It is our aim that teachers, parents and carers work together to establish a supportive and communicative relationship in supporting children's learning and development.

2. Aims

2.1 It is every child's right to grow up in a safe, healthy environment, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution to the world around them and, ultimately, achieving economic well-being. At Shrewsbury House School, the overall aim of the EYFS is to support every child to reach the Early Learning Goals, promote good health and well-being, and build strong foundations for their future learning.

2.2 The education for the Early Years Foundation Stage is achieved through:

- clear educational goals;
- sustained shared thinking;
- meeting every child's needs;
- warm, responsive relationships between adults and children;
- parents who support and are involved in their children's learning; high quality learning environments.

2.3 Our aim is that children are exposed to a wealth of learning opportunities and experiences within a welcoming, positive and motivating learning environment. Children enter a friendly, safe and communicative setting and learn in calm, peaceful and engaging classrooms and communal areas where achievements are displayed and recognised and where activities and resources are appropriate, varied and accessible.

2.4 Our planning process and documents allows us to specify clear learning objectives within the EYFS framework, encompassing and developing all areas of the children's learning and development. We evaluate our own performance and are responsive to our evaluations in order to ensure that the goals we set are challenging yet achievable. Furthermore, through our planning and evaluation processes, we continue to promote the sharing of ideas, practices and outcomes in order to enrich the children's individual experiences and opportunities at school.

2.5 We regard the core EYFS principle of "learning through experience" as a true opportunity to promote individualised learning within a class context. This is achieved not only through our own close interaction with the children but also through a balance of well-planned child- and adult-led activities which enable us to observe and respond to the needs, interests and achievements of the children in our care. As such, the concept of a "unique child" is intrinsically linked with the positive and nurturing relationships that staff aim to develop with the children. In this regard, we will continue to promote an open, informative and supportive relationship with parents, starting from a parent's first contact with the school. Through both written contact (such as welcome letters, practical information, use of the website Seesaw, reading records, formal reports) and face-to-face contact on a daily basis, as well as curriculum workshops and parent evenings, we recognise and encourage parents' roles as co-educators.

2.6 The delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage programme encompasses every aspect of planning, delivery, observation and evaluation, ensuring that every child achieves their full potential and enjoys a rich and rewarding experience in the Early Years setting.

3. Learning and Development

3.1 The Early Learning Goals (the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the end of the Reception year) and the educational programmes (the matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught to young children) are set out in *Statutory Framework*

for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

3.2 The seven areas of Learning and Development are:

3.2.1 Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
We support children's emotional well-being by helping them understand and manage their feelings, express emotions, and develop strong self-regulation skills. We promote managing self by encouraging independence, confidence, resilience in the face of challenge, and healthy habits. Through warm, supportive relationships, we help children build positive social skills, show empathy, form strong friendships, and learn to respect and collaborate with others.

3.2.2 Communication and Language (CL)
We create a language-rich environment where children are encouraged to express themselves. We develop listening, attention and understanding by sharing stories, rhymes, non-fiction, and engaging children in active conversations. We support speaking skills by introducing rich vocabulary, asking open-ended questions and giving children the confidence and time to elaborate on their thoughts, feelings and ideas across various contexts.

3.2.3 Physical Development (PD)
We promote physical health and well-being by developing children's core strength, stability, balance and spatial awareness through varied gross motor opportunities. We refine fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination using a range of tools and materials, building the control and precision needed for writing. Children are supported to make healthy choices regarding exercise, food, sleep, and hygiene, building independence in self-care routines.

3.2.4 Literacy (L)
We foster a love of reading and language by immersing children in stories, poems and non-fiction to build comprehension and vocabulary. Children develop word reading through structured synthetic phonics to decode words and recognize print. We support writing development from early mark making through to spelling and composing simple sentences with confidence.

3.2.5 Mathematics (M)
We build a strong foundation in Mathematics by encouraging children to explore, manipulate and talk about numbers and spatial concepts in meaningful contexts. We focus on numbers, supporting children to develop a deep understanding of number, subitise and master counting skills. Through practical experiences, we explore numerical patterns, spatial reasoning, shape, and measure, giving children the confidence to spot connections, solve problems and apply their mathematical thinking with accuracy.

3.2.6 Understanding the World (UW)
We guide children to make sense of their world and community through hands-on exploration. We share personal stories and local history and celebrate people, culture and communities to foster respect for diverse traditions. Through the natural world, children observe plants, animals, materials, and seasonal shifts, conducting practical experiments and using tools safely.

