



EYFS Policy

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Our Mission Statement

At St Joseph's, we pride ourselves on our mission statement: 'Growing in Love, in the Spirit of Christ, for the benefit of all.'

We feel our Mission statement 'Growing in Love, in the Spirit of Christ, for the benefit of all' reflects all we stand for as a community. We put the example of Christ at the center of all we do to help us grow socially, academically, spiritually, morally, and physically in our learning and our friendships. We do this for ourselves as well as for the members of the school, parish, local, national, and international communities in which we live.

Our Vision

At St Joseph's, our mission is to nurture a compassionate Catholic community inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, embracing every individual and all aspects of our school life. Guided by His message of love and forgiveness, our pupils, staff, parents, and governors work together to uphold and strengthen the school's Catholic ethos.

We are committed to offering a stimulating and well-balanced curriculum that reflects our values, while supporting each child in reaching their fullest potential. At St Joseph's, every person is valued, and we encourage mutual respect for one another and for the world around us.

Rationale

We believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. Across the Foundation stage we promote a culture of high expectation with high aspirations, with highest expectations for social behaviour.

Aims

- 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

Statement of Intent

At St Joseph's school we believe that the Early Years is crucial in securing solid foundations that children are going to continue to build upon. It is our intent that children who enter our EYFS develop verbally, physically, cognitively and emotionally whilst embedding a positive attitude to school and learning.

We believe that all children deserve to be valued as an individual and we are passionate in allowing all children to achieve their full unique potential. We look at our children and their individual needs- considering their different starting points we then carefully develop our EYFS Curriculum at a point that is suitable for their unique needs and stages of development.

Children across our Foundation stage follow the EYFS curriculum. We provide topics that excite and engage the children, focusing on developing their experiences of the world around them. We recognise that all our children come into our setting with varied experiences and we ensure we plan learning opportunities that widen their knowledge and understanding and that set ambitious expectations. Our curriculum celebrates diversity and supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The teaching of the curriculum is practical and playful. There is a balance between child initiated and adult led experiences. There is a combination of whole class, group and individual focused experiences as well as stimulating continuous provision. We use a range of topics across the year where we develop children knowledge and vocabulary. The children's interests influence planning and provision. There is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.

Our learning environments are developed to promote independence and allow children to access the curriculum confidently with the necessary level of support and challenge. We ensure our enabling environment evolves to meet the needs of our children.

Within our EYFS Curriculum children are assessed via observations whilst in play, through guided working experiences and through formative assessment opportunities, this information informs future planning, and individual children's next steps in their learning. They enable us to ensure learning is embedded and consistent and that all children continue to make outstanding progress within our EYFS setting.

Equal Opportunity Statement

The Governors and Staff at St Joseph's believe that all people are entitled to equal opportunities, respect, and consideration regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, disability, or personal circumstances. Therefore, we are opposed to any form of prejudice or discrimination which denies people this equality. This principle applies to both adults and children in our school.

Implementation

At St Joseph's we offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced and which builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills. The aim of our curriculum is to develop a thirst and love for learning by,

- Carefully planning sequences of activities that provide meaningful learning experiences.
- Providing high quality interactions with adults that demonstrate and impact on the progress of all children.
- Using high quality interactions to check understanding and address misconceptions.
- Staff acting as role models to children in order for the children to develop their own speaking and listening skills.
- Carefully assessing using these to inform next steps of learning and meet individual needs.
- Developing an effective and engaging environment that is set up so that children can independently access all areas of learning both inside and outside.
- Allowing children to be successful in their attempts at an activity and using effective feedback to help facilitate next steps in learning.

- Suggesting home learning opportunities with information about what has been taught allowing parents to build on their child's school experiences at home.

Impact

Reviewing teaching and assessing the learning shows we make a difference. The children make good progress from their starting point. Impact is shown through our observations, formative and summative assessments for each child. Children demonstrate high levels of engagement in activities, developing their speaking and listening skills, enabling them to communicate to both adults and children.

Children develop a wider sense of the world around them and can draw on these experiences during interactions with others and link this to new learning.

