



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

EYFS Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body on	Summer 2018
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Person(s) Responsible	EYFS Leader



At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.

The EYFS Principles

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school children join us in the Nursery in one intake in September. They are also welcome to join Reception, applying centrally, through Camden's department for children, schools and families, for a place starting in September following their fourth birthday.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A Unique Child

Positive Relationships

Enabling Environments

Learning and Development

A Unique Child

We celebrate the uniqueness of each child by offering personalised learning opportunities and through working closely with families and professionals from other settings who have knowledge of the child. In our school every child matters.

Our skilled professionals understand the process involved in children's growth, development and learning. The curriculum and the opportunities we offer are designed to help children develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture. We recognise that children learn in different ways and at different rates and we accommodate this in the provision we offer.

Positive Relationships

We recognise that children learn to be strong and independent through secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families and carers.

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents and carers have played, and will continue to play in educating their children.

- Teachers and Nursery practitioners visit all children in their home setting prior to their starting school and talk to parents about their child and their needs and abilities;
- We give children an opportunity to spend time with their teacher before starting school during Open Afternoons;
- We invite parents and carers to a Welcome meeting during the term before their child starts school;
- We hold Structured Conversation meetings with parents after their first half term in school after their child has started school to discuss transition and their child's learning at home and school; these continue termly to discuss individual children's progress and provide parents with individual targets;
- We offer parents regular formal and informal opportunities to talk about their child's development such as 'time in the classroom from 8.45am to 9.00am;

- Coffee mornings are held on a Wednesday/Thursday for parents of children throughout the school.
- Parents have access to view their child's learning journal on the Tapestry (electronic assessment learning journal) website. When children have settled into the setting parents are given a password to access their child's learning journal online. For any parent who is unable to access their child's learning journal online we are able to print out a PDF version.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journal through adding their own observations of their child when at home. Parents are encouraged to come and get advice and support from the EYFS staff about making observations themselves.
- EYFS staff make weekly updates to Tapestry with photos of the children's learning from that week to give parents the opportunity to see how their child's week has been.
- Teachers are also able to keep in contact with parents through the use of Dojo. This is used throughout the school and in the Foundation Stage is used as a great way to send out reminders and updates to parents.
- We keep a record of children's work in portfolios. These are always available for parents to look through and we hold a termly 'Portfolio Friday' on the last Friday of the month, where we invite parents to come and view their child's work!
- The portfolio is given to parents when their child enters Year 1 or leaves our setting.
- The EYFS provides many opportunities for parents to develop the knowledge and skills they need to support their children in their learning such as parents' workshops e.g. Soundabout, Ocean Maths, Early Phonics and Reading, and Stay and Play.

Enabling Environments

At St Joseph's we recognise that the physical and human environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. We observe the children and assess their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend their children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Planning is based on each child's ongoing formative assessment. We have termly and weekly plans to ensure coverage is equitable but these do change according to the needs of individuals and the class.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of observation, and this involves all adults working with the child. As a general guideline the children in the Nursery should be working within the 30-50 month band in Development Matters and children in Reception should be working within the 40-60 month band.

At the end of the Reception year, each child will be assessed against the 17 Early Learning Goals (ELGs), each one linked to one of the seven areas of learning highlighted in the EYFS curriculum below.

The teachers will record each child's level of development against the 17 ELGs as **emerging**, **expected** or **exceeding**. The profile is then completed with a brief commentary of the child's skills in relation to the three key characteristics of learning (playing and exploring, active learning, creating and thinking critically).

We provide a written summary of these judgements for parents. We also give parents an opportunity to discuss these judgements with their child's class teacher.

The Learning Environment

Our learning environments are organised to enthuse children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is arranged into learning areas, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. Our Nursery class has their own enclosed outdoor area and learning opportunities are reflected in both areas. Children have the opportunity to free flow

between the two environments. The Reception class doesn't have their own outdoor area, therefore, children take turns to use the downstairs playground which is set up by EYFS staff every morning and afternoon and offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. We plan activities and resources for the children to access indoors and outdoors that help the children to develop in all seven areas of learning.

The Wider Context

We work closely with outside agencies to support children's development. Where appropriate we involve health and social care professionals, family support worker and other members of the local community.

Learning and Development

We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Through our teaching and learning we ensure that children feel secure at school and develop a sense of well-being and achievement. Our practitioners understand how children develop and learn, and consider this when they plan teaching opportunities.

We offer children first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions and extend and develop play. Our carefully planned curriculum helps children work towards the Early Learning Goals throughout EYFS.

We enable children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities. Children are encouraged to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management. Learning is supported by appropriate and accessible indoor and outdoor space, facilities and equipment. We identify progress and future learning needs of children through observations, which are shared with parents.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning in the Early Years are:

Playing and Exploring

Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. We believe that through play children achieve their highest learning potential. Play with peers is important for children's development.

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them to make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. We give children a degree of independence and control over their learning. As they develop their confidence they learn to make decisions and this provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creativity and Thinking Critically

When children have opportunities to play and engage with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.

We give children opportunities to be creative in all areas of learning. Adults support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children access resources freely and may choose to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

The EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. There are three *prime* areas which are crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for helping their capacity to learn. These are:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

There are then four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the World**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

More information about these areas of learning can be found by downloading the EYFS Framework available at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0068102/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs>

Health & Safety and Safeguarding

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. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance (2017) and there is a section in our school Safeguarding Policy that directly refers to practice in the EYFS.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

As stated in the Early Years Statutory Framework (2017) for children aged three and over in nursery classes in maintained schools there must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children. There must be at least one member of staff must be a school teacher as defined by Section 122 of the Education Act 2002 and the Education (School Teachers' Qualifications) (England) Regulations 2003; and at least one other member of staff must hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification. Reception classes in maintained schools are subject to infant class size legislation. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (as amended by the Education Act 2002) limits the size of infant classes to 30 pupils per school teacher.

It is important to note that members of staff do not use their mobile phones or personal handset devices in the classroom and are prohibited from taking photographs with their personal handsets. This is in line with Camden and St Joseph's Safeguarding Policy. Members of staff do, however, use school iPads and photo cameras to take photographs as evidence to support the regular observation assessment cycle in the EYFS. These photographs are used in tapestry, in class displays and on the school website. All parents are asked to state if they give permission for their child's image to be used on the school website through the paperwork in their initial starter packs. We are a healthy school and our children receive free fruit and milk from a Government scheme. We take all accidents seriously and always log and phone home immediately if a child bangs their head. We use cold, wet tissues/paper towels in the event of a bang or a graze. We encourage all children to start school without nappies but will support any children struggling with this. (See Nappy Changing policy). We follow whole school procedures for child protection (See School's safeguarding policy).

The policy will be given to all members of staff and copies will be available for parents.

The head teacher, members of the senior management team and members of the curriculum leadership team will monitor the policy.