3.2.7 Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)
We encourage children's creativity through open-ended exploration and play. We support creating with materials by providing diverse media, tools and techniques to experiment with colour, texture and design. We nurture being imaginative and expressive by encouraging children to share thoughts and feelings through music, movement, role-play and storytelling.

3.3 We believe that these seven areas are of equal importance and are inter-dependent in promoting the development of a rounded child.

4. Planning

Effective planning is the key to ensuring that our children's learning is exciting, varied and progressive. Effective planning allows us to build upon children's existing learning and experience. Our planning shows how the EYFS goals will be achieved, is informed by our observations and interactions with the children and aims to develop all aspects of children's learning and development, considering their interests and supporting them at all stages. We aim to take into account the children's interests as much as possible and to choose topic areas that are stimulating, practical, relevant and developmentally appropriate for them.

Planning is a collaborative process between all practitioners who work with the children. There are three stages to the planning process:

4.1 Long-term planning
We have developed a framework which gives structure and coherence to the curriculum. Topics are carefully planned, so there is a flow between Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and the early learning goals are distributed throughout the year in order to ensure breadth and balance of delivery of these objectives.

Term	**Reception Topic**
Autumn	● All about me ● Celebrations
Spring	● Traditional Tales ● Adventure Stories
Summer	● Holidays ● Paws, Roars and Claws

4.2 Medium-term planning
Medium-term planning incorporates more specific areas of the curriculum in greater detail for each half-term. We identify links between areas of learning and development. Learning objectives, assessment opportunities and activities and experiences in each area of learning and development are identified.

4.3 Short-term planning
As part of the short-term planning process, we identify learning objectives, activities, differentiation and deployment of staff and resources where appropriate on a weekly and day-to-day basis. We have developed this to increase the flexibility of teaching and learning in response to children's interests and for revision and modification and informed by on-going observational assessment.

5. Staffing and Organisation

5.1 We currently have one Reception class. It has one teacher and one teaching assistant. We aim to maintain a ratio of 1:10 or less in Reception.

5.2 The children have opportunities for structured and practical, play-based activities. Practitioners and support staff enjoy a communicative, team-based approach to planning, organisation, preparation and assessment. We strive to constantly update our skills, knowledge and understanding and, as such, all practitioners are encouraged to attend courses and participate in regular and varied school INSETS in order to propagate new initiatives, ideas and teaching methods amongst colleagues.

5.3 Miss Wells is the Head of Younger Years (including EYFS) as well as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6. Assessment, Recording and Monitoring

We undertake assessment for learning. We consider and constantly evaluate what we know about each child's development and learning and make informed decisions about the child's learning and appropriate next steps. This enables us to meet both their development and learning needs. All practitioners who interact with the child contribute to the assessment process.

6.1 Formative Assessment
We undertake baseline assessments at the beginning of Reception. In addition to this, our monitoring, observations and tracking of the children are recorded using Seesaw, and provide useful markers in identifying potential areas of concern or gifts/talents.

Activities that the children have participated in are recorded through photographs, observations, a wide range of work, all of which are displayed and gathered together in a 'scrapbook.' Parents can see their child's work during two in-person parent consultations in the Autumn and Spring Term and all books are sent home upon completion. EYFS Learning Goals are shared with the Year 1 teacher.

6.2 Summative Assessment
The EYFS profile summarises all the formative assessment undertaken and makes statements about the child's achievements, indicating the child's progress with regard to the Early Learning Goals. Assessment at the end of Reception evaluates children against the 17 ELGs as expected or emerging**.** At the end of the Summer Term, parents are given a formal report identifying children's achievements in line with Early Learning Goals and targets moving forward into Year 1.

6.3 Providing Support
Comprehensive communication with parents is of paramount importance to us with regard to assessment and monitoring and, in consultation with the parents, we aim to devise a personal programme of support for those children who require it. As well as utilising the SEND support available within school, we may also help the parents in seeking more information regarding their child's difficulties from an outside body, such as an educational psychologist or occupational therapist, should they so wish. Staff working with the child aim to establish a 'team' of support for that child, in conjunction with both support staff within or outside school and parents, and carry out recommended activities or strategies in the classroom.