Children develop their characteristics of learning and are able to apply their knowledge to a range of situations making links and explaining their ideas and understanding. Children are confident to take risks and discuss their successes and failures with adults drawing on their experiences to improve or adjust what they are doing. From their own starting points children make excellent progress academically and socially developing a sense of themselves so that they are well prepared for key stage one. St Joseph's EYFS strongly believe that we ignite the flame for learning and we can transform the lives of our children

Structure of the EYFS

Our Early Years provision includes a 26/26 place Foundation stage one for 3- and 4-year olds across two sessions, with some children attending for 30-hour provision. Our Foundation stage two class, has space for 30 children. Our Foundation stage is combined in a unit with a dividing partition. Children work both in their own class base and across the unit when the divide is open. We have a large outdoor area that children access from both classrooms, children also use the school grounds and hall. EYFS is open term time between the hours of 8:30am – 3:20 pm further details can be found in our school prospectus.

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 interconnected. 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:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through **the specific areas:**

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

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and with a careful balance of adult led and child-initiated activity. At St. Joseph's we recognise that play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, think about problems and to relate to others. The teachers make an ongoing judgement to maintain the balance between those activities led or guided by adults and those led by the children. The environment is well organised and stimulating and planning provides rich, varied and imaginative experiences to support all areas of learning.

Planning

Staff plan activities and experiences for children that enable children to develop and learn effectively across all areas of learning, as well as offering them opportunities to develop their cultural capital. In order to do this, practitioners working with the youngest children focus strongly on the 3 prime areas. Staff also consider 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.

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice. They also show ambitious intent for all children. Staff develop a strong continuous provision, and then plan enhanced provision and additional adult directed activities to support this. As children progress through the early years' foundation stage, key group work, adult-directed and whole class work will be planned, as appropriate for the age and stage of the pupils.

- Long term planning is based upon the EYFS curriculum guidance and Development Matters.
- Medium term planning is topic based and uses the Cornerstones programme to support planning. Planning Responds to the children's individual needs, interests and stage of development to create a challenging and stimulating experience across all areas of learning.
- Short term planning details the teacher directed, teacher led and child-initiated activities, the learning intentions, observation opportunities and assessments.
- Planning reflects the **characteristics of learning** which are the different ways that children learn: - **playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically**
- Planning is responsive to children's needs and planning is suitably challenging for all children.

Planning in EYFS

Our Foundation stage follow the EYFS curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework. The framework includes seven areas of learning and development that are equally important and interconnected.

The prime areas:

- Personal and emotional Development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

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

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design.

Development matters is also used to support planning and progression towards the ELG All planning is responsive to children's needs and planning is suitably challenging for all children

The teaching of the curriculum is practical and playful. There is a balance between child initiated and adult led experiences There is a combination of whole class, group and individual focused experiences as well as stimulating continuous provision. We use a range of topics across the year where we develop children knowledge and vocabulary. The children's interests influence planning and provision. There is quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind

Long term planning

Our long- term plan runs on a two-year alternating cycle and covers 6 topics. For each topic there is a Knowledge organiser, medium- and short-term planning. Focused vocabulary is identified linked to each topic.

Medium term planning

Our Topic planning is set around 4 cornerstones of pedagogy

Engage: We hook learners with memorable experiences which provides a context for learning. We believe in asking questions to find the children's interests and ignite their curiosity.

Develop: We believe in teaching the children facts and information which enables deeper understanding and knowledge. We provide creative opportunities for experiences and allow time for consolidation.

Innovate: We encourage creative thinking enabling children to apply learned skills. We encourage independent thinking and provide opportunities for collaborative working.

Express: We encourage reflective talk and create opportunities for shared evaluation. We celebrate and share children's success as well as identifying next steps for learning.

Foundation stage one and two follow the same planning document.

Specific knowledge and skills are identified for each focused activity.

The subject area of focus is identified via the ELG it links to for F1 and F2 with reference to development matters also: **Foundation 1 3-4 years** **Foundation 2 4-5 years**

Some focused activities are for a specific year group, others are for both year groups but show differentiation in the knowledge and skills section of the planning. Each focused activity is numbered so this can be cross referenced to the short-term planning. **This is written in red** the activities also include a title to make links to the short term planning explicit.

Develop focus weeks are grouped into specific areas of focus and have subheadings/ themes these are written in **red and highlighted in blue.**

The format of the planning includes, specific knowledge and skills that children are to develop. An explanation of the activity and resources required. Observation focus that are used to inform, assessments, future planning and impact groups. Enhanced provision and prompts, challenges and questions.

