



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

EYFS Guide for Parents



Together we grow in God's love, learning to be the best we can be.

Welcome to our Foundation Stage

We are very pleased you have chosen St Joseph's Catholic Primary School for your child and hope you will find this booklet helpful and informative.

Through love and as a community, we will, inspire and motivate your children so they can be the best they can be. We know children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. At our school, we ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging experience that is tailored to meet their needs.

We encourage a genuine partnership between school and home, knowing that by working together, we will have a positive impact on your child's development and learning.

We look forward to welcoming you to our school, and to a happy and successful partnership with all our new children and parents.

Mr M Maloney

Headteacher

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is a statutory framework on which we base our curriculum. It details the provision of learning, development and care for children between birth and the academic year in which they turn five (0-5 years). At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, our Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and a Reception class.

The EYFS seeks to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned 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.

Overarching principles

These are the four guiding principles that shape our practice:

- Every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- 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.
- Importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn 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 (SEND).

Learning and Development in the Early Years

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development 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.

These three areas, the *prime* areas, are:

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

Children are also supported in four *specific* areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

These specific areas are:

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

Our curriculum involves activities and experiences for children, as follows.

- Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations
- Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
- Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

- Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology.

Play and Effective Learning

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults. Our staff observe children and make judgments about the balance between activities led by children, and activities led or guided by adults.

In planning and guiding children's activities, our staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- 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 achievements;
- Creating and thinking critically children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment

In the Foundation Stage, children's progress is tracked through on-going observation and assessment leading towards achievement of Early Learning Goals that are identified within seven areas of Learning and Development by the end of Reception. Staff will use observation of the children during both adult led activities and child-initiated learning to plan effective, engaging and exciting learning opportunities to help the children develop their knowledge and skills to reach their full potential.

These observations are recorded in the child's Learning Journey on Tapestry and these are shared with parents. We also encourage parents to contribute to these journals.

At the end of Reception the EYFS profile is completed. The profile provides parents and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities and their progress against the Early Learning Goals.

Working With Parents

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we believe that successful relationships between parents and practitioners can have long lasting and beneficial effects upon children's learning and well being. Early Years staff will always be pleased to answer your questions and address any concerns you may have. Usually the best time for this is at the end of a session.

Besides the day-to-day informal contact between staff and parents there are many opportunities to share information. These include:

- Newsletter
- Class Web page
- Parents' Evening
- LIFT sessions
- Purple Mash
- Seesaw

Children's Welfare

The Foundation Stage staff do all they can to safeguard and promote children's welfare and well-being. They maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the classes, and to meet the needs of the children. We ask for parent's help in ensuring that information held on children is up-to-date.

More information can be found on www.stjosephs255.herts.sch.uk

