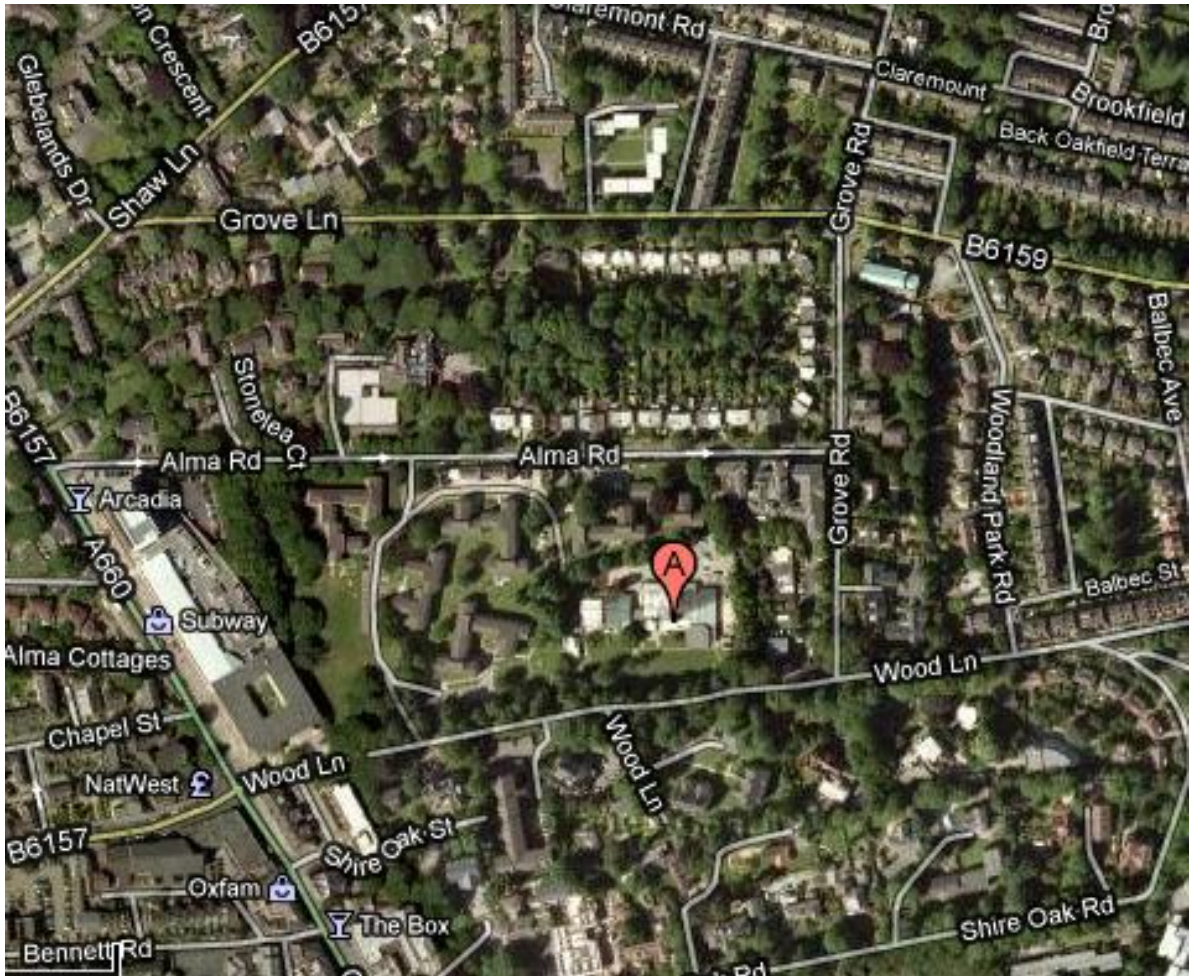


ROOTED IN THE COMMUNITY – GROWING FOR THE FUTURE



SHIRE OAK
C of E (VC) Primary School

Welcome



Find us just off Otley Road in a peaceful, woodland setting.

Shire Oak CE Primary School

Wood Lane

Headingley

Leeds

LS6 2DT

0113 275 5890

info@shireoakcofeprimaryschool.leeds.sch.uk

Welcome to Shire Oak CE Primary School. We're glad you have chosen to find out more about us.

Choosing a school for your child can be a very difficult thing to do and it can be hard to weigh up all the information you will be receiving. In the end you have to trust your instincts about a school, asking yourself where your child will be happy and understood, because we know those two things will make the biggest difference to how well they progress with their learning. I think that seeing a school in action and meeting the children who go there is the best way to make that judgement. We ask for our oldest children to take visitors on tours of our school during our regular Open Days – that way you can be sure that the things we talk about are really happening!

When the schools in this area were reorganised a few years ago, Shire Oak was formed and now draws children from Headingley, Hyde Park, Meanwood and beyond. In the early days the focus was on establishing a positive ethos, great behaviour and a good attitude from all the children. This has been done so successfully that we are now able to focus to an even greater extent on learning and progress.

At Shire Oak we are proud of our creative curriculum, our commitment to learning outdoors and our development of responsible local and global citizens. Please rest assured though, that creative and nurturing does not mean we are not rigorous in our pursuit of good standards in teaching and learning – quite the contrary! Knowing our children well and working hard to make the curriculum relevant, interesting and exciting to them is how we make sure that we support *all* our children to make great progress, prepare them well for High School and later life and stretch them to do as well as they possibly can.

Please do arrange to come and meet us so that I can answer any questions you may have.

Jane Astrid Devane

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Headteacher

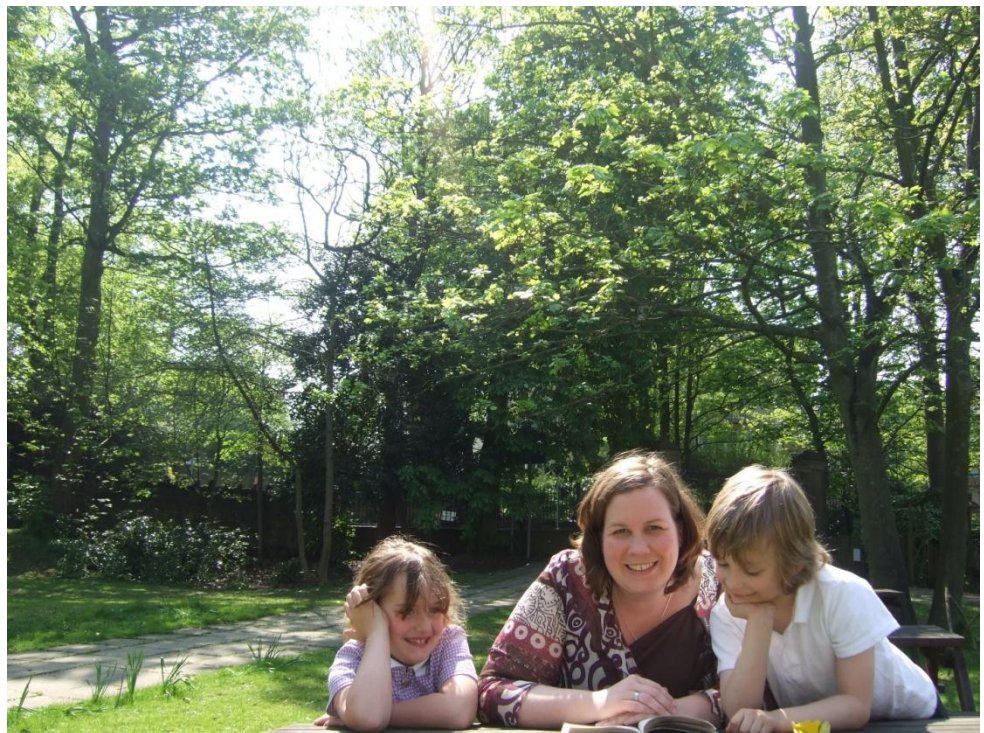


Photo by Nathan, Y2

Dear Parent / Carer

On behalf of the Governing Body I am delighted to welcome you and your child to Shire Oak Primary School. The school community consists of children, parents, teachers, support staff and governors and I hope that very quickly you and your child feel a part of that community.

The Governing Body is proud of the way in which the school has developed so far, especially its emphasis on providing a safe, caring and supportive learning environment for all our children. Shire Oak Primary has a strong staff team. Both teaching and support staff will work with you to provide the very best education and support for your child.

The school prides itself on the quality of teaching and learning provided and the high standards of attainment and behaviour. Just as important are the extra-curricular and enrichment activities that are offered both during school time and through a wide range of after-school clubs. Whatever your child's interests and talents we hope that there will be something on offer that they will find stimulating, challenging and enjoyable. At Shire Oak we take seriously our roles and responsibilities to the global community. We are working towards becoming a Fair Trade and Sustainable school; we work hard to make a positive contribution on environmental issues; and we are pleased to be active members of our local community.

I very much hope that your child is happy at Shire Oak and, as a parent / carer, you have confidence in the school. The school's governors are drawn from different groups associated with the school - the staff, the parents, the church, the local community and also from Leeds City Council. The role of the Governing Body is to support the Head Teacher and school staff to provide the very best education for your children. If there are issues that you feel the Governing Body should be addressing I would be pleased to hear from you.



Janie Percy-Smith
Chair, Governing Body

This printed prospectus is deliberately short, as part of our commitment to sustainability.

More information, and a blog that the children contribute to, can be found at

<http://www.shireoakcofeprimaryschool.co.uk/>

How we learn

We all want our children to grow up to be confident, resourceful and well educated. We believe that strong skills in reading, writing and maths are vital for this and they are therefore woven into every aspect of learning here at school.

We know that children learn best when learning is done in a creative and exciting way, making links between subjects and topics and working in a variety of ways, e.g. independently, in pairs and in groups. We work hard to place all learning in a context, so that it is meaningful and relevant to the children we are teaching. Learning is tailored to meet the needs of all the learners in a class, through adult support, a range of activities and extra challenge when children are ready.



We take pride in the play based structure of our Early Years, as we understand that young children learn best through play. Our very skilled staff are good at taking children's own ideas and taking advantage of every learning opportunity within these. As well as a range of resourced learning areas within the classroom, Reception and Year 1 both have dedicated outdoor learning areas that they use throughout the day.

"We had to try to answer the question, 'Could a rhino live in Headingley?' The rhino bit fitted in with our topic on Africa, but we also went on a science trip to explore the habitats around here to see if there was everything a rhino needed. We had done lots of research about rhinos in books and on the Internet, It was good because now we know lots about Africa (especially the countries we each chose to find out about), researching on our own, presenting our work, rhinos and Headingley."
Georgia and Gabriel, Y6.

A distinctive feature of our school curriculum is our commitment to Outdoor Learning. We know that, especially for young children, speaking and listening skills improve when working outdoors. For all children the outdoors provides wonderful opportunities for problem solving and investigations. We are fortunate to have expansive school grounds in which we have created a wildlife garden, a community orchard, vegetable patches, a willow circle, two learning gardens and other areas that make a great place for learning.



Meaningful opportunities for learning outside are identified and planned for throughout the whole year. For instance, all children get the chance to grow their own food and then cook it.



As well as reading, writing and maths we teach children the full range of subjects in the National Curriculum. One of the subjects we are working hard to develop at the moment is music; not only is every child in school being taught by a specialist music teacher, but they regularly sing and create music to share in whole school events. Y4 children are all learning to play the djembe drum and all children have the opportunity to take up private instrument lessons, at a reduced rate, in school hours.





