



**Enjoy,
Aspire and
Achieve
Together**



PROSPECTUS 2018/19



CONTENTS

Ethos and Aims	3
Contact details	3
Values Education	4
Safeguarding our children	4
Our school introduced	5
Ofsted 2017 – resoundingly good school	6
Curriculum	7
Organisation of our classes	8
Staying in touch/keeping parents informed	8
The Governing Board	9
Admissions	10
Transfer on to Middle School	10
School Day	11
Uniform	12
School Policies	13
School Meals	14
Eco Council and School Council	15
Helping and volunteering in school	16
Parent Teacher and Friends Association	16

ETHOS AND AIMS OF OUR SCHOOL

Our Vision

Enjoy, aspire and achieve together to be the best that we can be.

Aims

- Our children will be confident, respectful and adventurous learners
- Our staff will be motivated, committed and inspiring leaders of learning
- Our parents will be engaged and informed partners in their children's education
- Our governors will be active, strategic and knowledgeable critical friends
- Our wider community will be valued and welcomed to be part of our school life
- Our learning environment will be stimulating and progressive
- Our natural world will be appreciated and nurtured
- Together we will be happy, respecting and caring, feel safe and embrace diversity, and be enthusiastic about developing ourselves and our skills to achieve our full potential.



The rules of the school are simple and require each child to show care, courtesy and consideration at all times and to strive to ensure the well-being of all members of both the school and the wider community. This behaviour is reinforced by the Values Based Education programme.

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Values Education



We believe that Values underpin everything we do at our school. They create the best foundation for our children as they learn to live well in society. We follow a **'Values-based Education'** programme where the children reflect and act on a different key value every three weeks.



We hope to inspire the children to choose their own personal, social, moral and spiritual values and to be aware of ways to deepen and develop themselves as world citizens.

We give our values real importance by talking about them informally with children as well as formally through assemblies and in lessons.

At school we have a **'Values'** apple tree. Every week in assembly we recognise those children who have acted out a value by adding their name to the tree.

In 2016/2017 we began to develop a school-wide **'Mindfulness'** programme. This connects superbly with our work on Values. Children are encouraged to think and reflect on how they are living their lives and given quiet time together every day to step back and silently reflect.

Safeguarding our children

The school is very strongly committed to highest quality practice in safeguarding for our children. There are a range of practices and procedures which help ensure this practice is sustained to an excellent standard. From time to time we will highlight those aspects which involve particular response and engagement from parents. The school expects all staff and visitors to be equally committed to best safeguarding practice.





OUR SCHOOL

Shillington Lower School is a thriving rural school of just over 130 pupils. We educate children from the age of two to nine years old. Although most of our children come from Shillington village, we also have a third of our children coming from surrounding villages.

We pride ourselves on retaining single-year group teaching. Classes currently range from 17 to 30 pupils.

Our school building is surrounded by large grassed areas, vegetable patches, playground, playing field, outdoor swimming pool, wildlife garden and pond – a really beautiful, enclosed and attractive setting.

Around this beautiful site you will see a:

- large outdoor classroom which is used from late Spring and into the summer months
- Vegetable patches for each of the classes to enjoy and learn in
- Wildlife pond
- Our own outdoor swimming pool which is very popular for the main school to use every day during the warmer summer months. (Thanks are due to the PTFA for funding this great facility).

We opened our own **pre-school – Pixie Class** on the site in September 2017. This provides a direct link between the main-school staff and our great team of teacher and pre-school specialists working with our Pixies. The mutual gains are already in evidence and will certainly grow and develop over the coming years.

Pixies is open in school term times and runs from 9.00am to 3.15pm each day.



Dawn to Dusk provide before wrap around provision before and after school.

OFSTED 2017

We were very pleased with the numerous tributes given to the school, pupils and staff in the course of the inspection of our school in May of this year:

- ✓ You ensure that teaching standards are high across the school
- ✓ Pupils make consistently strong progress
- ✓ Your thoughtful promotion of pupils' social and emotional well-being continues to be a strength of the school
- ✓ You also ensure that pupils behave well in lessons and around the school
- ✓ Pupils said how much they enjoy coming to school
- ✓ Pupils are respectful towards adults and co-operate well together
- ✓ Pupils are kind to each other and treat each other with respect
- ✓ There is a clear emphasis placed by all staff on developing pupils' positive attitudes to learning
- ✓ Parents are equally positive about their children being happy and well looked after at school



CURRICULUM

We aim to provide an inclusive curriculum where children receive quality in their education regardless of race, gender or religion. Our teaching follows the National Curriculum and the Bedfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.

Our teaching methods are designed to encourage the development of confidence, independence and responsibility. A variety of strategies are used to enable children to learn effectively. These include individual, group and whole class teaching. We provide a broad and balanced education. Pixies pre-school and Rainbows Foundation follow their Foundation Stage Curriculum.

The National Curriculum

This comprises of eleven subjects, together with Religious Education and also Personal, Social, Health Citizenship Education (PSHCE).

Core subjects: English, Mathematics, Science and Computing.

Foundation subjects: Art & Design, Design Technology, History, Geography, Modern Foreign Language (eg French), Music, Physical Education, PSHCE.



English and Mathematics are taught as discrete subjects and lessons. Science is also generally taught discretely. Other subjects may be taught within an overarching topic – as a major theme which looks to investigate and learn about the different subjects in a bigger context.

ENGLISH

This is very evidently fundamental to all learning and given high priority. The majority of our skills taught include speaking and listening, reading, writing, punctuation, spelling and grammar and handwriting. Parents are provided with information sessions to help understand support their children's Phonics work. We also ensure that parents are enabled to understand the carefully stepped programmes for developing reading skills followed at Shillington. All children are given a Reading Record book and should read with their parents regularly.

Writing is also taught in a carefully programmed way – from the correct way to hold a pencil through to well-presented cursive writing. Children will develop their skills in story telling and other forms of writing.

MATHEMATICS

As with English, engaging parents in how skills, techniques and understanding Mathematics are taught is very important. There are a range of ways in which pupils learn their Maths which have moved on significantly in recent years. At the same time the intent to linking this study to practical applications and to developing a sense of the fun and interest that can be had in this subject is very important.

ORGANISATION OF CLASSES

Our overriding aim is to maintain provision of single age-group classes. These are mixed ability. The teaching organisation of each class will vary according to the activity. Children are often taught as a class, sometimes in a group and sometimes individually. Sometimes they will be grouped within the class by ability and at other times the organisation will be to mix abilities.

In our school we have the following classes, all single year age groups:

	Class Name	Year Group	Age Range	Teacher
Pre-School	Pixies		2 - 4	Mrs Minta
Foundation	Rainbows		Age 4-5	Mrs Hitchcock and Mrs Young
Key Stage 1	Unicorns	Year 1	Age 5-6	Miss Gradwell
	Dragons	Year 2	Age 6-7	Miss Sharpe
Key Stage 2	Centaurs	Year 3	Age 7-8	Mrs Matcham
	Phoenix	Year 4	Age 8-9	Mrs Mossop and Mrs Ross

STAYING IN TOUCH

A successful school like ours is built on a great working partnership with our children's families and carers. We have a range of ways to keep in touch regularly with you.

We greet the children at the school gate every morning and in the afternoon either the class teacher or teaching assistant will see the children to the school gate and hand over in person to parent/family.

Every fortnight we email our ParentMail newsletter to report what has been happening in school and advise of events and issues for the coming weeks.

Twice a year two different days for the parent consultation evenings are offered and a range of times across a four hour slot on those days in order to maximise the options for parents.



THE GOVERNING BOARD



Governors are appointed, elected or co-opted for a fixed term. The Governing Board is made up of representatives from the staff, parents, community and members nominated by the local authority. The Headteacher is also a Governor.

The Governing Board supports, guides and works in partnership with the Headteacher to focus on the school's strategy for excellence and continuous improvement. Our Governing Board is comprised of a diverse group of local people with a range of experiences and expertise. The full Governing Board meets at least four times a year with much of the work being carried out in termly sub-committee meetings. These include:

- Resources and Planning Committee which oversees finance, staffing issues and the overall development and forward planning of the school
- Standards, Teaching and Learning Committee which meets to discuss aspects of what is taught in school and results

We have an active governing board who work closely with the Headteacher and staff and their responsibilities include:

- the general conduct of the school;
- the appointment of staff;
- the school environment;
- the welfare of the children and staff;
- the curriculum;
- setting and monitoring the school's budget;
- contributing to the School Development Plan; and
- monitoring the overall effectiveness of the school.

Our Chair of Governors is Mr Lee Fitzpatrick, who can be contacted via the school office.



ADMISSIONS

Central Bedfordshire Council operates a catchment area policy although parents have the right to express a preference for another school. At Shillington Lower School we welcome applications from outside our catchment area.

The maximum capacity of our main school is 150 pupils and we are able to admit up to 30 pupils in any one year group. If the number of places in a particular year group at a school is not sufficient to meet the requests of all parents, then the local authority will apply the following criteria (in the rank order shown) to determine how the places will be allocated:

- All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'
- Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school
- Children living in the catchment area
- Other children with siblings at the school
- Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address

Children enter the main school in the school year in which they turn five. They enter the Foundation Stage class in one intake in September. The preschool is open for children from the age of two years.

