St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bingley

EYFS Policy

Our Vision
'Learning with Jesus, to be the best we can be'

Date written: January 2022
Reviewed: Sept 2023, Sept 2024

Aims of the policy

The aims and objectives of St. Joseph's School in formulating this policy are as follows:

We aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent learners. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and carers to help every child reach their full potential.

As outlined in the 'Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage':
'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.'

The Mission Statement

- We aim to grow in knowledge and friendship with God
- We, the governors, the Headteacher and the staff will uphold the Catholic Values of our school life
- We will feel compassion for others in difficulties
- We aim for a welcoming, Christian atmosphere
- We live our lives according to Gospel values, following the examples of the Saints
- We will achieve the best we can academically, spiritually and in everything we do

- We will work in partnership with our families, our parish, other schools and our diocese to create a community of faith
- We welcome other faiths working in harmony with Catholic traditions
- We will deliver a high standard of Religious Education which will be reflected in all of our teaching
- Prayer and Collective Worship will be at the heart of our school life and we will enjoy regular visits from our parish priest who leads us in our spiritual development
- We will care for our world and everything in it

In order to achieve this we aim:

- To make prayer, worship and liturgy real educational experiences, and in co-operation with parents and parish, contribute to the development of faith of each individual in the school community.
- To develop the school as a caring, sharing Catholic community, extending links into the local and wider community and to include an awareness and nurture of a sense of justice and tolerance of other faiths in terms if equal opportunities for all.
- Through a well-balanced and well planned curriculum the school will provide the children with a sound basis on which they can build, in order to develop opportunities, responsibilities and experiences for an adult life.
- To ensure the best opportunities for children's learning and progress by ensuring that planning and assessment of work is well structured and reviewed.

Statutory Framework of EYFS

We adhere to the 'Statutory Framework of the EYFS' and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- 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**, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/ carers;
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the EYFS, across the seven curriculum areas, using play as the vehicle for learning;
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.
- We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents and carers;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment and by the children's own ideas and interests;

- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated, child-initiated and adult supported;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and outdoors.

Early years foundation stage curriculum
We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals.
All seven areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.
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, both in the EYFS and into Key
Stage 1.

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

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

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

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

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

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:
1. **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
2. **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties.
3. **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they can explore, think creatively and be active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

We create medium term plans based on a series of topics each of which offers experiences in all seven areas of learning. At the beginning of each topic the children are encouraged to share their ideas for learning experiences with us which we record as part of our class learning journey. These ideas are then used to inform our short-term weekly planning, alongside our observations which identify areas to focus on. We always remain flexible to allow for unplanned circumstances and

children's responses. Our planning is continually evaluated by all staff to ensure that children's individual 'Next Steps in Learning' and personalised learning needs are met.

Children will engage in whole group and small group activities alongside their independent learning. There are also allocated times for whole class daily 'carpet learning sessions'.
The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS framework: *'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'.*
We plan a balance between children having time and space to engage in their own child-initiated activities and those which are planned by adults. During children's play, the adults in class interact when appropriate to stretch and challenge them further.

In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect as practitioners on the different ways that children learn and build these into our practice. We create a stimulating learning environment to encourage children to free-flow between inside and outdoors as far as possible.

Observations and assessment
As part of our daily practice we observe and assess children's development and learning to inform our future plans. We record our observations in a variety of ways and everyone in class is encouraged to contribute.

Observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal, online 'Tapestry' Learning Journal. Parents/carers receive a notification when an observation has been added to their child's Learning Journal and they can then view this observation and any related photographs/videos and assessments.
Parents/carers are encouraged to add their own comments and also to upload their own observations to show us what their children are able to do at home. Children's 'Next Steps in Learning' are added to most observations so that parents/carers know how to help their children with their learning at home.
These ongoing observations are used to inform the EYFS Profile/Development Matters bands. The children's progress is reviewed continually. Throughout their time in Reception, parents/carers are welcomed in to share their children's learning; both informally through our 'open door' policy and more formally during parent/teacher consultations.

At the end of the year the EYFS profile provides a summary of every child's development and learning achievements including whether they have reached a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). Children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG) by the class teacher - who uses the exemplification documents, and their knowledge of the children to make a 'best fit' judgement. This profile data is the statutory data that is sent to the Local Authority and used to help school benchmark and identify improvements.

Safety including safeguarding and welfare requirements
The safety and welfare of our children is paramount at St. Joseph's Primary School. We have robust policies and procedures in place to ensure their safety.

In Reception we provide a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to take risks, follow rules and stay safe. We comply with the welfare requirements set out in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage and understand that we must:

- Promote the welfare of all children;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively and appropriately;
- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the environment is safe and all equipment and furniture is fit for purpose;
- Ensure all children have a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious fruit snacks, access to water throughout the day, allocating significant time for physical development and following set procedures when children become ill or have an accident. Staff and visitors are prohibited from using their mobile phones in our classrooms, only the class iPads are used to photograph children (for Tapestry observations and assessment purposes) and children must be appropriately dressed in photographs.
We have robust systems in place to ensure that all practitioners who have regular contact with children are suitable for their role.

The EYFS staff hold the Paediatric First aid qualification, which is a statutory requirement of the EYFS.

The Child Protection Policy is in place to ensure the safety of all stakeholders. Backing up this policy is a dedicated safeguarding team which includes three Designated Safeguarding Leads. Staff have access to the 'CPOMs safeguarding system' to log any concerns regarding any aspects of safeguarding and behaviour. All staff are vigilant in reporting concerns.

Inclusion
We value all our children as individuals, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meet the needs of the individual child and support them at their own pace so that most of our children achieve the Early Learning Goals.
We work closely with the parents/carers of our high achieving children to ensure that their individual needs are met and their talents fostered. We ensure that these children are challenged appropriately to reach their full potential.
We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents/carers and outside agencies. We have SENDCo in school who supports us with any additional needs a child may have.

The role of parents/carers
We recognise the central importance of parents/carers as children's first educators. We believe they have a significant role to play in the lifelong education of their child. We strive to create and

maintain partnerships with parents/carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care in numerous ways.

- Holding information evenings before the children start school;
- Talking to them about their child's interests and needs during our introductory sessions in school.
- Being welcoming and approachable and having an open-door approach for parents to voice concerns/ask questions;
- Inviting them to a parent consultation in the Autumn and Spring terms to discuss how their child has settled and share progress and next steps for learning;
- Valuing parents' contributions to learning journeys;
- Encouraging parents to read with their child at home and make comments in their reading record books;
- Providing curriculum planning overviews for each topic, each term, highlighting how they can support their child at home;
- Inviting parents into school for 'parent phonics' sessions to demonstrate how we teach phonics and help them support their child;
- Providing parents with an end of year summary report detailing achievements and their child's EYFS profile;
- We also draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings and inviting members of the community into our setting to talk about their lives, work and experiences.

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and significant time is given to ensure continuity of learning and care. At times of transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings. Children attend a number of introductory sessions with their parents/carers to develop familiarity with the settings and practitioners.

At the end of the EYFS, our Reception teacher meets with the Year 1 teacher to liaise with them and discuss the individual children and their specific needs. The children's assessment data is sent with them to Year 1 so that their new teachers are able to plan for their 'next steps in learning' from the moment they enter their new class. Children spend a time towards the end of the school year in the Year 1 classroom OR with the Year 1 teacher to ensure that they are familiar and comfortable with their new teacher and are 'next year ready'.

Signed:

Date: Sept 2024