The challenge we face is to prepare children to work in jobs that do not exist yet, using technology that hasn't been invented yet. Whatever happens, having confidence and skills in using ICT is going to be so important and we are always looking for ways to develop our equipment and work in this area. Instead of seeing ICT as a distinct thing that is done in a computer

suite, we encourage children to see the use of computers, interactive whiteboards, cameras, recording equipment, sensors, visualisers, etc. as a tool – in just the same way as pen and paper. We, therefore, have banks of laptops that can be used at children's tables and outdoors, as well as a mini suite of computers in each classroom to support group work.



We make sure that children have at least 2 PE lessons a week, as well as other opportunities to be active and play sport. PE lessons include games, dance, gymnastics and outdoor pursuits.



Children learn to swim from Y3 onwards. We have school rugby, gymnastic, football, cross-country running and sports clubs which are open to all, and some children from these groups choose to play competitively in tournaments and other events organised between Leeds schools as well as in our own House Team competitions. This is in addition to our other lunchtime and after school clubs which include languages, arts and crafts and choir.



Part of our creative approach to the curriculum is enhancing learning with a wide range of educational visits and invitations to interesting and engaging visitors. Recent visits have included The Deep, the Royal Armouries, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, the universities and the City Learning Centre. We regularly walk out and about in the local area. For instance, Reception class go

to the card shop when learning about celebrations and Y6 walk along the Ridge to explore and classify local wildlife. School heavily subsidises these opportunities, as they are so important. When voluntary contributions are invited, they are collected in sensitively and cost is never a barrier to participating in the full range of school activities.





We plan three residential visits each year. The first of these is for children in Year 2 and is just for one night. During this visit children have the chance to learn in a different environment and develop some independence skills with adults they are familiar with and well supported by. Children take their second residential visit in Year 4, usually to Bewerley Park where they take part in a range of outdoor and adventurous activities. This visit is a little longer, the children are away for two nights. Finally in Year 6 the children are ready to take on the challenges offered at the Robinwood activity centre, including the infamous piranha pool!

As a Church of England school we value the importance of setting aside a small amount of time each day for worship and reflection. This usually takes place as a whole school, or in a key stage, within an assembly that has discussed or explored a topic or theme. Our assemblies reflect the faith backgrounds and cultures of all our children and the wider British community and give the chance for children to develop their spirituality in an inclusive way. We generally finish with a reflection or prayer and use the words: "Put your hands together, close your eyes so you can concentrate and so that people may pray if they would like to." As a voluntary controlled school (not voluntary aided) we follow the Leeds Agreed Syllabus for RE, in common with the state schools. Children learn about and from Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and Buddhism in detail, as well as about other festivals and practices. Twice a year we all walk up to St Michael's Church in Headingley, for a special assembly to which family and friends are invited.



How well we do

Children at the end of Foundation Stage, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two achieve results that are broadly in line with the Leeds and national averages and we are working hard to improve from this solid base. As well as the standards we reach, the progress children make during their time with us is so important. One way we do this is to set challenging targets for all children to make at least two levels progress from Key Stage One to Key Stage Two and then closely track them to make sure this is achieved.

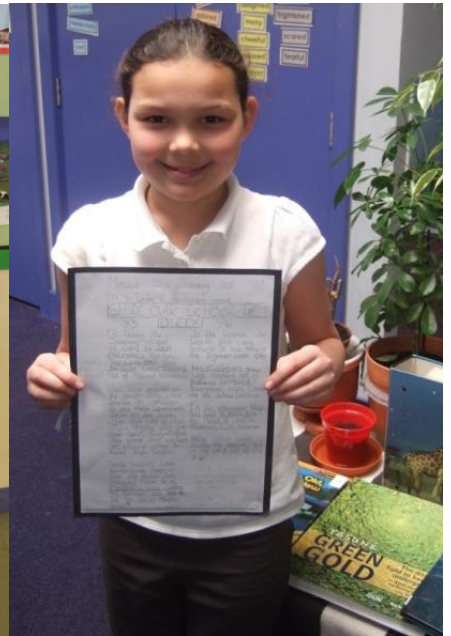
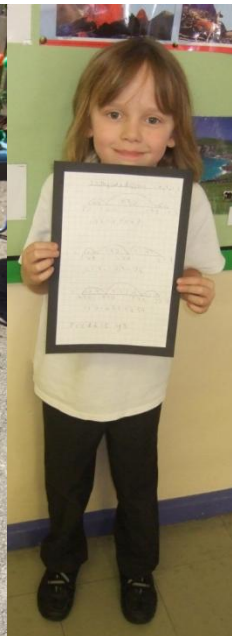


We keep a really close eye on children's progress whilst at Shire Oak. If someone appears not to be doing as well as they should, we find out what they need and put it in place. This might be targeted individual or small group catch up work or additional resources and attention to support them in class. All children, whatever their ability, get the opportunity to work with dedicated extra adult support at the times they would most benefit, and



this includes extending the learning of the most able.

We value children's achievements from the whole curriculum as well as from activities outside school. One of the many ways we celebrate these achievements is in our Wednesday Superstar Assembly when we present Superstar certificates for exceptional effort, work or behaviour as well as a trophy for the Citizen of the Week and celebrate birthdays. We also announce the weekly totals of House Team points earned throughout the week and children can share out of school accomplishments.



The School Day

At Shire Oak, our school day starts with children forming a class circle on the playground, where their teacher welcomes them and says 'Hello' to families. We dedicate a small amount of time each day to coming together as a whole school or key stage for an assembly in the school hall which includes an act of inclusive collective worship, suitable for children of all faiths or none. Assemblies are usually based around a current topic or theme and provide opportunity for celebration, discussion and music. We regularly invite families to join our assemblies and the children enjoy preparing for these and showcasing their learning to the audience.



We're always busy and active with our learning and during the course of the day children will learn outside the classroom, visiting the library, the hall, the music room, the nurture room and our expansive school grounds. During some lessons the bank of laptops is wheeled in for whole class ICT work to supplement the fixed group of computers found in every classroom.

Children really enjoy their breaktimes and lunchtimes at school

and we work hard to provide a range of activities during these. Children get active playing football, basketball, skipping and hockey. We have a stage area where children are often spotted making up and rehearsing dances and plays and then performing them for their friends. Children enjoy running and jumping on the tyre park or relaxing for a chat on the benches



under one of our many oak trees. At lunchtime, children eating packed lunches and school dinners can sit together and socialise; in the warmer weather we often sit outside in the sunshine. Children having school dinners can always choose what they'd like to eat from the menu, which is different everyday and on display in school. The younger children are well supported in making their choices at lunchtime and for the first few weeks have a buddy from one of the older classes to help them get used to the routines and make sure they have happy, fun-filled lunchtimes. At all times through the year children are supported by Peer Mediators who are well trained older pupils who can help with sorting out minor disagreements. There is also a Buddy Bench where children can sit if they are looking for someone to play with.

We offer on site wrap-around care from 7:50a.m. until 6:00p.m. provided by 'Kidzone' who plan a range of engaging activities, provide snacks and can even help with your child's homework or reading practice. Kidzone is based in one of the rooms in school and the staff are friendly, caring and well-loved by all the children, as confirmed in our recent parents' questionnaire.



At Shire Oak, all children wear a purple school cardigan or jumper. We sell these new at the school office, or, as part of our effort to be a sustainable school, you can buy good quality second hand items from FOSOPS (Friends of Shire Oak Primary School). We are proud that our children come to school in uniform and sensible shoes, etc. that are appropriate for all the ways we work, indoors and out. We do ask the children to dress smartly and have a suitable PE kit, but there is no expensive uniform to buy and we don't discriminate against children for not having a specific item. We are always adding to our stock of wellies and outdoor clothing for children to use when gardening and working outside.

How we support our children

We know that all children learn well and make good progress when they are well supported and their emotional needs are being met. At different times in their school life, children may need an extra helping hand to help them make their next step. We have a range of support systems in school as well as always being kind and approachable.

Hilary Whitehead is our very experienced Learning Mentor. She supports children and their families and is the familiar friendly face that greets pupils each morning in the playground. This is a good time to have a quick chat with her about things that are happening at home that might affect children at school. Sometimes teachers ask Mrs Whitehead to work with specific children and pupils can also request this support by putting a note in the Worry Box. Mrs Whitehead helps children 1:1 or in small groups to manage their feelings and put in place strategies to help them deal with things in a positive way.



Mrs Whitehead also trains our Peer Mediators who are older pupils who can help children to play and make up games nicely, join in with others and use the playground equipment in a fun way. They are also trained in sorting out minor disagreements: They know when to get an adult to intervene, and when they can help children learn to stick up for themselves and sort out the issues themselves. We have a strong anti-bullying policy at Shire Oak and believe that part of being able to tackle bullying is being able to tell the difference between a falling out and bullying. By helping our children develop the skills they need to tackle tricky situations in an assertive, but not aggressive way, they become more able to stand up for themselves and deal with the difficult people they

will meet at High School and in later life. (This is made possible by knowing that a supportive adult is always on hand should they be needed and that the adults are watching to see if there is behaviour that should be tackled.)

Our nurture groups are run by Lydia Turner in a specially dedicated room, which the children helped to design. We aim for all children in school to benefit from this small group work at some point in their Shire Oak time. Children learn and share a lot of skills in these sessions that complement the PSHCE (personal, social, health and citizenship education) curriculum. As well as some of the lovely art work you will see displayed at our assemblies and around school, they learn speaking and listening skills as well as social skills, such as turn-taking, how to be assertive and stick up for themselves and how to work collaboratively and peaceably with others.



We work very hard to ensure smooth transitions between every phase of your child's education with us. This begins with the option of receiving a home visit and invitations to settling in sessions before your child starts in Reception class. To ease the move to Key Stage One we plan for our Year 1 classroom to evolve over the year to change from a Reception style play-based classroom to one which has space for the whole class to be working at tables when they are ready. They also have their own dedicated outdoor area, which is used regularly too. From then on, careful planning takes place between class teachers to ensure continuity of care and challenge. In Year 6 we have a special Ambassador's Project to help children feel more confident, in control and excited about the move to High School.

What are our values?

Children at Shire Oak enjoy creative teaching and high quality learning.

All our children are encouraged to fulfil their potential in a happy, safe and nurturing environment.

We express our Christian values in a sensitive way while, at the same time, welcoming families of different faiths and beliefs.

Children at Shire Oak recognise their responsibilities towards each other, the local community and the wider world.

How do we live our values?

Teaching and learning

Our aim is for all children to make the best possible progress through high quality teaching and learning.

We ensure children develop the key skills they will need for later life.

We provide all children with a broad and balanced education that meets their particular needs.

Children and staff are encouraged to be creative in all areas of learning.

The school works closely with parents/carers; we recognise that children are more likely to fulfil their potential when we work together.

A happy, safe and nurturing environment

Staff and pupils show mutual respect for each other.

We enjoy a stimulating and purposeful atmosphere in school.

Our school is a happy place; children know that their concerns will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Children learn to be good friends, to care for each other and work cooperatively.

School provides a safe and secure environment in which children learn to deal with risk appropriately.

Social responsibility and behaviour

We expect high standards of behaviour from all members of the school community.

Children develop an understanding of right and wrong.

Children are supported to play an active part in the life of the school.

Children develop the knowledge and skills to make positive life choices.

Through sharing and celebrating different faiths, children develop an awareness of the role of spirituality in everyday life.

The school and the community

Children are encouraged to play an active part in the local community and develop an understanding of their role as global citizens.

The school works closely with partners from our local community to provide a wide range of learning experiences.

We actively promote environmental sustainability in all aspects of school life.