In addition to the above practices, profile data and all relevant information pertaining to the children is discussed with next teachers prior to entry into Year 1. This is a crucial part of easing the transition to Year 1 and of enabling children to achieve any outstanding Early Learning Goals that they may not have already reached before accessing the KS1 curriculum.

7. Learning Through Play

"Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults."

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Department for Education.

7.1 It is our primary belief that play underpins the delivery of the EYFS curriculum. We support children's learning through planned play activities and decide when child-initiated or adult-led play activities would provide the most effective learning opportunities. We believe that it is important for adults to support children's learning through play, by getting involved in the play themselves. Children are given the opportunity to explore and discover within a safe and supportive environment.

7.2 Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. The children have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children, as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They are able to express fears or re-live anxious experiences in managed, safe situations. The children are involved with both group and individual play, some initiated by adults, some initiated by the children. They learn through being active learners, working with a wide range of resources.

8. Introduction to Shrewsbury House School

8.1 Prior to their child starting at Shrewsbury House School, parents are invited to attend a welcome meeting with the Head of Younger Years and Reception teacher, detailing what to expect when their child starts Reception and how they can prepare their son over the summer holidays for starting school in September.

8.2 At the start of the Autumn Term, parents are invited to a briefing meeting and parent social - at this time, they can get to know the staff and meet other parents. Parents and carers have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and Head Teacher and to spend time in the classroom. They will be given specific information about how the Reception class works, for example reading and phonics.

9. Home/School Links: Partnership with Parents

9.1 From our very first interactions with them, we strive to create a comprehensive approach to our relationship with children and their parents/carers. A key part of this is ensuring they feel part of the school community before they arrive.

9.2 Outlined below are some of the means through which we aim to develop strong partnerships with parents and carers:

- an introductory meeting in the Summer Term for parents to attend, to prepare them and their son for starting school in September;
- Reception briefing to inform parents/carers about school life and to help them to understand the value of supporting their child's learning at home;
- encouraging parents/carers to fill in their key information on our Schoolbase system;

operating an ‘open door’ policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner;

- email contact with parents, promoting efficient sharing of practical information;
- sharing information and celebrating successes through the Younger Years newsletter;
- using Seesaw to share learning during the day;
- sharing children’s progress at school through regular dialogue between the EY staff and parent/carers as part of the ‘open door’ policy;
- family events at school, usually through the Shrewsbury House Association;
- encouraging parents/carers to listen to their child read each night or to engage relevant child-led learning activities at home such as holiday journals, etc;
- asking parents to share any achievements from home with the school;
- discussing individual progress and targets with parents/carers at Parents’ Evenings (Autumn and Spring Terms and informed by the EYFS Profile);
- providing a formal, bi-annual written report to parents/carers in December and July summarising the child’s progress against the Early Learning Goals and Characteristics of Effective Learning.

9.3 This strong and friendly relationship with parents sets a very positive tone for our relationship with the children. They see that parents and teachers know each other and work as a team. We actively encourage the introduction of aspects of home life into school, such as good news and achievements, so that children do not see a major distinction between home and school life and are pleased with our interest in their outside activities and being given the opportunity to be able to share them with their peers. Similarly, photographic recording of activities and sharing these with parents has enabled parents and carers to gain a greater appreciation of what goes on in school and has prompted more meaningful conversations about school life between parents and children.

9.4 We recognise the role of parents and carers as co-educators of the children and, from the outset, aim to establish meaningful and honest relationships with children, parents and carers through the sharing of information and experiences.

10. Equal Opportunities

10.1 We aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability, equal access to all aspects of school life and work to ensure that every child is valued fully as an individual. Practitioners, as role models, are aware of the influence of adults in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence, where appropriate, to challenge stereotypical ideas. Children are encouraged and assisted in developing positive attitudes towards people of different ethnic groups, cultures, beliefs, gender and ability.

10.2 The school is committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of a child’s gender, gender reassignment, race, ethnicity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, linguistic background, SEN and disability or cultural background.

*Please refer to the school Equal Opportunities Policy.

11. Inclusion

11.1 Children with special educational needs will be given support as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum. This includes children that are more able, and those with specific learning

difficulties and disabilities. Individual Support Plans identify targets in specific areas of learning for those children who require additional support, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.

11.2 The class teacher discusses these targets with the child and his/her parents/carers. Progress is monitored and reviewed every term. The Learning Enrichment Teacher/Head of Younger Years will help by providing additional information and advice to practitioners and parents and assisting in the arrangement of external intervention and support where necessary.

