SHERFIELD SCHOOL NURSERY

Little GEMS

Early Years Foundation Stage

Curriculum, Planning, Teaching and Learning, Behaviour and Parental Engagement

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Annex 1: GEMS Values

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1. Introduction: Giving children a head start

The Nursery and pre-Reception settings use the EYFS curriculum as a framework for learning combining it with the GEMS Core Values (Annex 1) and with some additional sessions and programmes with approaches to learning based upon research and an understanding of early childhood development.

The staff are required to provide excellent role models for spoken and written language in order that the children are able to develop correct grammar, pronunciation, extensive vocabulary and comprehension.

The curriculum is delivered through cross curricular themes; such as the Music and Movement sessions for Nursery children and selected published programmes such as Write Dance.

The approach to essential learning is Adult Led and Child Initiated. All activities take into account the following three characteristics of effective teaching and learning as per ‘Development Matters’:

- playing and exploring;
- active learning;
- critical thinking and creativity

2. EYFS Nursery planning

Planning is at the following levels:

- Term Dates, Holiday Closures and Events are sent out to all parents each term

- Long term planning: staff brainstorm ideas for activities adding events and dates linked to the theme and Early Learning Goals across the 7 areas plus any celebrations. Includes child initiated ideas for planning and activities. Long term planning provides the basis for the Medium Term plans.

- Medium term planning: usually up to 3 weeks of advance planning with ideas and suggestions taken from the long term plan. Medium term planning is displayed for the parents to view. Focused activities are planned in (both adult led and child initiated) across the 3 main areas of the EYFS curriculum, and draw in all 7 areas (for Nursery). Pre-Reception and Reception class to plan focused activities across all 7 areas.

- Weekly and Daily routine: using the overview, the staff plan what activities, events and any celebrations will be happening in each area over the week. Specifies daily Adult Led and/or Child Initiated activities with objectives plus other routine activities or variations to the theme as necessary.

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• Consideration is given to provision for EAL and SEN/Enrichment including challenges for the more able, gifted and talented as well as what resources will be needed.

• Detailed Adult Led focused activity plans are completed for the 3 main areas but also incorporate and draw in all areas of the EYFS curriculum showing the child’s stage of development (such as emerging, expected, exceeding) and next steps as necessary.

• Observations and termly assessments are completed using the TAPESTRY online early year’s journal for each child and are sent to parents via the TAPESTRY link.

Themes are planned to include the following areas of learning as per the 7 areas of the EYFS:

• **personal, social and emotional development**: supporting children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities;

• **physical development**: providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive developing their coordination, balance, control, and movement; understanding the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food;

• **communication and language**: providing access to a wide range of reading materials – books, poems, and other written materials; providing opportunities for children to speak and listen in a range of situations such as using action rhymes and songs to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; encouraging and supporting children to read and write with confidence; and using the outdoor area for inspirational ideas for taking communication and language beyond the setting

• **literacy**: providing children with the support to lay the foundations for later reading skills, have fun with books and stories by creating their own journals, diaries or mini-books; building a wide vocabulary through reading and writing

• **mathematics**: providing children with opportunities to explore, solve problems and to apply their knowledge; to practise and improve their skills in counting and calculating practically using addition/subtraction; multiplication/division; shape, space and measure including time and money;
• **understanding the world**: guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment;

• **expressive arts and design**: supporting children to explore, play and make things using a wide range of media and materials, providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, performance and design and technology.

*Suggested themes for planning:*

• Animals
• Farming/where our food comes from
• Food
• Growing
• Homes
• Mini-beasts
• Night and Day
• Patterns
• Pirates
• Plants
• The Sea
• Seasons/Weather
• Space
• Toys
• Transport

For instance, as part of Understanding of the World, all themes can include:

• sustainability and environmental issues;
• a healthy approach to food and nutrition;
• business engagement, charity and community links for older children.
Staff from a company or business may agree to come and talk to the children. For example a doctor may come and talk to the children in the setting and then the role play area is set up as a doctor’s surgery.

A risk assessment must be carried out for visits, checking the site, use of rooms etc. (Facilities Manager) Visitors to the setting must sign in at the main reception, obtain a visitor’s badge and be accompanied by staff at all times.

3. Adult Led and Child Initiated activities

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework emphasises that it is the responsibility of providers to make judgements about the mix of play and more formal teaching, as well as the balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities.

