

Rawmarsh St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date of policy: Summer 2020
Date of review: Summer 2022

INTENT

1. AIMS

This policy aims to ensure:

- Provide the necessary elements to allow children to learn, develop and feel valued.
- Provide a safe, welcoming, and stimulating environment in which children can learn and feel secure.
- Value all children as individuals and [promote their self-confidence, independence, self-esteem, and relationships with others.
- Provide a range of experiences to encourage children's thinking, creativity, imagination, and physical development.
- Develop children's own interests, skills and attitudes.
- Provide equal and appropriate teaching and learning.
- Enable parents to become actively involved with school and your child's education.
- Establish a partnerships with parents, families, and the community.
- Develop a supportive and positive attitude amongst staff, and to work together as a team.

2. LEGISLATION

This policy is based on requirements set out in the 2017 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

This document also complies with our Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Early Years Policy of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

3.2. The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the physical Early Years Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

3.3. The Governing Body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the School's complaints policy.

3.4. The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Early Years Policy of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

3.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the Early Years Policy.

4. PRINCIPLES OF THE EYFS

4.1. A unique child:

- Every child is a unique, competent learner.
- Children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.
- Children's attitudes are fluid and can be influenced by others.

4.2. Positive relationships:

- Children learn to be strong, independent individuals by developing secure relationships with teachers and peers alike.
- Relationships with parents and carers are also important and will be nurtured and developed.
- Any relationship will be respectful, caring and professional.

4.3. Enabling environments:

- The learning and play environments are vital for supporting and extending a child's development.
- In the classroom and outdoor environment, we observe and assess the children's development and interests.
- Based on these observations, suitably challenging activities and experiences are planned to extend their learning and achievement

4.4 Learning and development:

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is organised in a way that encourages children to explore and learn safely.
- There are areas for activities and play, and others for quiet time and rest.
- The setting is designed to enable children to learn and play independently.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE EYFS

At Rawmarsh St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we had one 1 Foundation Stage 2 class (FS2 or Reception).

Parents/carers wishing to apply for a place in FS2 should do so via Rotherham Borough Council admissions.

6. CURRICULUM

Rawmarsh St. Josephs EYFS follow the curriculum as outlined in the 2017 statutory framework of the EYFS (see in Appendix 1).

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 PLANNING

'In the moment' planning

Our practitioners continually plan "in the moment". Each time they interact with a child, they are observing, assessing, planning for, and responding to, that individual child. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment).

The aim is to plan and organise the setting - including the time, the resources and the adults - to ensure that the majority of the children display deep levels of engagement for the majority of the time. If that happens, then we can be confident that they are making

good progress. When deeply engaged, their brains will be “lit up”, adults will notice when support is needed, interactions will ensure that obstacles are overcome or that new directions and possibilities are available and learning will be meaningful and fun!!

An enabling environment is critical. **When the children arrive, nothing is set out but everything is available and accessible.** The doors to the outside are open for the whole session. From day one, the children are supported to explore the environment to see what is available, to select the resources they would like, to use them appropriately and to tidy the area when they have finished. Because the children have got the resources out themselves, they know where to return them to. We also have a big tidy up time at the end of the morning and afternoon session where each child is assigned to an area to check it has been properly tidied. This gives the children a degree of responsibility and ownership. Ground rules are essential when so much freedom is given – all the children need to feel safe. Clear and consistent expectations are key. For example, indoors the children will walk and use quieter voices – running and shouting can be done outside.

Our outdoor areas are designed to support all areas of the children's development. The sand area is large and a trolley is nearby with resources. The resources available are traditional sand toys, as well as natural shells, sticks, stones, etc and cooking utensils, plates, cups, cutlery etc. to support a variety of play ideas. A water supply is essential, this allows for cooking, chemistry, cement mixing, moat filling or alchemy! There are lots of opportunities for risk – trees to climb, PE equipment for the children to set up, woodwork with hammers and saws, balance bikes. Again the crucial induction period ensures that the children know how to use equipment and are encouraged to think about the risks themselves.

7.2 TEACHING

The traditional cycle of observation, assessment and planning is recommended in numerous documents including Development Matters and The National Strategies document “Learning, Playing and Interacting”. In this document we wish to highlight the section that states “Babies and young children are experiencing and learning in the here and now, not storing up their questions until tomorrow or next week. ***It is in that moment of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest – the ‘teachable moment’ – that the skillful adult makes a difference.*** By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment).”

The sessions are organised to maximise the amount of “free-flow” time available. Just making this one change in the behaviour of staff can bring about a complete shift in emphasis and focus. The children become the focus instead of a particular activity that the adult has planned.

At St. Joseph's we have a child-initiated approach which encourages children's natural desire to explore and learn by providing them with a safe and enabling environment which supports their interests and offers stimulating, real life, flexible and differentiated resources. Each area of learning and development is implemented through a planned environment which enables the children to engage in purposeful play and learning. We recognise that teaching moments take place at **all** times of the day during times of play and child initiated learning both inside and outside the classroom and we encourage our staff and volunteers to seize every opportunity for teaching and learning. Staff are encouraged to think carefully about their questions and interactions in children's play and learning in order to optimise this.

Practitioners respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. The FS2 area provides pupils in the Foundation Stage with learning opportunities through carefully planned and organised continuous provision both inside and in the outdoor environment. Practitioners will work with pupils on a 1:1 basis or in small groups when needed. Formal learning will include the teaching of Phonics.

The weekly organisation is as follows - each Friday 3 children are selected who will be the "focus children" for the following week. These children are given a form to take home for their parents to complete – asking about current interests of the child, any special events in the family and any questions the parents may have. Families are encouraged to do photos to the foundation stage over the weekend. We start each morning with phonics and the session lasts for 30 minutes.

7.3 AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The environment supports children to be fully engaged in purposeful play of their own choice and interest. As with the outdoor area, the indoor area allows for learning in all areas of development, but the two areas do not mirror each other. This is the ideal place for children to be calm and quiet (and we enforce this requirement firmly and consistently), pursuing activities which require small equipment and using resources that will not survive the outdoor elements. In EYFS, the children choose where to go and what to do from the moment they arrive – they initiate their own learning and adults join them and support them in their pursuits. In order to support genuine choice, we have a workshop style environment setup in the classroom. In all areas, the resources are available and accessible to the children at all times, but nothing is set out. The areas are clear, stocked and tidy at the start of the day, the tables and carpet areas are free of equipment but the resources are available next to these areas.

This allows the children to be in control of their learning. They are able to select the area in which to play, the resources to use in that area and what to do with them. Obviously their choices are limited by the areas and resources available and it is therefore crucial to have appropriate areas with varied, high quality, open-ended

resources. It is also vital that the areas are well stocked, tidy, clearly labelled (with picture or picture and word) or shadowed and arranged to allow optimum access and learning opportunities.

The resources (as well as the areas) are assessed and reviewed constantly with changes made as necessary. We provide mark making equipment in all areas

7.4. WORKING WITH PARENTS

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

We work with parents in a range of different ways which range from communication with home to inviting parents into the school setting:

- ✓ Transition Sessions
- ✓ Home visits
- ✓ Stay and play sessions
- ✓ Reading books shared between home and school
- ✓ Termly attainment updates
- ✓ Termly special week teaching and learning moments
- ✓ Parent workshops (for example on phonics)
- ✓ Contributing to Learning Journeys through special week home sheets and photographs
- ✓ Progress meetings and feedback from special week
- ✓ Display to celebrate learning at home
- ✓ Story afternoons

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The progress check and EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Each child is assigned a key person who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs. The key person supports parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. The key person also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate. For some pupils, it may be necessary for the academy SENDCo or Inclusion Team to offer advice and support.

When a child sets off for their first day at school, they should be full of positive emotions – excitement, confidence and happiness. This happens if they know exactly where they are going, who will be there, what they will be able to do when they get there and how long they will be staying there. A successful transition means the child settles quickly into school, learning and developing from day one. Practitioners welcome a class of children and these children are settled, confident and ready to learn.

7.5. PHONICS

Read Write Inc

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we follow the Read, Write, Inc phonics scheme.

Read Write Inc. Phonics is a programme that uses systematic phonics to teach all children to read.

It lasts two years for most children.

- We teach the sounds first – in a specific order.
- We then teach the children to blend those sounds together in order to read words.
- The children read words in the matched Storybooks. Each Storybook is carefully matched to the sounds they can already read - setting them up for success.
- We read to children 'real' books'. Once they have learnt to read, they will be able to independently read these books for themselves.

Children are grouped according to their ability and work with a teacher or teaching assistant on the Read Write Inc. programme every day Monday to Friday. They are assessed every half term and then regrouped according to their phonics knowledge and fluency when reading.

7.6 MATHEMATICS

Mathematics Mastery

At St Joseph's Primary School we use the Mathematics Mastery scheme to teach Mathematics.

In EYFS, children have a short 10 minute input daily, then have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills through set activities and continuous provision.

Aims-

- Instead of learning mathematical procedures by rote, we want pupils to build a deep conceptual understanding of concepts which will enable them to apply their learning in different situations.
- We believe it is essential for pupils to develop mathematical thinking in and out of the classroom in order to fully master mathematical concept.

- A crucial part of a 'deep understanding' in maths is being able to represent ideas in many different ways. Using objects and pictures to represent abstract concepts is essential to achieving mastery.

Each day is also started with a 10 minute "Maths Meeting", which is used to consolidate key areas of mathematics in your class. Maths Meetings provide an opportunity to teach and revise 'general knowledge maths' which may not explicitly be covered during the maths lesson, and also allows the daily integration of maths into the surrounding environment. This means that pupils are practising concepts and skills on a regular basis, meaning they are continually building on their mastery of these concepts.

Maths Meetings should be a positive part of your day that everyone looks forward to and pupils should be fully engaged with.

