



## ST JAMES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, HEBBURN

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Early Years Foundation Stage Unit at St James**

We are delighted to introduce our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Unit from January 2026, which brings together nursery and reception children in a shared learning environment.

This integrated approach offers a wealth of benefits for your child's development and wellbeing. By combining nursery and reception into a single EYFS unit, we create a consistent and nurturing setting that supports children from age 3 through to the end of their reception year.

### **Key Benefits of Our EYFS Unit**

#### **1. Peer Learning and Social Development**

Mixed-age interaction encourages younger children to learn from older peers, while older children reinforce their understanding by modelling behaviours and skills. This dynamic fosters collaboration, empathy, and independence.

#### **2. Leadership and responsibility**

Supporting younger peers nurtures empathy, patience, and social responsibility.

#### **3. Consolidation of skills**

Teaching or modelling behaviours (like tidying, turn-taking, or early literacy) strengthens their own understanding.

#### **4. Confidence building**

Being seen as capable and "grown-up" raises self-esteem.

#### **5. Community feel**

A mixed-age environment mirrors real-world social settings, fostering collaboration and friendships across ages.

#### **6. Flexible learning**

Staff can group children by developmental stage rather than strict age, personalising learning more effectively.

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## 7. Peer learning

Children naturally learn from each other - observing, imitating, and experimenting together.

We know that when children in nursery and reception work together this supports social, emotional, and academic growth, while creating a cohesive, nurturing EYFS community and we are excited to share this community with our children.

We would like to invite you to a coffee afternoon on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 1:30pm – 2:30pm to have an informal chat about our EYFS provision. We hope you can join us on the day.

Kind regards

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