



**ST JOSEPH'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
A VOLUNTARY ACADEMY**

**A MEMBER OF  
THE BISHOP KONSTANT CATHOLIC ACADEMY  
TRUST**



# EARLY YEARS POLICY

*Updated September 2021*

*The following Mission Statement is central to our philosophy on transition.....*

We at St Joseph's School believe that the Catholic Faith is central to and permeates all aspects of school life. We aim to achieve this through the teaching of the curriculum, prayer and worship.

All members of the staff at St Joseph's, both non-teaching and teaching, should be encouraged and supported to develop their talents and skills for their own professional development and for the benefit of the school.

We aim to foster a caring environment where individuals value and respect one another. We should develop effective communication through sensitive talking and listening. We should positively encourage and enable the children to fulfil their own potential, building their self-confidence and self-esteem and equipping them with the knowledge and skills they will require in later life.

We aim to increase each child's awareness of the need for discipline and ultimately develop self-discipline.

We recognise the importance of, and aim to develop a working reciprocal partnership between home, school and parish. We also encourage the children to take an interest in and play an active part in the wider - community.

As followers of Jesus Christ our Mission at St Joseph's is to provide the opportunity for each individual to develop intellectually, morally and spiritually in a happy and caring environment.

*Produced by the Staff and Governors of St Joseph's*

***This philosophy can be supported by the following:-***

***Each individual has:***

*The right to be valued*

*The right to be safe*

*The right to achieve*

*The responsibility to value others*

*The responsibility to keep others safe from harm*

*The responsibility to allow others to work or achieve*

### **Basic information and organisation:- Staffing:**

Foundation Stage Leader/Foundation Teacher: Mrs Catherine Medley

Teaching Assistant: Mrs Lucy Dillon

PPA and Management time cover: Mrs Audrey Forster

### **The Role of the Practitioner**

- All staff are responsible for planning and resourcing a stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment, both indoors and outdoors.
- All staff will support and extend children's learning through planned, purposeful play activities, based on the children's interests.
- All staff will develop and extend children's language and communication skills through high levels of interaction.
- All staff are responsible for observing and evaluating, recording and reporting what children learn.

### **The role of the key worker**

The class teacher is the key worker for all children.

The children are split into groups for focused activities. The adult leading these will undertake snap shots of work which will contribute to assessments. This will be done on Tapestry.

All adults in Foundation are responsible for settling the child into their new class and for making observations of the child's activity and progress. They will collect work samples, photographic evidence and quotes in order to track the child's progress through the Development Matters Bands and Early Learning Goals, as appropriate. The class teacher will be responsible for setting targets through discussion with all staff.

### **Staff development and training**

The class teacher will attend in service training days. These will be determined by the Head teacher and the senior management team and will be determined by priorities on the School Improvement Plan. Further training courses may be arranged depending on availability and budget for all staff within the Foundation Stage.

### **Admissions**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School follows the admissions procedure set out by our own admissions policy. This coordinates with Wakefield LA dates.

**Number of places:** Reception: 30 places full time

### **Timetables and routines-**

Session times:

Start Time 8.55am

Lunch time: 11.30 - 12.30pm

Finish time: 3.25pm

Parents are encouraged to accompany their children into Foundation for the first two weeks in September. There will be time to speak briefly to the staff in Foundation but if Parents wish to discuss something at length or wish to discuss a confidential issue they are free to make an appointment to see the class teacher after school.

After the first couple of weeks, parents should leave their child at the door to Foundation where a member of staff will be waiting to take them into the classroom.

At the end of the school day parents or a named carer wait at the door for their child to be dismissed. If someone, who is not on the contact list is picking up a child the parent must inform the school about this and give a password before a child is released from the classroom.

### **Foundation Provision**

Children in Foundation have access to outdoor play. The practitioners enhance the areas of provision with activities that follow the children's line of enquiry and interests. Many of the activities are cross curricular in nature, play based, and practical and continue to utilize the areas of continuous provision, both indoors and outdoors, as well as taking into account the children's interests.

### **Our EYFS Pedagogy**

In our setting the practitioners ensure that children are valued as individuals, safe and well cared for.

We aim to provide a happy, fun and challenging environment with Christ at the centre of all we do.

We understand that children's choices and interests are the driving force for building knowledge, skills and understanding.

We support children to build positive identities through managing and taking risks, having a go, developing resilience and promoting a 'can do' attitude.

Through high quality provision, we are laying the foundations for the children becoming independent, active, lifelong learners.

### **Aims and objectives -**

The Foundation Stage at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School follows the whole school aims and also has the following as specific early years aims and objectives for the very youngest children.

- To create a warm, friendly and co-operative relationship between home and school.
- To build on the foundation laid in the early years at home with the family.
- To provide a secure, stable and caring environment, within which each child can grow and mature socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically and so develop into people who have respect for themselves, others and their environment.
- To provide opportunity for each child to observe, experiment, investigate, discover and consolidate, both independently and cooperatively.
- To promote children's communication skills.
- To encourage children to enter the world of the imagination.
- To enable children to encounter new experiences with curiosity, enthusiasm and confidence.
- To encourage children to form stable relationships with other children and adults and so develop a sense of belonging to the wider school community, particularly our church.

### **Learning experiences - the curriculum**

#### **The Foundation Stage**

The Foundation Stage at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School curriculum is based on the **Early Learning Goals** and progress can be tracked through the **Development Matters Bands**. The Early Learning Goals and the Developmental Stages are set out in 'Early Years Foundation Stage'. The curriculum consists of all those experiences planned and provided by adults to support all areas of the child's development. Children in the early years

learn by playing, talking, observing, questioning, experimenting, testing, repeating, reflecting and responding to adults and to each other.

## **Principles**

- Effective education requires a relevant curriculum and practitioners who understand and are able to implement curriculum requirements.
- Effective education requires practitioners who understand the rapid physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of children in the early years.
- Practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued regardless of culture, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or special educational need.
- Experiences should build on what the child already knows and can do.
- Parents and practitioners should work together in partnership
- An effective curriculum should be carefully structured to provide for planned experiences and self initiated activities.
- Practitioners should use a variety of strategies which include sensitive direct teaching which stimulates children's interest, observation, sensitive intervention, modelling and skill support, whilst maximising children's opportunities for autonomous learning.
- The learning environment should be well planned, both indoors and outdoors, to allow children to have rich, stimulating and autonomous experiences.

## **The Learning Environment**

Foundation Stage is set out in areas, which denote the areas of continuous provision. Some of the areas you may see are outlined below:

- Sand
- Water
- Construction
- Craft
- Home bay
- Small worlds
- Prayer Area
- Malleable materials
- Paint
- Music
- Mark making
- Mathematical activity
- Computer
- Book corner

Each area is designed to be aesthetically pleasing, stimulating, well-resourced and clearly labelled, enabling children to access equipment relative to their self-initiated or adult led activity, thus enabling them to be autonomous learners. Each area is rich in examples of literacy and numeracy to enable children to assimilate these aspects into their play. Children have access to these areas during periods of free flow play and adults also plan play based learning experiences, which utilize these areas of continuous provision. Children are encouraged to develop independence, take responsibility for their environment, to respect the equipment and to follow procedures where appropriate. Children are expected to tidy away their equipment and leave the area ready for others. Children also have opportunity to use a similar environment outdoors, which also provides for physical activity. As indoors, children are encouraged to be autonomous learners and are given opportunities to incorporate literacy and numeracy into their play.

**Planning** - Planning takes into account the interests of the individual children and individual's next steps of learning. Plans are written weekly, with ongoing daily tweaking. Daily dialogue between practitioners is constant and is highly valuable in planning next steps in the children's learning.

### **Learning and teaching strategies**

Through well planned activities and a pleasing and well organised environment which promotes free flow play opportunities, children are encouraged to be active, imaginative and creative learners. Confidence, independence and positive self-esteem are promoted by staff who actively consider the levels of sensitivity, stimulation and autonomy they offer the children in the learning process. Staff use a range of teaching strategies including whole class teaching, small group and individual work.

### **Assessment, recording and reporting**

Practitioners use an I-pad based system of continuous assessment based on observation and work sampling. In this way, children's progress can be tracked through the Development Matters Bands and Early Learning Goals and on into the National Curriculum as appropriate. Foundation Stage practitioners gather evidence of learning and record progress in the child's individual online journal, which parents have access too. At the end of the Reception year the Reception teacher writes a summative report to parents, identifying learning covered, progress made and targets for future learning.

## **Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs**

Resources in the Foundation Stage department represent both genders, a range of cultures and are accessible to children who may have disabilities. Activities promote positive images of the multicultural society in which we live. Staff work hard to promote non stereotypical images and role models. All children, regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, ability or disability, are encouraged and supported in order that they can access the curriculum in ways that are meaningful and relevant and will enable to make appropriate progress. Children who have special educational needs are monitored and supported through the whole school policy and the DfEE code of practice for identification and assessment of children with SEND.

This sets out:

- The necessity to address SEND.
- The need for all children to access broad and balanced curriculum.
- The expectation that children with SEND should, wherever possible, be educated alongside their peers.
- The need for early intervention, with the involvement of outside agencies where necessary
- The need for positive partnerships between Parents, children, school and all agencies involved.

The SENDCO for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is

## **Parental partnership, home and community liaison**

All staff acknowledge that parents are the first educators of their children and that when the child enters the education system we must work together if the child is to reach his or her full potential. The Foundation staff go out on home visits, or do face to face calls via a video link prior to the child starting Foundation. This develops a partnership between school and home very quickly. It also ensures that the children meet staff in a familiar setting. Parents are also invited to a formal meeting prior to their child entering Foundation, when staff share practical information and philosophy for teaching and learning.

Prior to entry to Foundation, children may also be visited at their feeder settings and in this way, the school begins to make links with the wider community. Close links have been established with many of the local nurseries and Foundation teachers meet with nursery providers at a LA transition meeting.

Parents are regularly informed about the learning their child will be engaged in and are encouraged to be involved in and support their child's

learning at home. In Foundation parents are encouraged to support their child's learning by hearing them read, practising key words and by helping with numeracy tasks at home. Parents also work on set tasks in a special learning log and this is used to gather evidence for assessment.

Parents are free to discuss any problems or celebrate achievements with the staff.

### **Safeguarding**

The Foundation Stage complies with the whole school safeguarding policy.

### **Pupil Premium**

The Foundation Stage complies with the whole school pupil premium policy.

### **Transition to Key Stage 1 (See Policy)**

Policy updated by Catherine Medley (Foundation Stage Leader)  
September 2021.