The framework explains that: **Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others**

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity.

Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others.

The EYFS says that in planning and guiding children’s activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways children learn and then reflect these in their practice. It outlines three characteristics of effective teaching and 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

**Adult Led activities**

The teacher/practitioner works directly with a small group of children focusing on specific learning objectives taken from the EYFS curriculum.

The activities are planned for the children taking into account the need to provide hands on experiences where children can use all of their senses to enhance their learning.
The learning is supported and extended through the use of high quality resources such as including ICT, role modeling of language and effective questioning.

Skilful support by the adult opens new learning pathways so that children are able to investigate, explore, experience and understand the world around them. During Adult Led and Child Initiated all children have the opportunity for extension through the challenges that are incorporated into the learning opportunities. Staff continuously support and extend children's thinking and learning particularly through extended questioning. Continuous assessment enables staff to identify children who are potentially gifted or talented. Children’s needs are met through differentiation, extension and challenge in the setting.

**Child Initiated Activities**

A range of activities are provided including the use of outdoor areas. These are usually linked to the theme giving further opportunities to explore and consolidate learning. Staff interact and encourage children to use language and communication therefore increasing their vocabulary as well as imagination through role play or re-enacting situations. Learning intentions for a child-initiated activity cannot always be planned. However, through observations and adult support of children’s play, the learning that takes place can be assessed.

You will then be able to consider appropriate resources that can be added to your continuous provision in order that children can revisit ideas that have been introduced in adult-initiated activities and/or extend their learning. It is recommended that practitioners always leave some areas of the provision for children to choose what materials or resources they want.

4. **Continuous provision**

Continuous provision can enable children to explore their recent learning, practice new skills, and follow their own interests. Staff and teachers are able to enhance the continuously offered activities to make more overt links to adult-initiated and adult-directed, focused sessions. This combination of continuous and enhanced provision gives staff and teachers a context within which they can set their adult-led activities, being sure that children have plenty of opportunities to practice and improve their skills, knowledge and confidence in active, independent learning.

5. **Celebrations and events to include younger children**

Celebrations and events include end of term performances (pre-Reception and Reception classes) which can include sharing of children’s experiences, their work and songs, a Christmas nativity play or performance. Younger children and their staff are invited to come along and see these events to build confidence and for the children to understand what they will be taking part in once they have moved to the next setting and to share the celebration. This in turn will give positive self-esteem and a sense of pride to the children presenting the celebration.

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6. **Plan, Explore, Review (Reception class)**

**Plan;** at the beginning of the session the adult supports a small group of children to choose and/or plan what they will do, where they will go and how they may do it. Photographs and/or diagrams may help the children to select activities and variations.

**Exploring Time;** is where the children are encouraged to ‘have a go’ and to become engaged in the learning activities they have planned. Learning is enhanced by providing a rich and stimulating environment that promotes independence, interdependence and risk taking. Staff support, encourage, extend and embed children’s learning through role modeling and effective communication.

**Review;** is where the children come back from their explorations and review what they have done and how they did it. Staff guide the children into thinking about what they have achieved and how they can do better.

7. **Additional Sessions and Programmes used in the setting**

The following schemes are designed so that by the end of the Reception class children are confident in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. The following additional sessions and programmes are used to support the elements needed for competent reading and writing:

We offer regular age-appropriate sessions and programmes as follows:

**Early Years World Languages** (for all age groups across the setting)

**Jolly Phonics** (as from pre-Reception age as an introduction to sounds, letters and early reading skills)

**Music and Movement** (all age groups across the setting to enhance cognitive and physical development and to increase listening skills)

**Write Dance programme** (in the Butterflies Nursery class to develop fine motor skills through movement and dance)

**Writing skills** (as from the 2 year old room in Nursery. To regularly develop children’s fine motor skills, pencil control through tracing, copying and mark making)

**PE lessons** (as from pre-Reception age as an introduction to children being healthy, active and developing their co-ordination)

**Library** (regular Library visits for the children to enjoy a story from the librarian. Pre-Reception and Reception children get to choose a book of their choice to take home to read)
8. Early Years World Languages

The young baby makes every sound in the human language. As he or she hears language many of these sounds are filtered out. The young child’s vocal cords begin to develop around the age of two and are completely developed by the age of ten. Introducing world languages from an early age enables children to develop the capacity for learning language and to accurately produce the sounds from other languages.

