

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

“Following Jesus in all we do”

GROWING CLOSER TO GOD THROUGH PRAYER AND WORSHIP
SHOWING RESPECT, LOVE AND CARE FOR EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING
GIVING OF OUR BEST IN ALL THINGS
SHARING FULLY IN THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL AND BEYOND



Approved by Governors

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1. Aims

At St Joseph's Catholic School we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for each and every child by giving children opportunities to gain fundamental learning skills within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We value each child as a unique individual and children's interests are at the centre of our curriculum. This enables us to create a safe and happy environment which is stimulating and motivating for learners. We endeavour to work in partnership with parents to enable children to reach their full potential and ensure children become successful learners.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice

2. Legislation

We adhere to the four guiding principles outlined in the [statutory EYFS framework](#):

- **A unique child** - every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** - children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- **Enabling environments** - children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- **Learning and Developing** - children **develop and learn in different ways and at different rates** and all areas of learning and development are equally important.

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum in EYFS across the seven areas of learning; using play as the vehicle for learning
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support including children with special educational needs, for whom English is an additional language and those who have gaps in their development. We achieve this through skilled bilingual practitioners and the delivery of high quality speech language intervention
- Work closely with outside agencies to ensure that both children and parents are offered effective support and guidance
- Work co-operatively with parents and within the wider context to ensure there is excellent communication between school and home. This is promoted through our 'open door' approach to parent communications and use of Tapestry, class emails, school website, parent text and Twitter
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observations, assessment and planning meetings with the children to gain an understanding of what they already know
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, extended by the adult

- Preschool use keyworker approach to develop close relationships with individual children; this is then fostered through Teacher and TA relationships with children as they move into Reception
- Set individual next steps for children which are facilitated by practitioners 'in the moment' to aid progression
- Use building learning power characters to enable children to identify the types of learning skills they need to be successful learners in line with the characteristics of effective learning (see appendix 2)
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment both indoors and outdoors to provide opportunities for children to manage their own risk and safety

3. Structure of the EYFS

We have a Preschool setting for children aged 2-4 years old. We are open from 8am to 3.15pm. We offer flexible funded sessions so that parents can access free Nursery Education Funding. Children can attend for up to 32.5 hours a week, parents can claim 2 Year Funding (15hours per week), 3 and 4 Year old Funding (15 or 30 hours Funding per week). Any extra sessions are charged per session and parents are invoiced monthly.

Reception is for children aged 4-5 years old. Our Reception comprises of two classroom bases; Reception Oak, Reception Pear and an outdoor learning environment. Although children are based into two classes, all children access both classrooms and the outdoor learning environment throughout the school week.

4. Curriculum

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

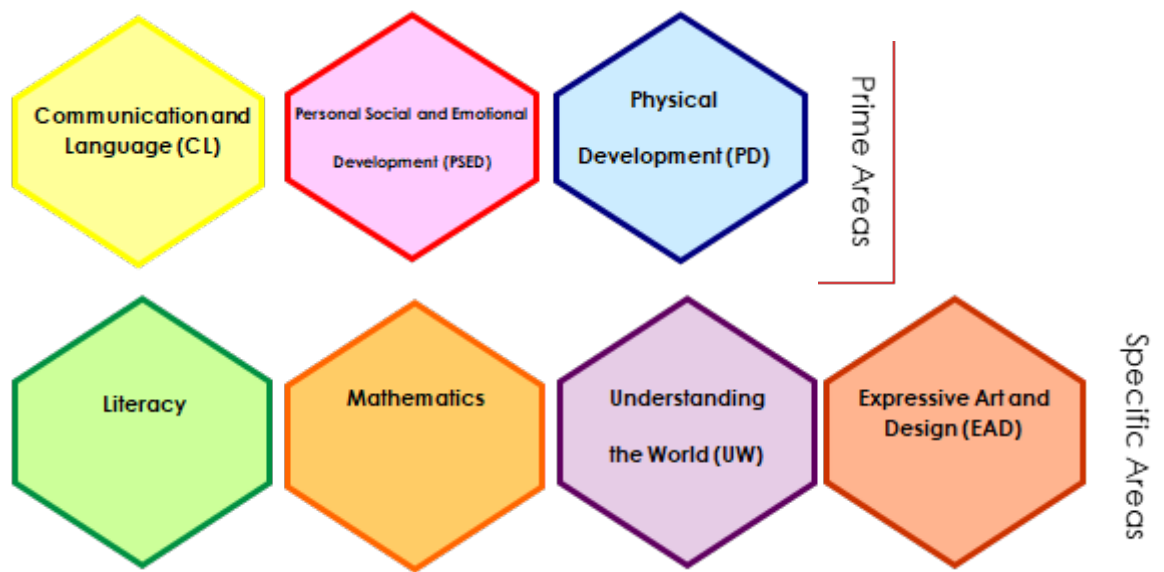
The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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



4.1 Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively. In order to do this, staff working with the youngest children are expected to focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which children explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. We use medium term plans based on a series of topics, each of which offers experiences in all seven areas. We also follow the children's interests where appropriate so these plans then inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations, which remains flexible for unplanned circumstances or children's responses.

Staff reflect upon observations and adult led activities to inform planning, ensuring we create an enabling environment for all learners. Observations are utilised to create a stimulating environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and out.

4.2 Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We aim to create a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those that are planned by the adults to challenge them and ensure progression. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their

development through warm, positive interaction and utilising 'in the moment planning' principles.

Children have whole group and small group sessions which increase as they progress through the EYFS with dedicated time for a daily phonics session using 'Read, Write Inc', teaching aspects of Mathematics and Literacy; including shared reading and writing. As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

5. Assessment

At St Joseph's, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

5.1 Preschool

When a child is **aged between 2 and 3**, staff review their progress and provide parents and/or carers with a written summary of the child's development in the 3 prime areas. This 'progress check' highlights the areas in which a child is progressing well and the areas in which additional support is needed.

Upon entry into Preschool all children are assessed using Birth to 5 Matters [guidance](#) to indicate if they are 'met' or 'not met' using 'Tiny Tracker' in accordance with their specific age range. This is repeated at the end of the year against progressive age range criteria. Throughout the year pupil progress meetings will be held with staff using **check points** to determine if children are developing expectedly in line with their age range. This allows for early intervention to be put into place to ensure any learning gaps are closed. Ongoing observations and interactions with the children monitor children's progress and development formatively throughout the year.

Assessment is focused upon the prime areas of learning for the youngest children and progress to the addition of Literacy and Mathematics for children aged 3-4, in a readiness for their reception year the following year.

5.2 Reception

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development ('expected')
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

Upon entry into Reception children are assessed using Birth to 5 Matters to indicate if they are 'met' or 'not met' using 'Tiny Tracker'. This is then reviewed in December, April and finally in June for the EYFS Profile. The 'met' criteria advances throughout the different points within

the year. Pupil progress meetings formalise this process to ensure the curriculum is meeting the children's needs, children with learning gaps gain targeted support and so that children with additional needs gain necessary outside agency support and early intervention.

6. Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development through parents appointments throughout the year and the use of Tapestry where snap shots of learning and next steps are shared with parents. The progress checks and EYFS profile help to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

In Preschool each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. This is then fostered through Teacher and TA relationships with children as they move into Reception.

7. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general. This is done by providing milk and fruit at snack times, encouraging the children to make healthy choices and providing parents with information about healthy lunchboxes. Links to change4life are shared which provides parents with ideas and healthy swaps. We encourage parents to provide water in drink bottles and limit the number of cakes and biscuits in each lunch box. Children are rewarded with stickers for making healthy choices. We talk to the children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth and how to brush your teeth

We participate in Worcestershire's supervised tooth brushing program in preschool and staff have attended training to ensure we follow the Supervised Toothbrushing Guidance in line with Covid 19, for safety around supervised tooth brushing.

The supervised toothbrushing program helps to:

- Prevent tooth decay
- Develop a healthy habit
- Improve children's toothbrushing technique
- Increase children's willingness to brush their teeth

The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by Leona Dean (Assistant Head and EYFS Lead) Alexandra Cree (Preschool Manager) every 3 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

Appendix 1. List of statutory policies and procedures for the EYFS

Statutory policy or procedure for the EYFS	Where can it be found?
Safeguarding policy and procedures	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for responding to illness	See health and safety policy
Administering medicines policy	See supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
Emergency evacuation procedure	See health and safety policy
Procedure for checking the identity of visitors	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedures for a parent failing to collect a child and for missing children	See child protection and safeguarding policy
Procedure for dealing with concerns and complaints	See complaints policy

Appendix 2. Characteristics of effective learning

The ways in which children engage with other people and their environment (playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically) underpin learning and development across all areas and help children become effective and motivated learners. These are the characteristics of effective learning outlined by the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework:

Playing and exploring (engagement)

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Be willing to 'have a go'

Active Learning (motivation)

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoy achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

At St Joseph's we promote these essential learning skills with our Building Learning Power Characters.



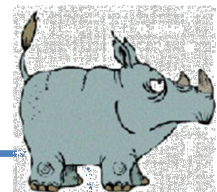
Have a Go Hare



Bradley Bat (Listening)



Busy Beaver (resourceful)



Resilient Rhino



Tom Tortoise (reflection)



Team Ant