

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Joseph's Catholic primary School, a number of children join us at FS1 and then join the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon four themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

This policy explains how our practice is underpinned by these four themes.

A Unique Child

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children all develop in their own individual way and this may be at varied rates. Children's attitudes and outlook to learning are greatly influenced by feedback from others therefore we use praise, encouragement, celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

Inclusion:

We value the diversity of individuals within the school. Like the rest of the school all children in EYFS are treated fairly and they and their families are valued within our school. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best.

In the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of each of our children. We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests;
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs; them to learn effectively;
- using resources which reflect diversity;
- planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- monitoring children's progress across Nursery and Reception and take action to provide support as necessary.

Welfare

It is important to us that all children in the school are 'safe'. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards.

We understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage. We understand that we are required to:

- promote the welfare of children.
- promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs.
- ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to

- them are suitable to do so.
- ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.

Positive Relationships:

We recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from upholding secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

Parents as Partners:

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value being partners with them in their child's education through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school and gaining as much information as possible
- Offering both parents and children the opportunity to spend time in the Foundation Stage before starting school.
- Operating an open door policy for parents with any queries.
- Sharing the children's 'learning journey' with parents
- Offering reception parent meetings and Nursery drop in sessions.
- Sending a report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of the school year.

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. The role of the key person is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents when appropriate, and working in partnership with them.

Enabling Environments:

We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. Through observation we assess the children's interests, stages of development and learning needs, before planning challenging, achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning:

The planning within the EYFS is based on the Development Matters statements from the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These plans are flexible so that teachers can respond to the needs, achievements and interests of the children. This fostering of the children's interests develops a high level of motivation for the children's learning. We make regular assessments of children's learning and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations. These observations are recorded in a variety of ways, and contribute to the child's individual 'Learning Journey' profile book. At the end of the reception year in school, the child's progress is recorded on to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. Each child's level of development is recorded against the 17 Early Learning Goals.

The Learning Environment:

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are areas where the children can be active, quiet, creative etc. Each classroom has defined learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The Foundation Stage has enclosed outdoor areas, and children are able to free-flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Being outdoors

offers the children opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. They are able to explore, use their senses, develop their language skills and be physically active. We plan activities and resources both inside and outside enabling the children to develop in all the areas of learning.

Learning and Development:

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in Early Years settings. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are often inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Teaching and Learning Style:

We recognise that features of effective teaching and learning in the EYFS are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, so that our children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this affects their teaching;
- the range of approaches used that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play and talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence;
- the support for learning with appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment;
- the identification of the progress and future learning needs of children through observations;

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They have the opportunity to think creatively and communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. We deliver learning for all of the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. These experiences enable children to be active learners and become motivated and interested.