Our Early Years World Languages introduces children to a range of world languages and related age-appropriate activities such as books, CD’s and puppets so that children have the foundations to become multi-lingual.

9. Music and Movement exercise sessions

The Nursery uses Music and Movement exercise sessions (such as Sticky Kids) for young children (Ladybirds/Fireflies/Butterflies) based upon research into how young children learn and develop through sound and movement. Children in pre-Reception and Reception class also take part in PE lessons. In order to learn effectively children need to be able to process information from their sensory systems, develop balance, gross and fine motor movements, self-esteem, confidence and the ability to positively manage emotions and challenges. The sessions will encourage and support the following:

✓ balance;
✓ muscle tone, stamina, suppleness and gross motor movements;
✓ posture and control;
✓ body and sensory awareness;
✓ grip and fine motor movements;
✓ self-control, persistence and organisation;
✓ language, rhythm and communication skills;
✓ listening skills, processing and attention;
✓ independence, leadership and team work (negotiation, turn-taking, encouraging and supporting others);
✓ self-esteem and confidence;
✓ awareness of all round health (mental and physical)

10. IT Technology

Information Communications Technology is an integral part of modern life. However, there are concerns about young children spending too much time playing computer games and accessing inappropriate material on the internet. Use of the Clever Touch Smart Board with appropriate programmes integrates appropriate state of the art technology into the curriculum. For example iPads have applications correlated with our literacy and numeracy programme in the Reception class. For
children in pre-Reception there is the opportunity to use the IT suite as part of their curriculum.

**11. Music**

As well as developing a love of music and musicality, music is extremely important for young children’s learning. Singing and playing a variety of instruments during our music sessions helps the young child to develop. Listening to varied genres of music is an essential part of musical development both instrumental and vocal.

**Phonemic Awareness**: As children listen and sing songs they begin to recognise individual sounds within a word and notice the same sounds in different words.

- **Phonics**: singing helps to re-enforce the letter sounds.
- **Fluency**: Repeating favourite songs helps children to develop fluency and confidence in reading. Children are also able to experiment with grammatical rules and rhyming through song.
- **Vocabulary/Comprehension**: Many songs provide a lively, rich oral language experience. The skills of re-telling, visualising and questioning are further developed through song.

**12. All settings - Environment and Display**

As part of the EYFS curriculum the children are encouraged to understand the effects of preserving and interacting with their natural environment to learn about sustainability and how to look after the planet in ways that they are able to comprehend depending on their age group.

The following areas may be included in the theme planning and outdoor learning:

- the earth;
- dangers to our planet;
- litter;
- re-cycling;
- growing our own food;
- water preservation;
- energy sources;
- re-newable energy;
- environmentally friendly products;

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All settings – Environment and Display contd.

The quality of displays within a setting indicates the standards, values and ethos within the setting. Children will respect and look after an environment that they have helped to create and which has a clean, cared for, pleasant, and orderly appearance. All areas within the setting must be used to celebrate achievement and to demonstrate how the learning has developed.

Heads of Room/Managers/Teachers or staff must conduct a daily classroom environment/risk assessment check that includes:

- cleanliness; floors, surfaces, cupboards, toilets clean;
- furniture; appropriate; arranged to support learning;
- resources: appropriate; accessible; tidy; labeled;
- children’s and adults personal property is appropriately stored;
- displays: attractive and creative linked to the curriculum/teaching and learning; updated regularly; showcase children’s own work, photographs and explanations and objectives of the learning process;
- information board for parents; notices, policies; curriculum; newsletters (if appropriate)
- heating/air conditioning / ventilation working so that temperature is comfortable for learning;
- noise levels: carpet and appropriate flooring; appropriate resources, organisation (young children need low levels of background noise).

13. Meeting the needs of children who need support

If a child in the setting requires support, the staff will initially observe the child over a short period of time during various activities. The EYFS SENCO will be involved and consulted. It may be that only minimum support is required from staff to help the child in a particular area. An initial discussion with the Head of Nursery/Manager/Teacher is essential before approaching the parents regarding any concerns or offers of support at this stage. The parent’s views, opinions and their consent will be taken in to consideration in a sensitive manner before consulting other outside professionals if necessary, such as portage, speech therapy or the area inclusion officer for advice. Staff will continue to work with the child giving support as advised with regular and supportive feedback to parents, celebrating positive outcomes and achievements. The SENCO will keep all records as necessary.
14. Meeting the needs of the more able, gifted and talented children

Meeting the needs of children who have been highlighted as more able, gifted and talented will warrant important discussions with the teacher and parents.

