

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Joseph's RC Primary School.



ST HILDA'S
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chance. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.”

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage)

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) refers to children from birth to five years of age. In all of St. Hilda’s school schools children complete their final year of the EYFS in reception.

The EYFS at St Joseph’s School seeks 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 interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly
- **partnership working** between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- **equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

We aim to achieve this by:

- setting the standards for individual learning, development and care to support each child to fulfil their potential. We do this by providing safe and enabling environments, both indoors and outdoors
- providing for equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Creating the framework for partnership by working with parents, professionals, staff within the school and other outside agencies.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Joseph's RC Primary School.

- ensuring that learning and development is planned around the individual needs and interests of the child and informed by the use of on-going observational assessment
- laying a secure foundation for future learning through consistent planning, school wide moderation and regular CPD for all school EYFS practitioners

Play

"Children learn as they play. Most importantly, in play children learn how to learn."

(O. Fred Donaldson)

At St Joseph's School, we recognise the fundamental importance of how play underpins and shapes all learning and development for young children. Most children play spontaneously although some may need adult support. It is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally. By providing well planned experiences based on children's spontaneous play, both indoors and outside we support our children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside and with other children and adults as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems.

Teaching and learning

Alongside spontaneous learning experiences we provide a balanced curriculum to ensure as the children progress through the EYFS, are supported by all of the adults in the setting. The balance between child-initiated and adult led activities shifts as the children progress through Nursery and into reception as we aim to embed the basic skills needed for future learning throughout school. In planning and guiding children's activities we acknowledge the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice, identifying three characteristics of effective learning:

- **playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- **active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements
- **creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Joseph's RC Primary School.

The early year's experiences we offer our children are based on the following principles:

- Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

Unique Child

At St Joseph's School, we believe every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We give every child the opportunity to achieve their best by having realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of all our children across the areas of learning and development. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with disabilities, children with additional educational needs, children with medical needs, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, skills, experience and interests.
- planning opportunities to develop their well-being, self-esteem and confidence, including experiences that provide risk and challenge
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a secure and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is respected and valued
- using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination or stereotyping
- planning challenging and appropriate experiences for higher achieving children
- monitoring children's progress and providing additional support when identified
- using age appropriate ways to seek the views of all children through observing, listening and sensitive discussion
- seeking advice from specialist agencies where appropriate.

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Joseph's RC Primary School.

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. At St Joseph's School, we respect that parents are the child's first and future educators. We believe that the positive relationships we build are the key to effective partnerships between all practitioners, parents, carers and families. We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- developing positive relationships with parents during the induction programme.
- working with parents / carers right from the start to find out about their child's needs, feelings and interests
- developing effective partnerships with families throughout the year by offering regular opportunities for them to talk about their child's progress through our open door policy, stay and play sessions and parent consultation meetings across Foundation Stage.
- encouraging families to talk to their child's teacher, as well as other staff members to foster two way communication with parents / carers and families
- helping parents to support children's learning and development
- recognising that friendships and relationships are an important part of a child's development from birth.

Enabling Environment

At St. Joseph's School, we recognise that the environment plays a crucial role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. Our learning environments are carefully planned both indoors and outdoors to help children achieve across all aspects of the EYFS. Opportunities are provided for children to take part in a wide range of experiences and to extend their interests.

We meet the needs of all of our children by:

- encouraging children to communicate and talk about their experiences
- developing children's independence and decision making by providing an environment where children can freely access resources and select from the experiences on offer
- using the outdoor environment to enhance learning and development
- analysing children's responses to different situations and identifying their future learning needs
- using materials and equipment that reflects both the community that the children come from and the wider world
- encouraging a positive attitude to learning by ensuring our planning begins by observing the children in order to consider their current interests, developmental

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Joseph's RC Primary School.

stage and learning style.

We work in partnership with parents / carers, other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community to support children's learning and development.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The EYFS is made up of seven areas of Learning and Development: All areas 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.

Children should mostly

develop the **3 prime areas** first, these are:

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

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in the **4 specific areas**. Our settings must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These are:

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

All of the 7 areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led (child working with the adult) and child-initiated (child chosen) activities.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outdoors.

Observations undertaken by all practitioners are used to plan children's next steps of learning and progress is recorded in their learning journals and feeds into the data which forms the basis of the EYFS profile.

At St Joseph's School, we ensure that the requirements of the EYFS are met through all seven areas of learning and development, in order for children to make

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

St Joseph's RC Primary School.

progress towards the early learning goals, which are the established expectations for most children to reach by the end of the reception year. Progress is tracked half termly and the data collected is shared with team leaders, SLT and Headteachers. This information is then passed on to Year one teachers to inform future planning to ensure our children's individual learning needs are met as they continue their learning journey into Key Stage 1.

"The most effective kind of education is that a child should play amongst lovely things." *(Plato)*



September 2017

Review Date:

Reviewed by: