

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Early Years Policy



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St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Early Years Policy

St Joseph's Mission Statement

*At St Joseph's School we wish all our children to enjoy learning.
Through our teaching we will endeavour to equip all our children with the essential learning skills and instill in each pupil an appreciation of education as a life-long and enjoyable process.
By means of interesting and varied experiences we wish our pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills.
But most of all to develop an awareness of God's love for each person in the school community through the way we care and value others and ourselves.*

Unicef Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 2

The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whether their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

This policy also links to Articles 3, 4, 8, 14, 19, 23, 28, 29 and 30

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Ref to Single Equality Scheme.

Aims

At St Joseph's School we seek to provide:

- Quality and consistency so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interest of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- Partnership working between staff and parents/ carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, which ensures that every child is included and supported.

Overarching Principles

At St Joseph's School we adhere to the four guiding principles which shape our practice in Early Years. 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 well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The Early Years Curriculum

The Early Years Curriculum is organised into learning and development requirements which comprise.

- The seven areas of learning and development and the educational programme.
- The Early Learning goals, which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the reception year.
- The assessment requirements - when and how we assess children's achievements.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and 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. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development.

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design.

Planning in Early Years

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we plan a curriculum that is balanced and inclusive and meets the needs of all learners. We recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by

observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning. Topic planning takes place on a half-termly basis. The staff are also led by the children's interests, and ideas for themes and mini topics can develop throughout the year.

Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes plan appropriate activities based upon children's age and stage of development. They plan adult led activities as well as planning the environment to ensure that children have access to a wide range of quality resources which will enhance their play and opportunities for learning. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

Assessment

Ongoing formative assessment is embedded into daily teaching and learning, we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs. Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of ongoing observations, photographs and examples of work. This enables teachers to track progress and then plan for the next steps from the information gathered which helps to enhance the children's learning.

We understand that assessment plays an important part in helping staff, parents and carers to recognise children's progress, understand their needs and to plan activities and support.

In partnership with parents and other childcare settings, an on-entry assessment is made of all children during their first few weeks of school attendance and this information is updated termly in order to monitor progress.

Reception Baseline Assessment

The Reception Baseline Assessment is a statutory assessment conducted during the first six weeks of the Reception Year. It is used to establish a starting point for each child's learning journey and measures progress throughout their primary education.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

In the final term of the reception year we complete the EYFS Profile for each child. This means that each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. The Profile provides parents and carers 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. Within the final term of the EYFS, we also provide a written summary to parents, reporting their child's progress against the early learning goals.

The Learning Environment

The classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classrooms are set up in learning areas, where children are able to find and locate

equipment and resources independently. The classrooms have their own enclosed and partially covered outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales from indoors. It offers the children the chance to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

Teaching strategies

We ensure there is a balance of adult led and child initiated activities across the day. We recognise that the interaction between the adult and child is essential as the adult's response to children, builds understanding and therefore guides new learning. The adult's role is to continually model, demonstrate and question what the child is doing.

We include direct, carefully planned, adult led experiences for children in the form of structured adult led teaching and adult led group activities. These are particularly important in helping children to learn specific skills and knowledge, such as phonic teaching, and it is often through children's play that we see how much of this learning children have understood and can apply. Discrete phonics lessons are taught in small groups throughout Early Years, using the RWI scheme.

Play

Learning through play is an important part of our Early Years classrooms. We believe children learn best from activities and experiences that interest and inspire them. Using children's interests as a starting point, we provide children with stimulating, active play experiences in which they can explore and develop their learning to help them make sense of the world. They have opportunities through their play to think creatively and critically alongside other children as well as on their own. They are able to practise skills, build upon and revisit prior learning and experiences at their own level and pace. Play gives our children the opportunity to pursue their own interests and inspire those around them. The children learn to adapt, negotiate, communicate, discuss, investigate and ask questions. We believe it is important that adults take an active role in child initiated play through observing, modelling, facilitating and extending their play.

SEND

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we adhere to the Special Education Needs requirements as outlined in Section 3.68 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. Within the Early Years Foundation Stage staff will use the non-statutory 'Birth to three Matters' guidance as a tool to support identifying the level at which a child is developing against the expected age / stage descriptors for their chronological age: Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, we will consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal

checks, ongoing observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs.

All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

The EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

The safeguarding and welfare requirements are legal requirements which are designed to ensure we provide a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Child Protection- Requirements 3.4 to 3.8 are met through the academy's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. The Head teacher is the designated officer, with the Deputy Head and Early Years lead as the deputies. Safeguarding information is on the school website and the Head teacher maintains a safeguarding training folder and ensures that training for all staff is updated.

Suitable People-Requirements 3.9 to 3.13 are met through the Single Central Register procedures, for ensuring that all people are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles, including enhanced DBS checks. This information is stored securely and centrally in an electronic format.

Staff taking medication/other substances- Requirement 3.19-Practitioners will not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children.

Staff qualifications, training, support and skills-Requirements 3.20, 3.21,3.25, 3.26, are met through all staff being part of the school CPD and Performance Management processes and following the school CPD Policy. All staff regularly attend EYFS meetings. The EYFS Leader monitors in all areas regularly, which feeds into the School Improvement Plan.

Paediatric First Aid - Requirement 3.25. At least one person who has a current paediatric first aid (PFA) certificate is on the premises and available at all times when children are present, and will accompany children on outings. PFA training is renewed every three years on a rolling programme. A list of staff who have a current PFA certificate is displayed within the setting.

Key Person- Requirement 3.27-The class teacher is the child's Key Person the teaching assistants in Nursery and Reception support the teacher in this role. Parents are

informed of their child's Key Person during the Nursery Visit or when their child is admitted. All Key People are aware that part of their role is to help to ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs and to liaise with families.

Staff: child ratios- We meet, requirements 3.28, 3.29, 3.35,3.38, 3.39 for adult-child ratios.

Health-Medicines- Requirements 3.42, 3.43 and 3.44 are met through following the guidance on infection control. We follow the school's Medication Policy and Health and Safety Policy. Inhalers are labelled with the child's name and stored in a high cupboard or shelf. List of children with inhalers is displayed for adults to see.

Other prescription medicines are kept in the meeting room. Parents complete an administration of medicine form stating correct dosage and times for use.

Requirements 3.45. We promote good health including oral health of children both in and Reception, through our PSHE curriculum.

Food and drink-Requirements 3.48 and 3.49- Fresh drinking water is always available for Early Years Foundation Stage pupils. We participate in the school fruit and vegetable scheme. Completed dietary requirements such as allergies are displayed in the classroom and kitchen, and lunchtime staff are informed as appropriate. All staff are aware of hygiene practices.

Accident or injury-Requirement 3.51-First aid box is kept in a high, labelled cupboard. All incidents and treatment are recorded in the First Aid/Accident Book. For minor injuries, parents/carers are informed at collection times. For other injuries, emergency contacts are telephoned, in the given order, and informed so that they are able to decide whether or not they wish to collect their child for further treatment.

Managing behaviour- Requirements 3.53 and 3.54 are met, as we adhere to the ethos embedded in our Mission Statement, and in the school's Behaviour Policy. Parents are given copies of the School's Mission statement and the school's Home school contract. Children are supported in their behaviour development, at an appropriate level, through positive engagement with adults during play activities.

Safety and suitability of premises, environment, and equipment-Safety Requirements 3.55 and 3.56- We adhere to the school Health and Safety Policy. Updated risk assessments and internal checks records are kept. A log of external inspections is maintained in school.

Premises- Requirements 3.58 to 3.63-Continuous and Weekly provision plans detail outdoor provision. The setting meets the requirements for number of toilets and hand basins. The school has appropriate public liability insurance. All staff follow the Safeguarding routines for the start and end of the day. An adult supervises the door whenever it is opening time. Gates are kept locked at all other times. All visitors to

school follow a signing in procedure, and all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unauthorised persons entering the premises.

Risk assessment- Requirement 3.65-EYFS written risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure that hazards indoors and outdoors are kept to a minimum. All staff have access to the risk assessments and are aware of their responsibilities.

Equal opportunities- Requirement 3.65- We follow the school policies for Equal Opportunities, Special Educational Needs and Inclusion. Staff are involved in Rights Respecting Schools planning and evaluations.