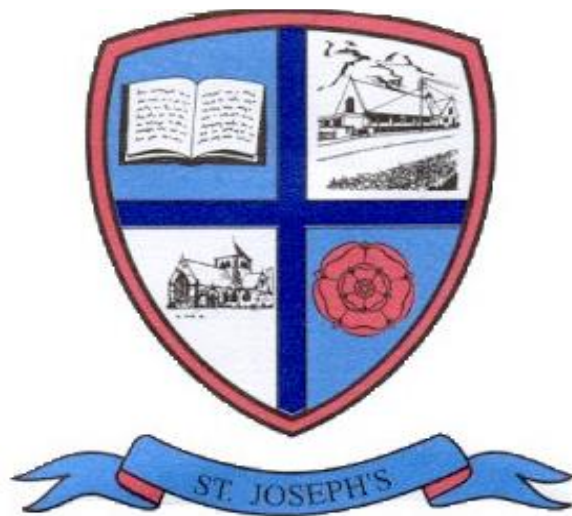


ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

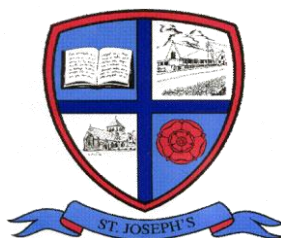
Reviewed: September 2022

To be reviewed: September 2023

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Wrightington

EYFS POLICY 2022



'Living life to the Full'

Introduction:

"Children learn and develop more from birth to five years old than at any other time in their lives. If children are at risk of falling behind the majority, the best time to help them to catch up and keep up is in the early years. Every child can make progress, if they are given the right support."

Development Matters Sept 2021

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School children are admitted to Reception in the September following their fourth birthday. We also provide Pre-School provision for children from the age of three. Rising Threes allows children to begin school the term that they turn three, however, these children are not eligible for the 15 hours free provision.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At St Joseph's Primary School we value greatly the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

However, we also believe that early childhood is valid in itself as part of life. It is important to view the EYFS as preparation for life and not simply preparation for the next stage of education.

Aims & Objectives:

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

The EYFS is based on seven key features of effective practice as set out in Development Matters 2021:

1. The best for every child
2. High-quality care
3. The curriculum: what we want children to learn
4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn
5. Assessment: checking what children have learnt
6. Self-regulation and executive function
7. Partnership with parents

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Little Joey's Pre-School we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the

children to experience as they begin their journey through school;

- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence;
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress;
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children;
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.

The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across all areas of learning
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Provide early intervention for those who need additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and where needed outside agencies
- Plan challenging learning experiences for all our children, based on the individual needs of the child
- Provide opportunities for our children to engage in adult led learning and self-initiated learning
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors
- Plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observations of children's needs, interests and stages of development across the seven areas of learning
- It builds on what our children already know and can do
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

Inclusion:

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and believe that every child matters. All children at St Joseph's and Little Joey's are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. All families are valued within our provision.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

At the Foundation Stage we set realistic and challenging expectations matched to the needs of our children, so that most achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the stage. We do this through:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them learn effectively;
- Offering a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Employing resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities to meet the needs of both boys and girls, of children with special educational needs, of children who are more able, of children with disabilities, of children from all social and cultural backgrounds, of children from different ethnic groups, and of those from diverse linguistic backgrounds;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary (such as referrals to

speech therapy) as necessary.

- Working closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's progress.

Parents as Partners:

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

- ❖ Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open afternoons and induction meetings;
- ❖ Arranging, where possible, visits by the teacher to all children in their Nursery setting or childcare provision prior to their starting school;
- ❖ Providing a handbook of information about commencing in Pre-school and Reception at St Joseph's;
- ❖ Outlining the school's expectations in the Home-School agreement;
- ❖ Inviting parents/carers and children the opportunity to spend time their Class for three induction visits before starting school, pre-starting days are also encouraged for children joining Pre-school mid-year;
- ❖ Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have;
- ❖ Holding INSPIRE sessions at the beginning of the academic year showing parents how we teach the children in the EYFS and how they can support this at home;
- ❖ Holding termly 'Stay & Play' sessions, to include parents in their child's learning.
- ❖ Holding a Parent Consultation Evening early in the academic year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment;
- ❖ Operating an open door policy for parents/carers with any queries or concerns. Conversely, if Foundation staff have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them;
- ❖ Written contact through the Reading Diary and school newsletters;
- ❖ Sending home Star / Writer / Reader / Mathematics of the Week and 'Top Table' certificates designed to enable parents to record outstanding achievements;
- ❖ Publishing a Curriculum Newsletter topic map detailing the areas of learning and the overarching theme of the half-term as well as a school newsletter;
- ❖ Inviting parents to attend informal meetings about areas of the curriculum, such as phonics or reading.
- ❖ Sharing termly the children's 'Learning Journey' with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers;
- ❖ Offering termly parent/teacher consultation meetings each half term at which their child's progress is discussed;
- ❖ Offering two formal Parents' Evenings;
- ❖ Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in Reception;
- ❖ Asking parents to sign a generic permission form for visits, food tasting and photographs etc;
- ❖ Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as:
 - Assemblies
 - Workshops
 - Christmas Productions
 - Sports Day
 - Class Masses
 - Stay and Pray sessions
 - Stay and Play sessions
 - INSPIRE sessions
- ❖ Offering a range of activities, throughout the year, to encourage specific collaboration between child, school and parents e.g. Dads and Lads reading event, topic outcome events.

Staff:

Our EYFS team consist of 1 class teacher, 1 TA. All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships

with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them. All staff are highly trained.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPING:

The EYFS Curriculum:

Our Foundation Stage Curriculum reflects the areas of learning identified in the Early Years Foundation Stage Handbook and Development Matters Framework.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision in early year's settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the levels required at the end of EYFS. 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.

The three Prime areas are:

- 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

Children's development levels are assessed and as the year progresses, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Children also participate in a daily phonics session, following the 'Bug Club Phonics' guidance and in line with school policy.

Characteristics of Effective Learning:

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and exploring - children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world.

They practise and build up ideas, 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.

- Active learning - children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.
'Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.'

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

- Creating and thinking critically - we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
"When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions."

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning:

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for the end of the Foundation Stage. The planning objectives within the Foundation Stage are from the ***Development Matters*** document. The planning is based upon themes with discrete phonics, maths, writing and reading directed teaching. However, planning which is based upon a different topic which is identified as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children.

Observations:

Foundation Stage staff use observations as the basis for planning. All staff in the Foundation Stage are skilled at observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's Learning Journeys.

Assessment:

(see our Whole School Policy for Assessment, Reporting & Record Keeping)

During the first term in the EYFS, the teacher assesses the ability of each child. Reception children are also assessed by using the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise their pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the Early Learning goals as 'on track' / 'not on track' against

the Development Matters age expectations. At the end of Reception children are assessed as Emerging or Expected against the Early Learning Goals. 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, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate.

The teacher keeps progress records and learning journey books and records examples of child's work / things taught in class. These progress books contain a wide range of evidence that we share with parents at each parental consultation meeting.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the LA for analysis. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead. We share this information to parents in the end-of-year report.

Parents receive an annual written report that offers brief comments on each child's progress in each area of learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs, and gives details of the child's general progress.

The Learning Environment:

The Foundation Stage classrooms are organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas where the children can be active, be quiet, creative etc.

Children have access to both inside and outside areas across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. The Foundation Stage has its own outdoor classroom areas as well as the children having access to the playground, complete with trim trail. We encourage being outdoors as offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and in different scales than when indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. All areas of the curriculum can be explored outside.

Transition:

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children with the transition and to ensure it is as smooth as possible for each child and that they settle in to their new class quickly and happily.

Starting Pre-School and Reception in September:

Parents of all children starting in the next academic year will be invited to an Induction Meeting in the Summer term to meet their child's new teachers and other key staff and learn more about the Reception curriculum. This is an opportunity for staff to:

- To go through the starter pack
- Explain about uniform, PE kit and school dinners/ free school meals
- Explain about holidays and absences
- Purchase uniform and book bag if requested
- Explain the arrangements for the gradual induction in to reception

New class sessions:

The children are given three opportunities to come in to school to meet their new class teacher and other children in their class. They will spend three afternoons in their new class. Parents can leave their child during these sessions. This means that before they join their new class the Reception environment is already a familiar place to them. Children and parents are also given the opportunity to visit school one lunch time to try a school dinner. Arrangements are also made for the children's new class teacher to visit them in their current nursery setting.

As children may join Little Joey's Pre-School mid-year (the term they turn 3 years old) they are also invited to attend sessions the term before they begin. Parents are welcomed to speak to school about any information needed.

September Intake:

When children join the school in September the following procedures will apply in order that they can gradually adjust to their new surroundings:

- During the first two weeks, children are brought straight into the classroom by Parents.
- During the third week, and thereafter, children will line up on the playground with the rest of the school.
- Children in Reception are also paired up with a 'Buddy' from Year 6. Children are introduced to their 'Buddy' when they visit school in July. The 'Buddy' system gives the new starters an older friend they know they can go to on the playground. Children are given 'Buddy' time throughout the year.
- Pre-School children are dropped off and collected through the Pre-School's front door all year round.

Starting in Key Stage 1 (Year 1):

Throughout the Reception year, each child's involvement in whole school life will have been built upon; many of the teaching and support staff will already be familiar people to them. They will have taken part in Key Stage and whole school assemblies as well as sharing playtimes with the rest of the school. The Reception and Year One teacher have a transition meeting in the Summer Term.

Children have the opportunity to meet their new class teacher and spend an afternoon in their new class during the summer term/or the term before they start, if they are joining Little Joey's mid-year.

Safeguarding & Welfare:

*(see our **Whole School Policy for Safeguarding & Child Protection**)*

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School and Little Joey's Pre-School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs
- To ensure that all adults who look after the children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.