

# St. Joseph and St. Bede R.C. Primary School



## Early Years Policy

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## **Early Years Policy**

### **Mission Statement**

Our school is a welcoming, Catholic community, with Christ at the centre.

Through worship, we come together to listen and speak to God, to spread the Gospel message and to move forward in faith together.

As ***“Guardians of life and creation”***; we work together with respect, understanding, honesty and joy, to develop love, tolerance and justice for all.

We strive for greatness in our learning, we develop our unique talents and each day we take pride in all our efforts and achievements.

### **Rational**

“Children develop rapidly during the early years physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. They are entitled to provision which supports and extends knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence, and helps them to overcome any disadvantage.” QCA

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to their full potential. A child’s experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure safe and happy childhood is extremely important, and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. The Early Years Foundation Stage is the framework that provides that assurance.”

Good Early Years education is of great importance for every child. In line with the Mission Statement the school endeavours to provide effective learning and care for all the children in the Foundation Stage, working in partnership with parents so that each child can reach their full potential.

The Early Years Policy covers admission into Nursery, the Reception Year and transition into Year 1

### **Aims**

- To encourage the children to become independent and self confident within a secure and happy school community which promotes Christian values.
- To foster and promote an understanding that the feelings, needs and beliefs of others are treated with respect and to encourage the development of good relationships with adults and peers.

- To ensure that each child has access to a broad, balanced curriculum in line with Early Years Goals to provide the opportunity for effective development in language and literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, physical and expressive arts and design, and encourages personal, social and emotional development.

## **The Curriculum**

Children follow Come and See

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

Within these principles there are seven areas of learning:

### **Prime Areas**

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

### **Specific Areas**

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELG's) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

## **Teaching Methods**

A variety of teaching methods are employed which take account of the individual needs of the children and the nature of the task.

- Whole class teaching
- Group teaching
- One to one teaching

## **The Learning Environment**

We aim to provide a well planned and well organised environment to give children rich and stimulating experiences. This provides the structure for teaching within which children explore experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves, thus enabling them to learn, develop and make good progress.

The EYFS is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. The classroom is set up in areas of provision, where children are able to find and locate equipment and resources independently. The EYFS has its own outdoor area. This has a positive effect on the children's development. Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. It offers the children to explore using their senses and be physically active and exuberant. We plan activities and resources for the children to access outdoors that help the children to develop in all 6 areas of learning.

## **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Children are assessed on entry to Nursery in liaison with the parents. They are then assessed again in February and finally on exit from Nursery. This data is inputted into Target Tracker. Within the final term of Nursery, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress thus far and state where children are working against the Development Matters statements. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

Children are assessed on entry to YR (if new to Reception) again in the Spring term and on exit from YR. A Foundation Stage Profile is completed using Tapestry software, individual records are kept for each child and are passed from Nursery to Reception and from Reception to Year 1. Tapestry is used to record judgements against Development Matters and the Early Learning Goals. Within the final term of the EYFS, we provide a written summary to parents, reporting their progress against the ELG's and assessment scales. We give a reasonable opportunity for the parents to discuss these judgements with the EYFS teacher.

In Nursery parents drop-in sessions are held throughout the year and parents receive a written report at the end of the year. In Reception, Parents Evenings are held twice a year and parents receive a written report at the end of the academic year.

Children of particular concern (academic or behavioural) are placed on Stage 1 of the Special Needs Register and Provision Maps are written for children with particular needs.

Teachers and other staff make planned or spontaneous regular observations of the children in order to assess the children's needs and achievements.

## **Parental Involvement/ Parents as Partners**

A close partnership between home and school is encouraged and is seen as especially important during the Early Years.

Links between home and school are encouraged through the following:

- Both Nursery and Reception encourage parents to visit the settings prior to the child attending.
- Informal open evenings are held twice a year in Nursery in order for parents to discuss with the staff the Early Years curriculum, allay any concerns and find ways of settling the child into a new environment.
- An open evening and a 'taster session' are held for Reception parents to help ease transition from Nursery to Reception.
- Parents are provided with an information booklet that indicated how the child might make the transition more easily.
- 'Stay and Play' sessions are held across the year to welcome parents into the setting.
- A letter is sent to prospective pupils due to start school.
- Parents are invited to join Tapestry, where they are able to view their child's online profile and they are encouraged to comment on their child's learning from home.
- Each child has a home/school diary, in which parents as well as teachers are able to write a comment.
- There is a parents evening twice a year (YR)
- There is a parent drop-in session twice a year (YN)
- An annual report and FSP is written for each child (YN&R)
- An open invitation is sent via school newsletters, Parent Hub or SMS service for school Masses, concerts, fund raising activities, assemblies and other events.
- Staff are available to discuss concerns about children before and after school informally or at a mutually agreed time.
- Parents are encouraged to become 'helpers' in the class under the supervision of the teaching staff.

## **Transition**

### **Transition from Nursery to Reception**

Parents are invited to an open evening in the summer term. Following the open evening, children and parents are invited to a 'taster' session where they can look around the classrooms, meet the staff and parents have an informal meeting with the head teacher. Alongside this are informal sessions where children spend time in Reception throughout the term and the Reception teachers spend time in the Nursery zone working alongside the children in an informal environment. Nursery and Reception also share the outdoor area so have had contact with all members of the Reception team.

Nursery data from Target Tracker is passed along to the Reception teacher. Reception and Nursery staff meet to discuss children.

Reception children start school part time, with one half starting in the mornings then the second half starting in the afternoons. A staggered start helps the children to settle in.

### Transition from Reception to Year One

Children have two 'move up' sessions and the year one teachers spend time with the children in class.

Information that is passed on to the next teacher –

- EYFS Profile Scores
- Target tracker data
- Reports
- Provision Maps
- Writing book (most up to date one)
- Assessment files – numeracy, reading, and phonics.
- Phonic tracker

A meeting is held with the Reception teachers and the year one staff to discuss children and help ease transitions.