



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Joseph's is a **happy**, welcoming **community**, enriched by our **diversity**, where we strive to be **better than our best**.

A place where we **love** one another, **love learning**, **love Jesus** and **love life**.

Date of Policy	Autumn 2023
Next Review	Autumn 2024

Statement of Intent

At St Josephs, we aim to provide a stimulating, balanced and rich curriculum which provides a secure foundation for future learning and development

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to five years. In our school, all Reception children join us at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. (Compulsory schooling begins at the start of the term after a child's fifth birthday.) Nursery children join the term after their third birthday.

At St Joseph's we ensure:

- Quality and consistency in our early years setting, so that every child makes good progress, and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly.
- Partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right, and in preparing children for later schooling. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage. Our school has been following the guidance set out in the new EYFS framework. As such, our provision reflects the principles of the EYFS framework and its overarching themes and principles:

- **A Unique child** – every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive relationships** – children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents or key person.
- **Enabling environments** – The environment plays a key role in extending and supporting children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

Children develop and learn at different rates including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Aims

- To provide a happy, caring and safe environment.
- To build positive social relationships with adults and peers.
- To facilitate quality learning experiences through planned provision.
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which stimulates children and follows their own interests and cultural backgrounds.
- To provide regular opportunities for parents and carers to actively participate in their child's development both in and out of school.

- To secure a consistent approach in provision across the Foundation Stage.
- To ensure children progress toward and beyond the Early Learning Goals.
- To ensure children leave as confident, independent and enthusiastic learners.

Principles

- Children should be treated as individuals, acknowledging that they develop at different rates.
- The most effective learning takes place when children are actively involved in the process.
- The environment should facilitate situations where the social, physical, spiritual, emotional and moral needs of children can be developed.
- Children are confident in their own abilities and can think and act independently.
- Parents are the earliest influence on their children's learning and need to be actively involved in the process.

Learning and Development

The Foundation Stage curriculum is based upon the seven areas of learning as set out in the EYFS Framework from September 2012, revised January 2024. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

The curriculum itself covers seven areas of learning which are set out as follows:

Prime areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Specific areas

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive art and design

The curriculum has been organised into a programme of themes covering significant events over the year. Our staff also work very closely following children's interests and relevant work can be planned to challenge and extend their thinking in line with this.

Links with other policies

Inclusion

This policy builds on our school Inclusion policy and recognises the entitlement of all children to be given the skills they need to develop into confident learners. This particularly recognises the importance of supporting children for whom English is a second language, any children with SEND and any vulnerable groups of learners.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

It is important that any special needs are identified as early as possible and that relevant steps are taken to provide the correct support while working alongside parents, the SENDCO and external agencies. Our children are monitored closely to ensure they receive any additional support they may need as early as possible to offer them the best start possible on their learning journey.

Organisation – Induction Arrangements

Nursery

When children are allocated a Nursery place, parents are invited to visit the Nursery with their child during the summer term where staff and parents can discuss any particular needs of the child. We also offer Home visits to ensure the transition into Nursery. Parents are also invited to attend an induction meeting in July. The intake is staggered over a short period in September to ensure children settle in well. Children may also start Nursery on the term following their third birthday if places are available. In December, we hold induction meetings, visits and home visits to prepare the children who begin Nursery in January and again in March, for those children who join us in April. Transition will be extended for any children requiring additional support.

Reception

Similarly, there is an induction meeting for parents in July where parents have the opportunity to meet the Head Teacher and the Reception staff and will receive information on uniform, routines, etc. This includes the parents of children joining our school from other nurseries. In addition to this, children will have the opportunity to visit their Reception classes during the Summer Term. Intake is staggered over the first week of school to ensure children settle in well. Children from outside nurseries are visited by staff to support a smooth transition. There is also a 'Curriculum Evening' in October to offer information around the strategies used for teaching phonics and supporting learning at home.

Times

Our Nursery offers flexible provision in line with the new 30 hour provision for 3 year olds from September 2017. The Nursery sessions are currently running from 8.50-11.50am and 12.20-3.20pm in

line with the fifteen hour entitlement, however some children also access extended provision to suit the needs of families. Families are responsible for providing an entitlement code for the office each term to provide evidence they qualify for the extended provision.

The Reception day runs from 8.50am-3.20pm. Children should be dropped off and collected from the Reception door by an adult.

Location

The Nursery and Reception settings are next door to each other in our new school build. They have a sliding wall between the settings, but each setting runs independently. There is an outdoor area which is shared between both Nursery and Reception and accessible from both areas. The EYFS runs very much as a team and all staff contribute to the learning and development of all children.

Indoor and Outdoor Provision

In line with the statutory requirements set out in the EYFS framework, all children now have daily continuous access to the indoor and outdoor environments. Staff continually develop the Outdoor environments and provision. Children are encouraged to access both environments and there are planned opportunities to work with adults, following the interests of the child and seasonal changes.

Transition into Year One

Children will receive a more smooth transition to facilitate a more positive experience for all of our children to continue their learning journey into Key Stage One. This will be achieved by visits, induction meetings and booklets for the children. Year One staff will also spend time with the children over the Summer Term to familiarise themselves.