We welcome visits to the school from prospective parents. The Headteacher is always willing to discuss any aspects of school with you. Parents are asked to telephone the school office to make an appointment for a meeting at a mutually convenient date and time. Once you have decided that you wish your child to attend Shillington Lower School, please inform the school office who will guide you through the admissions process.

Further information on how to apply for a school place is available on the Central Bedfordshire Council website at;

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/admissions/landing.aspx>

The School Admissions Service can be contacted on 0300 300 8037 or admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Further details of our admissions policy are available from the school office.

Transfer to Middle School

In the September following their 9th birthday, children transfer to Middle School (usually Robert Bloomfield in Shefford). The Local Authority School Admissions Service sends out details early in the year of transfer.

There is a close liaison with Robert Bloomfield Academy throughout Year 4 to ensure transition is an enjoyable and exciting experience.



SCHOOL DAY

Years 1, 2, 3, 4

8.45 am	The school gate is open and children go directly to class
8.55 am	Morning session begins
10:45-11:00 am	Morning break
12:00/12:15 – 1:00/1:15 pm	Lunchtime *
1:00/1.15 pm	Afternoon session begins
2:15 – 2:30pm	Afternoon break (Years 1 and 2)
3:30 pm	School day ends

* *In order to stagger the queue for lunch, classes take turns to finish their morning lessons at 12.00 or 12.15 and then have their lunch break finish at 1.00 or 1.15*

Rainbows

8:55 am	Parents bring their children to the area outside the Rainbows classroom and accompany them into school when the door is opened.
11:45 – 1:00 pm	Lunch.
3:20 pm	Parents collect their children from the classroom door.

In Rainbow class, morning and afternoon break-times vary and children have access to the outside play area at most times of the day.

All children should be ***in school by 8:55 am***, when the gate into school is locked. We do like children to be on time - but it is better to come late than not at all.

Children will be dismissed at 3.30 pm. The children are escorted to the main gate and are only released to a named responsible adult (over 16).



Please note: for all children, we understand that ***occasionally parents are unexpectedly delayed*** at the end of the school day. If you are delayed, please contact the school on 01462-711637 as soon as possible so a message can be given to your child's teacher and inform us of alternative collection arrangements.

If you have made ***alternative arrangements for your child's collection*** (e.g. going home with another parent, going to a friend's house etc.) the school must be informed via the home/school communication book, phone or letter on that day as to who will be responsible for their safe collection. In line with our safeguarding policy, we cannot release a child unless this permission has been given.

UNIFORM

Children should be sent to school clean, tidy and appropriately dressed.

Long hair must be tied back.

It is of great help if children have been taught to manage buttons, laces and zips before starting school.

Boys grey trousers/shorts, white plain or school logo polo, red school logo jumper, plain black/grey/white socks.

Girls grey skirt/pinafore dress or trousers, white plain or school logo polo shirt, red school logo jumper or logo cardigan, plain black/grey/white socks or plain grey/red/black tights.



Footwear

Sensible dark coloured shoes are preferred for both boys and girls. Trainers and open-toed sandals are not suitable.

Children in **Rainbows** are also required to have a pair of **Wellington boots** in school. These should be clearly named and clipped together with a clothes peg.

PE, Games and Swimming

Rainbows black shorts, red short sleeved t-shirt with school logo, plimsolls.

Years 1 - 4 black shorts, red short sleeved t-shirt with school logo, plimsolls and trainers. In the winter a tracksuit or long sleeved top to be worn over shorts/t-shirt when outside.

P.E. clothing should be kept in a drawstring bag*.

All children **swim** during the summer term and will need a costume and towel. No goggles are permitted.

**The office sells school red PE bag, book bag, water bottle and school logo red sun hat.*

PLEASE ENSURE ALL CLOTHING AND BELONGINGS ARE NAMED.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Individual Needs (Special Educational Needs) Policy

Our Special Educational Needs Policy follows the assessment stages in the National Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We work closely with parents from the early identification stage of any child experiencing learning difficulties and respond sensitively and professionally to differences in learning abilities. Lessons are planned to provide work of the appropriate level for our children. Able children are given work that ensures they are properly stretched and challenged.



Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy

Our children are considerate, polite, excellently behaved and enjoy school greatly. Children are expected to behave well and treat everyone with the same respect. We promote good behaviour and attitudes to learning by recognising, drawing attention to and rewarding this high standard of behaviour.

In cases where a child's behaviour causes concern, parents are contacted and together we discuss and work towards resolving the issues. All staff and children follow the school's policy on discipline/behaviour which also encompasses the issue of bullying. Visual reminders are displayed in each of the classrooms and at other prominent places around the school.

Home-School-Pupil Agreement

We have a home-school-pupil agreement which we expect all parents and pupils to sign annually.

Safeguarding

We are committed to the safety of all our pupils and make positive steps to ensure we actively promote and adhere to safeguarding principles and policies. We expect parents, families and visitors to also actively support this commitment and respond to guidance and direction regarding key routines we have for safeguarding the children in our care.

Copies of school policies are available from the school office and on the school website.

School Meals

School meals are prepared, cooked and served on the premises. Children have choices and variety each day. Facilities are available for children who bring a packed lunch.

Shillington Lower School is a **'Nut Free Zone'**. Please do not include nuts of any kind in your child's lunch box or any snacks.

Universal free school meals are offered to all children in Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2. Some families throughout the school may also be eligible **free school meals** and this brings in additional funding to the school (known as Pupil Premium) – you may be eligible if you are in receipt of government benefits. The school office can advise on this.



NO NUTS OR NUT PRODUCTS

As a school, we legally have to make milk available to children during the school day. We do this through a company called "Cool Milk." Parents contact the company directly. Please ask the office for further details

Healthy Schools



We are proud of our Healthy Schools accreditation. The whole school worked together to achieve this award. All children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day and keep a personal water bottle in their classroom. These can be purchased from the school office.

If your child is in **Rainbow Class or Class 1 or 2** he/she will be given a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. This is usually provided before the

morning break. Children in other classes are allowed to bring fruit or vegetables for mid-morning break.

NO NUTS, CANS OR FIZZY DRINKS ARE ALLOWED IN SCHOOL

Eco-Council

Eco-Schools is an international award programme that guides schools on their sustainable journey, providing a simple framework to help make sustainability an integral part of school life. Eco-Schools can help enhance the curriculum and get the whole school united behind something important.

Pupils are the driving force behind Eco-Schools – they form and lead an Eco-Committee and help to carry out an audit to assess the environmental performance of the school. In conjunction with the rest of the school and the wider community, it's the pupils that decide the environmental themes they want to address and how they're going to do it.

The Eco-council have regular assemblies allowing the rest of the school to have input into the eco activities and to make them aware of what they are currently looking at, for example; how to save water and electricity. They also hold competitions and the winners are presented with a special eco certificate.

Shillington currently holds the internationally recognised silver award and is working towards gaining the Green Flag award, which symbolises excellence in the field of environmental activity.

School Council

The School Council is a representative group of children who have been elected by their peers to represent their views and raise issues with the Staff and Governors.

Our School Council consists of eight children. Our year 4 children take on the role of officers and help to run the council.

Our school council have many roles within the school. They:

- Help to raise awareness of charities and raise money for them in a variety of ways
- Read and address suggestions made by other children or staff
- Help with staff interviews when new staff are employed
- Prepare and lead assemblies
- Count vouchers for a number of schemes
- Sort and distribute Christmas card



Helping in School

There are many areas of life in school which would be almost impossible without the help of parents/carers and other volunteers. We are most grateful for all the help we receive, whether it is on a regular or occasional basis. Regular help covers such things as helping with art and craft, sewing, technology, cooking and hearing reading. In order to become a helper in school, volunteers will have to undergo an enhanced disclosure clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service, specifically for helping at Shillington Lower School. If you would like to volunteer to help in school then please contact the school office.

Community Links

We are extremely fortunate to have a large number of volunteers who come into school to help with such things as reading and school trips.

We have good links with the local community, with the Congregational and Church of England ministers regularly leading assemblies. One of our aims is to develop further links with the local community.

Collective Worship

Whilst not a church school, Shillington has a Christian ethos. The majority of assemblies are broadly Christian in character, with some drawing on other faiths and traditions.

Parent Teacher and Friends Association

Every parent at Shillington Lower is a member of the PTFA – the Parent Teacher and Friends Association. We have a dedicated group of parents that work relentlessly to organise a range of activities to raise money for the school. Events have included school discos, Christmas Fayre, summer balls, bingo, camping and fun run.

Every year the PTFA funds the running and maintenance of the school swimming pool. It also donates money to each class for additional resources and enrichment activities.

If you would like to volunteer to join the committee or would like further information on the PTFA please contact the Chair via the school office.

Parent Forum

A Parent Forum was established in 2016 and discussed the change of age range. Future meetings are to be held and all parents are welcome.

Please contact the school if you require any further information.

You will be given a copy of our booklet 'Information for Parents/Carers' once you have accepted a place at our school.