

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



CRC Article 29 (goals of education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year and it describes the curriculum throughout the nursery and reception years. At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, children join the Nursery class after they have reached their third birthday and join Reception class in the year that they turn five. In partnership with parents and carers we enable the children to begin the process of becoming active learners for life.

The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage guidance states that "every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up".

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St. Joseph's we greatly value the important role that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

Our Philosophy

At St. Joseph's we have developed a shared philosophy where we all believe young children's experiences are crucial in developing confidence, health and wellbeing and laying a secure foundation for future learning and development. Our shared philosophy has enabled us to develop a strong vision where we all believe each child is unique and is a competent learner from birth. Every child can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We are committed to developing positive relationships so that all children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and a key person. As a setting we aim to provide enabling environments that support and extend learning and development for all children. We believe children learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important.

Children need 'high-quality, early education from the age of two delivered by skilled practitioners, led by a teacher, in a setting that parents can recognise and access... A child who is ready for school must have the physical, social and emotional tools to deal with the classroom, as well as the basic groundwork to begin to develop academically'.

(Wilshaw, 2014, Ofsted)

Our shared philosophy and strong vision provides us with a clearly defined aim that enables us to create principles that underpin our effective practice in the care, development and learning of young children. We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to his / her full potential.

Induction Programme

To ensure children settle into our EYFS provision safely and securely we will endeavour to meet their individual needs. Beginning Nursery or Reception for the first time can be very daunting, therefore we introduce children and parents to our setting firstly

through a "Stay and Play" session and a parent meeting at your home. Children are then provided with their start date to begin school. Staff will work collaboratively together to ensure children settle happily and comfortably into our provision.

Transition to Reception Class

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and allocation of classes and any concerns they may want to express.
- The children are invited to a stay and play visit.
- Members of staff from school make visits to the home or feeder settings. The number of visits will depend on the child's needs and how much information gathering is required in order to support the child's transition.
- Children at St. Joseph's Nursery (main feeder setting) will have opportunities to be taught by the Reception class teacher in the Reception classroom.
- Children will have time to share their learning journey with the Reception class teacher.
- Parents invited to attend PEEP to learn about the Reception curriculum.

Learning in the EYFS

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- **children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates**. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Nursery and Reception together comprise the Foundation Stage Unit within the school. They have their own curriculum and assessment. Children learn best by feeling secure, valued and confident and also through quality play. The learning experiences we provide are based on our assessment of each child's stage of development and then matched with the Early Years Outcomes and Early Learning Goals (which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year) set out by the Government.

The EYFS Framework explains how and what children will be learning to support their healthy development. Children will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**. Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- Communication and language;
- Physical development; and
- Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for children's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

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

These 7 areas are used to plan children's learning and activities. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

Throughout EYFS we plan to ensure our youngest children receive high quality learning experiences that build upon existing knowledge, understanding and skills. We aim to ensure children receive rich and stimulating learning opportunities that support

learning and development. At St. Joseph's when we plan and guide children's activities, we reflect on the different ways in which children learn. Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **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; and
- **creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

(Taken from statutory framework for the EYFS 2014)

Learning Environment

We provide a secure, safe and happy environment which ensures that the children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. Within our setting we recognise that an enabling learning environment is vital to provide children with rich and stimulating experiences where learning can flourish. We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, learn and investigate through first hand experience. Also we aim to make it a place where children feel secure and confident and are challenged to develop their independence.

Religious Education, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

As a Catholic school, our faith is at the heart of all we do. It is embedded in our curriculum and is implicit in all we do. We use the diocesan scheme and assessment procedures. Throughout our practice and provision our Catholic vision also permeates our curriculum as we work, learn and grow together guided by Jesus' teachings. Throughout our Catholic curriculum children develop a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, gospel values and good citizenship. As our children grow and learn together in a faith school we aim to nurture and encourage them to become adults who can transform our world into a more just and loving society. Children are encouraged to become caring, responsible and compassionate individuals.

Assessment

We continually assess children's learning and development to ensure progression. In our setting we observe, make assessments and then plan for further learning experiences and opportunities to support and extend learning and development. All information that is gathered through the tools of observation is collated together and presented in books or on '2 simple 2 build a profile' to illustrate and celebrate children's learning achievements. By the end of the Reception year, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

Daily Routine

In Reception the children have between three and five focused learning sessions per day and in Nursery, children have two focused learning sessions per am/pm session. Parents and children are welcomed at the beginning of each day/session by all staff for self-registration and welcome time. When children are not in a focused learning session they are actively engaged in exploration time. During exploration time children are encouraged to engage in a wide range of high quality learning experiences both indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to move around the learning environments independently choosing different activities. Staff support and facilitate children's learning and development by encouraging children to engage in active learning through purposeful play.

Parents as Partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators. At St. Joseph's parents and practitioners work together and the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning. Positive parental partnerships are crucial for providing the most effective teaching and learning strategies. Equally they are vital for personalising learning opportunities effectively. We aim to develop positive relationships with parents that enable us to share information about children's interests and learning. This information is used to personalise learning opportunities and provide continuity and progression. We work together and support learning through warm and trusting relationships. The implications of this ensure knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively.

We develop positive parental partnerships that support learning when a child accesses our provision through:

- Talking to parents about their child before their child starts in our school;
- The children have the opportunity to spend time with their teacher and support staff before starting our setting.
- We have a staggered transition into Nursery. This ensures the needs of our children are met.
- We prefer children to start full days as soon as possible in Reception. Transition is very flexible and we work together with parents to make transition as smooth as possible for each individual child.
- Inviting all parents to a stay and play session and a parent meeting.

We continue to build and maintain positive parental relationships through;

- Offering parents regular daily opportunities to talk
- Encouraging parents to discuss any worries or concerns.
- Parent Workshops
- Involving parents in the curriculum
- Story mornings
- PEEP
- Parent Notice Boards
- Home school link books
- Newsletters / Questionnaires
- Parents evening
- Bilingual Support

Welfare

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Please see the Safeguarding Policy for school procedures which aim to provide a framework which ensures that all practice in the area of child protection is consistent with stated values and procedures that underpin all work with children and young people.

Key Person

All staff involved with the EYFS aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen and value responses and contributions. At our school all children in the EYFS are assigned a key person. A key person is an important person in a child's life whilst at school. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs. This person should help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents. Parents/carers should take the time to build on relationships at any given chance, for example, discussing any important events in the child's life.

Staffing and Organisation

Our Foundation Stage provision is integrated therefore Nursery and Reception children are together for certain times throughout the day. In Nursery there is one nursery teacher and one level 3 teaching assistant. In Reception there is one reception teacher, one higher level teaching assistant and one level 3 teaching assistant. All staff are committed to providing children with secure foundations and quality learning experiences.

Transition to Year 1

Practitioners must respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. As children grow older, and as their development allows, it is expected that the balance will gradually shift towards more activities led by adults, to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1. We hope this will allow children to trampoline into Year 1.

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