Planning

EYFS use a different system of planning to the rest of the school which tightly links into assessment procedures. Long term plans are linked to continuous provision and matched to the Early Learning goals. Medium Term plans show enhancements for continuous provision and match this carefully to Early Learning goals across the spaces for play in the setting. This planning stems from children's interests and needs and is documented in observations available on Tapestry and in floor books for RE and Personal Development. In the short term, staff carefully differentiate focus activities that are carefully planned to support and enhance children's interests and development. Planning is very reflective to focus on the needs and arising interests of the children. Staff review learning daily as a team and this feeds into enhancements and provision for the next day. In Nursery there is a strong focus on the Prime Areas of learning and in Reception this is built upon and extended to cover the Specific Areas in more detail.

Assessment and record keeping

Assessment forms a large part of our practice in EYFS and is carried out daily by all staff in the settings. We observe children at play and collect evidence of their learning and development in a range of ways including photographs, annotations, learning stories, children's work and quotes. This evidence is used to inform daily planning and themes for interest topics. These are then shared with parents through our online journal system - Tapestry.

Learning journals

Each child has had their own online 'learning journal' which will document their own individual learning journey throughout EYFS. They will show the learning stories, annotations, photos and any other work collected from each child. These are easily accessed at home and school, via the Tapestry app, with all parties involved in the child's development contributing to these.

Tracking

The progress of each child in Foundation Stage is currently monitored on a school tracking system which measures progress and attainment from Nursery entry through to Reception exit. It uses information from the EYFSP Baseline sheets, which is presented in developmental ages, to show if the child is on track. The data from this is used by staff to identify children needing extra support or children who need to be challenged more and helps staff to ensure children are making the expected individual progress. Targeted intervention is then planned for identified groups or individuals.

Staffing and resources

The Foundation Stage Team currently consists of:

Nursery; One teacher, two full time Early Years practitioners and a part time HLTA.

Reception; One teacher and one full time teaching assistant.

Staff are fully involved in whole school staff meetings and developments and also hold their own team/planning meeting on a weekly basis.

The Role of the Key Worker

Every member of staff in EYFS has the role of key person. The key person role within our school involves interacting with a designated group of children during a daily key person session. Deeper relationships are forged between the children and the member of staff and this detailed knowledge is passed on to parents/carers. These group sessions are also shared with parents so they are aware of the learning that is taking place in school and how to best support their child at home.

Resources

These are audited on a regular basis by each setting and compared against recommendations for provision for each of the spaces for play. We also look at resources to cater for children's interests and related topics as they arise. Resources are shared between the settings where needed. Ideas for provision and enhancements are discussed in our weekly meetings.

Budget

Any budgets allocated to EYFS are spent carefully on areas identified as needed by the whole team. Resources are discussed weekly in our team meetings and acted upon asap.

Staff development and support

Staff are given the opportunity to express preference for any training or development needs they may have and efforts are made to address these. Support is given through in-house CPD, external training and support given through Performance Management. Information from training is passed on to the rest of the team where appropriate and shared during our team meetings.

Early Career Teachers are given opportunities to attend relevant training provided by Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust in conjunction with Teach First, to support their induction.

Partnership with parents

We believe that all parents have an important role in the education of their child and understand the future part they will play. To acknowledge this we aim to:

- Arranging for visits to the school in the summer term for children to spend time with their teacher in the setting that they will enter in September.
- Inviting all parents to an Induction meeting in the summer term.
- Offering parents regular opportunities for formal and informal discussion of their child's progress with the teacher and by a convenient time arranged with staff through 'Stay and Play' dates and parents evenings or as and when is needed.
- Collaboration between home and school to update online Learning Journals and share this using the Tapestry app.
- Liaise carefully with parents of children who have special educational needs and those with English as a second language through termly review meetings.
- Communicate progress through termly meetings with parents. An end of year report will also be written to comment on end of year attainment.

Links with the community

St Joseph's Parish

Children have a strong link with our parish church and attend services throughout the year. Father Ligori and Father Luis also visit to lead acts of worship in school.

Speech and language/SEND support services

When children are identified, with the consent of parents, to any of these agencies, information is passed on and updated regularly to ensure both children and parents/ carers receive the support they need as often as possible.

Local EYFS Support

The school also receives regular support from Early Years Support teachers through cluster meetings and planned training/drop-in sessions, to support with a variety of areas of provision. Data is also measured during termly meetings.

Family Learning

The school runs family learning sessions each term. These sessions for parents and carers are tailored to the needs of the children in current cohorts. During these sessions, parents work together with their children on a range of topics. These range from Early Mental Health support to Supporting your SEND child. Parents can also suggest areas they would be interested in for their own personal development.

Cluster support with local schools

Our staff attend meetings with local schools to share practice and moderate assessment judgements, provision and other relevant areas.

Clubs and extra-curricular activities

Our Reception children access a range of after-school clubs and activities.

PTA Events

The school has an active PTA group which plan and organise community events such as Summer and Christmas Fairs. Funds raised all support the children in school by subsidising visits, equipment and events.