*Please refer to the school Special Educational Needs and Inclusion policies.

12. Safeguarding

* Please refer to the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

13. Health and Safety

We regularly update and review our risk assessments on classrooms, communal areas, outdoor areas and equipment and toys used by children in the EYFS, in order to identify and minimise potential hazards. Risk assessment documentation is stored on the shared central drive and within planning documentation where appropriate.

*Please refer to our school Health & Safety and Risk Assessment Policy. Additional reference should also be made to the Educational Visits Policy.

13.1 Screen Use

At Shrewsbury House School, we recognise that digital technology is part of the children's everyday lives. However, in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework, our priority is to ensure children develop through play, interaction and real-world experiences.

Screen time expectations in school

We adopt the following guideline limits in line with national guidance:

- Reception - up to 60 minutes per day, where appropriate.

We recognise that some pupils with additional needs may require more frequent or personalised access to screen-based resources. This use is purposeful and supports learning, communication, and emotional regulation, in line with individual support plans. There also may be times where it is necessary for the limits to be exceeded for the whole class- these will be infrequent and will adhere to acceptable uses of screen time.

All use of screens will be interactive, adult-supported and linked to learning intentions.

13.2 Banned Dog Breeds

In accordance with the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, dogs listed under the banned breeds legislation (including Pit Bull Terriers, Japanese Tosas, Dogo Argentinos, Fila Brasileiros, and XL Bullies) are strictly prohibited from entering the setting grounds or perimeter at any time.

13.3 Smoking and vaping including e-cigarettes

There is no smoking on site, including vapes and e-cigarettes, when children are present or about to be present. We operate a no smoking site in general.

14 Medical Matters

14.1 Parents should keep their child at home if s/he is ill or infectious and telephone the School Office by 8.30am on each day that s/he is ill and will not be attending school. Any child who is ill will struggle with the demands of the school day and may possibly infect others. Following sickness or diarrhoea a child must not return to school for 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea has ended. If a child has been diagnosed with an infectious disease, parents/carers should follow doctor's instructions with regard to his/her return to school. The school should be informed in order that other children can be monitored for similar symptoms.

14.2 If a child has a medical condition that necessitates regular access to medication, parents/carers are asked to provide full and current medical information in order to ensure that the child's needs can be appropriately provided for, or that they can be looked after in the event of an accident.

14.3 Should a child need to be given medicine during the school day, parents are required to fill in and sign a Medication Form in the School Office. Without this consent, staff are unable to administer medicine. The School Office will then administer the correct dosage when necessary and complete a form to indicate the dosage and time of medication administered. Medicines should be signed in/out by the parent/carer at the School Office. They should not be sent in via the children, in book bags or given to the class teaching staff.

14.4 All staff in the Younger Years have been trained in Paediatric First Aid and there is always someone on the premises at all times. First Aid bags are situated in the Year 1 classroom and are taken outside during playtimes as well as Games lessons and on outings. Parents will be contacted if their child suffers anything more than a trivial injury, or if there are any concerns about his/her health. If a child has a minor accident, bump or graze at school during the day, this will be reported to the School Matron and registered on Schoolbase, which generates an automatic notification to parents if treatment has been given.

*Please refer to the school's First Aid Policy, available on our website and in the School Office.

15. Complaints Procedure

We strive to make Shrewsbury House School a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for the children. We hope that parents will not feel the need to complain and that any difficulty can be efficiently and sensitively handled before it reaches this stage. However, the school's complaints procedure (which applies equally to the EYFS) is available on the school's website or can be sent to parents by request.

Parents of children in the EYFS are entitled to make a complaint directly to IAPS. A record of complaints will be made available to ISI upon request.

A record of any complaint in respect of the EYFS will be kept for at least 3 years. All complaints relating to the EYFS requirements will be fully investigated within 28 days of having received the complaint. The complainants will be notified of the outcome of the investigation.

In the event of a complaint parents will be given the details for contacting ISI or Ofsted and guidance on how a complaint can be made.

Contact details:
Ofsted Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)
Cap House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA / Tel: 020 7600 0100 / email: info@isi.net
www.ofsted.gov.uk

16. School Policies

To ensure that the school operates efficiently and effectively, we have a comprehensive range of policies, procedures and guidelines. These are available from the school office.

17. EYFS Policy Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Head of Younger Years and will be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis.