

A Parent's Guide to the EYFS



From birth to five years, children undergo remarkable growth and learning. At Sherwood Green, we believe these early years should be filled with enriching experiences that children carry with them throughout their lives. After all, childhood only happens once.



You might have heard about the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS), a government guideline setting the standards for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to five years old. Sherwood Green's academic lead, Emilia Olkowska, explains further.

What is the EYFS?

Your child's early years should be joyful and supportive, addressing their development, well-being, care, and learning needs. The EYFS is a comprehensive framework that sets the standards for early childhood education across England. It is designed to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The EYFS encompasses seven areas of learning and development, which shape educational programs in early years settings. These areas are interconnected, ensuring a holistic approach to early childhood education. The framework includes three prime areas that are essential for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships, and thrive. These are:

Communication and Language:

This area focuses on the development of children's spoken language, listening, and understanding skills. It involves providing children with opportunities to experience a rich language environment, develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves, and speak and listen in a range of situations. This area aims to enhance children's ability to communicate effectively, understand instructions, and engage in conversations, fostering a love for language and literacy from an early age

Personal, Social, and Emotional Development:

This area focuses on children's emotional well-being, helping them to develop a positive sense of self, form positive relationships, and respect for others. It includes helping children understand their own and others' feelings, manage their emotions, and develop self-confidence and self-awareness. This area also involves guiding children in learning how to manage their behaviour, work cooperatively, and develop social skills. It aims to create a foundation for children to build resilience, self-regulation, and social competence.

Physical Development:

Physical activity is vital for children's overall development. This area encourages the development of coordination, control, and movement. It includes providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive, and to develop their gross and fine motor skills. Physical development also supports children in making healthy choices and understanding the importance of physical activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Activities in this area help children develop strength, balance, and agility, laying the foundation for a physically active life.

ADDITIONALLY, THERE ARE FOUR SPECIFIC AREAS THROUGH WHICH THE PRIME AREAS ARE STRENGTHENED AND APPLIED. THESE SPECIFIC AREAS INCLUDE ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE SUCCESSFULLY IN SOCIETY:

Literacy:

This area emphasizes the importance of developing early reading and writing skills. It involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters, and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. Literacy activities help children develop language comprehension, vocabulary, and a love of reading. These skills are foundational for learning to read and write, setting the stage for future academic success.

Mathematics:

This area provides children with opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers, shapes, spaces, and measures. It includes activities that support children in counting, recognizing numbers, and learning about numerical patterns. Mathematical development helps children solve problems, use mathematical language, and understand concepts such as size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time, and money. Engaging in mathematical activities fosters children's ability to think critically and reason logically.



Understanding the World:

This area involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. It includes opportunities to explore, observe, and find out about people, places, technology, and the environment. Children are encouraged to engage with the natural world, ask questions, and develop an understanding of their own culture and the diversity of the world around them. This area helps children build knowledge, curiosity, and respect for the world they live in.

Expressive Arts and Design:

This area encourages children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities for sharing their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. Expressive arts and design activities help children develop their imagination, creativity, and ability to express themselves. This area fosters an appreciation for artistic expression and supports the development of fine motor skills and cognitive abilities.



How Can I Support My Child's learning?

Engaging in fun activities at home significantly contributes to your child's learning and development. Here are some ways to support your child:

- **Sing and tell nursery rhymes**
- **Share a book**
- **Talk to your child frequently**
- **Discuss numbers, colours, and words during outings**
- **Plant seeds in a pot or garden**
- **Cook together**
- **Let your child explore containers in the bath**
- **Enjoy nature, stand in the rain, and splash in puddles**
- **Play ball games**



The EYFS in Our Nurseries

At Sherwood green, we adhere to the EYFS* framework in England, but we believe in offering a broad range of experiences to support your child's learning journey. Our nurseries provide activities and experiences beyond the EYFS framework to ensure your child has the best possible childhood. From health and well-being to learning through play, our passionate and experienced team exceeds government standards.