Short term planning

Short term planning is over a weekly format there are focused activities that are linked to the seven areas of learning. There is an overarching theme for each week that supports

the topic theme.

Activities are directly linked to medium term planning via a title and number.

Focused activities move into continuous provision so pupils can consolidate their learning, enhancements are added to this based on observations and pupils' requests or interests.

Staff develop strong continuous provision, and then plan enhanced provision and additional adult directed activities to support this. As children progress through the early years' foundation stage, key group work, adult – directed and whole class work will be planned for as appropriate for the age and stage of the pupils.

Continuous provision is informed by child initiations and develops on children's interests and need.

Additional planning

RE- Come and See

RSE- Ten Ten linking to PSED

Reading- for pleasure is integral to day to day provision.

Phonics is taught daily through little wandle. This includes a rhyme time focus.

Math is taught through daily dedicated sessions. These sessions are carefully planned and use concrete resources. Sessions build on prior learning and real-life experiences. We want our children to become confident mathematicians who apply their learning to real life experiences. Planning references are from Development matters, and Math's Hub.

(F2)

Forest school sessions develop children's social interactions and introduce a range of skills. These sessions encourage children to take and manage risks. There is a dedicated time and area where children experience these sessions.

Teaching

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through positive interaction. Our outdoor provision enhances opportunities available to the children in inside offering a mix of adult-led and child-initiated learning.

Learning and Teaching Strategies

Throughout each week the children will access:

- ✓ Whole class activities
- ✓ Small group focus activities
- ✓ Adult initiated activities
- ✓ Child initiated activities
- ✓ Indoor and Outdoor learning

Children are actively encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards their learning and to understand that they have responsibility for it. By providing a wide range of activities and resources we ensure that the variety of learning styles are catered for.

Assessment

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 utilise observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Assessment is a continuous and integral part of our practice. It informs practitioners and parents/carers of individual development and progression through the EYFS and allows staff to plan appropriate opportunities to support and extend children's learning. Assessments are monitored to evaluate the progress of all pupils. Assessments are based on high quality observations and includes all involved in the child's learning and development. Children's needs are identified and they are given the support and challenge they need.

Summative assessments using Development Matters are made on entry to Foundation one within 2 weeks of the children starting school, at Autumn 2, Spring 2, Summer 2. In Foundation two a baseline assessment is conducted, then assessments are made at Autumn 2, Spring 2, summer 2. A final statutory summative assessment is made in the final term of F2 using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. The profile provides parents and teachers with a picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels and their readiness for year 1. Each child's level of development is assessed against the early learning goals and a judgement is made whether the children are on track (expected), not on track (not yet reaching)

All summative assessments are collated using **Arbor** and analysed to establish a baseline to measure progress against. Assessment for each child, cohort and vulnerable groups of children (Ever6, SEN, EAL and BME) is analysed to ensure progression and enables attainment to be compared within school, locally and nationally.

Formative assessments using observations, photographs, annotated pieces of work, Arbor, contributions from parents, discussions with children etc. are ongoing and all contribute to the summative assessments for each child. A judgement is made using on track / not on track using the development matters statements for three and four years and the Early Learning Goals. This information is used to monitor progress for each child and to inform planning.

Parents and Carers are kept up to date with their child's progress by meeting with Staff at regular intervals. A parents meeting is held in October, a more formal target setting meeting is held in February and Parents receive a report on their child's attainment in the summer term. Staff engage with parents to support all pupils and parents contribute to the assessment process across the year.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts F2, staff will administer the Statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA, May 2021).

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
- Not yet reaching expected levels

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 (referring to the Development Matters guidance) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

SEND

Meeting the individual needs of all children lies at the heart of our foundation stage practice.

If a child's progress in any area of the curriculum gives cause for concern this is discussed with the parents to reach an agreement on how best to support them. If specialist support is required help is given to access services and other agencies.

[Link to SEND policy.](#)

EAL

For children whose home language is not English opportunities are provided for the child to use their home language in play and learning as well as developing their use of English.

When assessing communication, language and literacy skills the child is assessed in English but where this isn't possible the child's skills in their home language is explored to establish whether there is a cause for concern about language delay. For parents who have difficulty understanding English advice is sought from the Achievement and Equality Service.

Safe Guarding and Welfare

All safeguarding and welfare requirements stated in the Statutory Guidance for the EYFS are met ensuring that our children learn in a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where all necessary steps are taken to keep them safe and well.

We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop this important life skill. We allow children to take evaluated risks, and they are taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. We know that children learn best when they are healthy and safe, when their individual needs are met and when they have the chance to build positive relationships with the adults around them and their peers.

We promote good oral health, as well as good health in general, in the early years through our curriculum, for example by talking to children about:

- The effects of eating too many sweet things
- The importance of brushing your teeth.

We also teach E-safety across our EYFS in age appropriate ways. The rest of our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

Detailed information is available in the Whole School Policies for

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Management of Medicines
- Behaviour
- First Aid – 2 members of staff hold the Paediatric First Aid Qualification

These policies are available for Parents to consult on the School Website or copies are available on request from the school office.

Staff Ratios

Staffing arrangements meet the needs of all children and ensure that the children are adequately supervised and remain safe. The staffing ratios stated in the Statutory Guidance are met.

- Foundation stage one– One member of staff for every 13 children. Each session has a maximum of 26 children with 1 Qualified Teacher and 1 Level 3 Teaching Assistant. Additional Teaching Assistants are employed for children with identified SEN.
- Foundation stage two – One Qualified Teacher and One Level 3 Teaching Assistant for a maximum of 30 children in line with the Infant Class Size regulations and in line with the Statutory Guidance.
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Partnership with parents and carers.

As a school we recognise that parents are children's first educators. We liaise closely with parents/carers and believe by doing so we can have a positive impact on development and learning. We promote an open-door policy whereby parents/carers are welcome to speak to staff before or after school regarding their child's circumstances, progress, interests, skills and needs. Parents will be formally or informally invited into school for events such as parental class visits assemblies, plays, parents' evenings, parent workshops etc.

We actively encourage parents/carers to engage their children in learning at home; parents are informed of the focus for the week and encouraged to support their child through homework activities. Staff engage with parents in their children's learning and continually keep them updated with their children's achievements and progress. Parents contribute to initial assessments of children's starting points.

Transition

We endeavor to make all transitions as smooth, positive and effective as possible. We have support documents for children and parents to support early transition phases. We also work with outside agencies to support families.

At St. Joseph's children begin their Early Years' education in Foundation one following their third birthday and transfer into Foundation stage two at the beginning of the academic year in which their fifth birthday falls. Children spend three, four or five terms in Nursery depending on the month of their birth and three terms Foundation stage two.

Starting Foundation One

- Parents/carers receive a letter offering a place for their child.
- Children are invited to attend "stay and play" sessions. This is an opportunity to meet staff and take part in stay and play, children then attend for an hours session alone if this is appropriate moving onto attend for a half day nursery session which gives the children an idea of the daily routine. All contact information is collected and permission forms are signed.
- The child begins to attend each session. We maintain a flexible approach where the length of the child's session can gradually be increased according to individual needs.

Transition into F2

- Foundation stage one children visit the F2 classroom and teacher and TA for a planned programme of visits over the summer term.
- The children are already familiar with the school building as they work within the foundation stage unit and use the school's facilities for, dinner, pe, assemblies... For children who do not attend F1 a transition event takes place where they can join the class.
- The F1 Teacher and the F2 Teacher meet at the end of the summer term to moderate the end of Foundation stage assessments and to discuss each child.
- The children begin school at the start of the Autumn term.

Transition to Year One

Transition to Year One builds upon and extends the experiences children have had in Foundation. There continues to be opportunities for child initiated and independent learning. This ensures that children remain motivated, enthused and eager learners.

- In order to achieve effective transition, we establish a shared understanding of the principles of the Foundation Stage and transfer these into Year One practice. We promote continuity in learning by ensuring that Year One teachers are aware of children's achievement and can implement the next steps in their learning.
- F2 and Y1 teachers meet to discuss children, their records and achievements and their needs.
- We build in time to introduce children to their new environment.
- We provide a carefully planned programme of transition activities.

This policy is monitored by the Early Years Lead. It is evaluated and reviewed annually by the school Governors, and staff.