IMPACT

8. ASSESSMENT

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Practitioners also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Each time practitioners interact with a child, they are observing, assessing, planning for, and responding to, that individual child. By using this cycle on a moment-by-moment basis, the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment).

The Early Years teaching staff record their initial assessments of the children in the form of a baseline, observational assessment (EAZMAG). This takes into account all available information from parents and previous settings. We continue to work with the children in provision and will regularly engage in teaching moments with the children.

Each week an A3 "Learning Journey" sheet for each of the focus children is put on the planning wall. These sheets are blank (except for a couple of words to indicate areas that the staff or parents would like to try and capture). During the week any adult who has a productive interaction with a focus child records the event on the learning journey. It is important that the whole cycle is recorded – i.e. the initial observation, the assessment, the teaching and the outcome. These teaching moments and the children's outcomes are recorded on their 'Learning Journey' proforma when it is their focus week or on an 'In-provision learning' proforma. Observations, particularly when we see 'wow'

moments, are recorded on a 'Wow moment' proforma or observation record sheet. All of the completed proformas are filed in the childrens own Learning Journey Portfolio which is kept in the classroom for parents to access freely.

We analyse and review what we see or know about each child's development and learning as a team. We then make informed and professional decisions about each child's progress. This enables us to plan appropriate next steps.

Each child has their own Learning Journey Portfolio, which documents their learning. This includes: teaching and learning moments, contributions from home, observations, photos and examples of their work in school. We assess each child in each area against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). As well as the baseline data, we also gather data each half term and other points in the academic year to record on EAZMAGs.

These interim assessments are judged by a number of school based levels which use the Development Matters age descriptors and the Early Learning Goals as their basis. They are as follows:

- 8-20 months beginning/developing/secure
- 16-26 months beginning/developing/secure
- 22-36 months beginning/developing/secure
- 30-50 months beginning/developing/secure
- 40-60 months beginning/developing/secure
- ELG beginning/developing/secure
- Exceeding beginning/developing/secure

Profiles are moderated within school with the EYFS team, colleagues from other year groups, with other schools within our trust and other schools in our locality.

We verbally report to parents following their child's focus week on their progress and next steps. They receive an attainment update termly and a formal written report at the end of the academic year giving detail of their child's progress and assessment against each of the seven areas of learning.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Exceeding expected levels or,
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are then shared with parents and/or carers in the end of year Record of Achievement and at the Summer Term parents' evening.

9. SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in the school's Safeguarding Policy.

10. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

10.1. St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive school which offers a broad, balanced and creative curriculum which aims to encourage all children to achieve their full potential, including children with SEND.

10.2. A member of our Senior Leadership Team is the designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

10.3. St Joseph's Catholic Primary School gives consideration to whether a child may have a special educational need (SEN) or disability which requires specialist support.

10.4. If a child's progress in any prime or specific area of learning gives cause for concern, we will discuss this with the SENCO and the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

10.5. Further details can be found in the following whole school policies

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

11.1. Further details can be found in the whole school policies:

- Child Protection policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions policy

11.2. We ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure staff and children in our care are not exposed to unnecessary risks. We complete both an indoor and outdoor risk assessment which is reviewed annually.

11.3. The following general Health and Safety safeguards are in place:

- The statutory adult to child ratio in a Reception class is 1 to 30.
- A supply of fresh, filtered drinking water is available on the premises at all times.
- Children's dietary needs are acted upon.
- A piece of fruit is provided for each child during the morning session.
- A first aid kit and at least one trained first aider is accessible at all times.
- Accidents and injuries are recorded in an accident book.

- A fire and emergency evacuation procedure and policy are in place.

Appendix 1

The Early Learning Goals

Communication and Language

ELG 01- Listening and attention: Children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

ELG 02- Understanding: Children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

ELG 03- Speaking: Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Physical Development

ELG 04- Moving and handling: Children show good control and coordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

ELG 05- Health and self-care: Children know the importance for good health of physical exercise and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

ELG 06- Self-confidence and self-awareness: Children are confident to try new activities, and to say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.

ELG 07- Managing feelings and behaviour: Children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

ELG 08- Making relationships: Children play cooperatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.

Literacy

ELG 09- Reading: Children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate an understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

ELG 10- Writing: Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Mathematics

ELG 11- Numbers: Children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single-digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

ELG 12- Shape, space and measures: Children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns.

They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

Understanding of the World

ELG 13- People and communities: Children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

ELG 14- The world: Children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one to another.

They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.

ELG 15- Technology: Children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

Expressive Arts and Design

ELG 16- Exploring and using media and materials: Children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

ELG 17- Being imaginative: Children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas,

thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role play and stories.

Appendix 2

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

(Department of Education 2012)

The Characteristics of Effective Learning and the prime and specific Areas of Learning and Development are all interconnected.

- The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.
- The **prime** areas begin to develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences, and run through and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout the EYFS.
- The **specific** areas include essential skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.