‘Gifted and talented’ is defined as follows:

**Gifted:** high achievement/potential in English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Modern Foreign Languages, RE, ICT or Design and Technology.

**Talented:** high achievement/potential in Art, Music, PE or the Performing Arts.

Children are usually kept within their peer group and their needs met by differentiation and additional provision. This is to keep them within their social and friendship groups and to take into consideration their all-round development needs. However, if by moving the child to the next year group there is considerable benefit to the child, a final decision would be made by the Head of pre-Prep, the class teacher and the parents.

15. Positive Behaviour Programme

The role of the Early Years practitioner is to explain, model and ensure all the children understand the expectations of the setting as regards behaviour. The key person for the child has a particularly important role to play within the team and ensures that there is excellent communication with parents and other members of the team regarding any issues which may arise with individual children. The SENCO/Enrichment Co-ordinator will then work with the staff involved in devising and implementing any behaviour support plans which may be necessary for individual children, in consultation with the local Area Inclusion Officer if appropriate.

16. Managing Behaviour

Heads of rooms and Managers must have the necessary skills to advise other staff on behaviour issues and to access expert advice if necessary. Everyone is responsible for implementing the Positive Behaviour Policy. A safe, caring and happy environment enables maximum learning to take place.

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In all cases, Early Years practitioners use praise and encouragement to reward good behaviour such as kindness, turn-taking and willingness to share. Corporal punishment must NOT be used under any circumstances. A record must be kept of any occasion where physical intervention is used, and parents/carers informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable (Refer to the Early Years Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Positive Behaviour Policy).

Positive behaviour is praised, rewarded and discussed with the children.

Children are encouraged to develop awareness of safety by not running indoors, being careful and considerate in their general behaviour and by walking sensibly up and down stairs.

Children and adults are required to speak politely to each other, with EYFS Practitioners acting as role models with regard to courtesy, care, good manners and friendliness.

Respect for property is to be fostered, and children encouraged to take care of books, toys and games and to help to tidy resources away.

Sometimes it is necessary to employ strategies to redirect or correct negative behaviour. **The main strategy in the majority of such cases is to redirect the child to a different activity and encourage positive behaviour.**

The following strategy is used for conflict resolution

- approach calmly;
- acknowledge feelings;
- gather Information; listen;
- take turns restating the problem;
- discuss and implement solution; for instance: *How can we solve the problem? What can we do to make it better (give 2 choices e.g. “we can take turns or play together”)*
- Give praise for resolving the problem.
- Be prepared to follow up.

Children who have hurt another (by action or words) may need time to calm down and regain control in a quiet place. EY Practitioners need to ensure that the child is safe, to show that such behaviour is unacceptable and to help the child to understand the impact of his/her actions upon others.

Physical intervention is only to be used with minimum force and only in order to prevent accident or injury a child or to prevent damage to property.

Parents are involved in promoting and supporting a positive behaviour ethos. Discussions with parents about behaviour should include celebration of positive behaviour, as well as concerns. Parents are invited to help plan and implement strategies to deal with any difficulties regarding behaviour.
17. Partnership with Parents

The evidence is overwhelming that where parents are engaged in their children’s learning and work in close partnership with the setting that children’s all round development and progress is enhanced.

Parents naturally want the best for their children but often find that nannies/childminders can be unreliable. Even when they are good carers they frequently do not provide sufficiently for the child's intellectual, social and language development.

Our settings offer opening times of 7.30am to 6.00pm, for 48 weeks of the year (weeks adjusted according to local regulations) or a Term Time only option for school based settings.

Parents can go to work confident in the knowledge that their children are receiving the highest quality education and care with trained staff including a key person who knows and cares for their individual child.

Time is given at the start of the day for parents/carers to share how their child has been at home. The daily feedback information sheet (Nursery) is completed by the key person or staff in the child’s room, and children share with parents what they have been enjoying in the setting. There is also communication via the weekly newsletter (pre-Reception) and Parent Portal (school). Nursery, pre-Reception and Reception class parents have access to their child's Tapestry online journal via a login to see activities through photos, observations that their children are doing during the school day. A termly assessment for the children is sent out through the Tapestry programme. Nursery also send a termly newsletter out to parents.

These strategies combined with parental consultations ensures that parents are fully involved in their children’s learning and know how their child is progressing in all areas.

Many opportunities are given for parents and the whole family to engage in Nursery activities such as joining the parents' association (FOS at Sherfield School), or termly open and activity mornings where parents can join their children in seasonal activities, charity support or fundraising occasions such as our annual ‘Guide Dogs for the Blind’ walk, celebration days and special projects such as developing a sensory garden, painting a mural or sharing expertise e.g. a world language or cooking.

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18. The key person and children's emotional development

In the setting each child has a key person who is responsible for the overall physical, intellectual, personal, social and emotional development of children in their care. Key to emotional development and feeling secure is the development of a secure attachment with the key person.

Young children usually have a “try all attitude” exploring and learning through play. However, very quickly they experience the negative feelings associated with failure and many give up trying in order to avoid the feelings associated with failure. It is important for the staff and teacher, others in the class and the children themselves to phrase things positively confirming that success is achievable.

As we are thinking and learning we often need to express our thinking out loud. Discussing children’s learning with others helps us to clarify thoughts and to make further connections.

If early learners are not achieving success then staff and teachers need to assess what is going wrong and try a different technique. An effective way of helping early learners to achieve success is to find someone who is achieving success and model their behaviour. Having to teach someone else is a good way of clarifying, consolidating and extending your own thinking.

Once skills have been mastered, opportunities need to be given to practise and maintain them and to remind everyone what has been achieved.

19. Developing Thinking Skills

Effective teaching and learning involves thinking and processing at all levels refers to:

- basic thinking - thinking at the knowledge level.
- engaged thinking - application and analysis.
- dynamic thinking - creative and evaluative thinking.

To get children and pupils thinking we need to provide opportunities for:

- information gathering and comprehension - active listening, group interaction, being able to obtain the information necessary for learning, able to organise, order, sequence, rank;
- criticality - being able to prioritise, question, compare, contrast, assess, estimate, find relationships and patterns, classify, make judgements, predict, infer, make analogies, analyse, generalise;
- creativity - being able to brainstorm, visualise, generate new ideas, alternatives, solutions, inventions;

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• connecting and re-framing - being able to see the ‘big picture' and to express and present thoughts, make decisions.

20. Physical State

In order to promote a physical state conducive to thinking and learning ensure that:

• lighting is sufficient and where possible natural;
• the temperature is not too hot - the brain works better when it is cool enough to need a jumper;
• there is ventilation and enough windows open;
• the right tools for the job are easily accessible for the children;
• the learner is comfortable - hunger, thirst etc. distracts the learner. Are the children drinking sufficient water? Is the learner eating a balanced and nutritious diet?
• the right physical position is chosen e.g. standing, sitting etc.

The most important message is that the learner is responsible for his or her own learning and must alter their own state in order to enhance thinking and learning. For instance music can enhance the learning environment by energising or relaxing (it may also distract). Physical activity can also help to change the learning state and give time for reflective thinking and processing.
Annex 1:

GEMS Values

GEMS Values are unique to GEMS, and are part of the planned curriculum. They are woven into the every element of school life.

http://www.sherfieldschool.co.uk/mission-and-aims.aspx

GEMS VALUES

Leading through innovation - Find the courage to challenge convention
  · We dare to dream of the possibilities
  · No idea is too small or too large if it makes things better for our learners and our people

Pursuing excellence - Work to continually exceed expectations
  · Just as we set educational standards for our schools, we ensure that everything we do is delivered to a high standard
  · We go the extra mile for our students and our colleagues

Growing by learning - Strive to develop your potential
  · Along with our students, we never stop learning
  · Each and every one of us has the capacity for leadership

Global citizenship - Making an active contribution to your local and global community
  · We respect and celebrate our diversity and recognize that there are many things that unite us all
  · We make a difference in our local communities so that we can build a sustainable planet to share
  · We build bridges of knowledge, push boundaries and unite young people.
  · We aim to produce not just great students, but great people who live with honesty, confidence and integrity

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