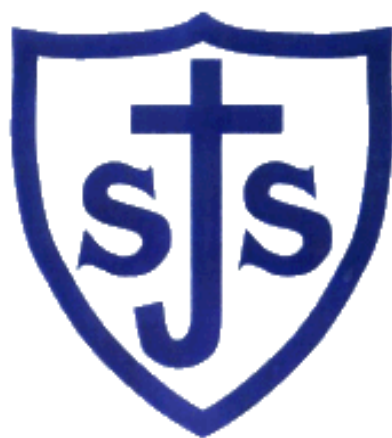


**ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
CRAYFORD**



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Learning and growing together with Christ

Updated:	Spring 2026
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1. Intent

At St Joseph's, we believe that the Early Years Foundation Stage is crucial in securing solid foundations that children are going to continue to build upon. It is our intent that the children who enter our EYFS develop emotionally, verbally, physically and cognitively whilst embedding a positive attitude to school and learning.

We believe that all children deserve to be valued as an individual and we are passionate in allowing all children to achieve their full potential.

Every child is recognised as a unique individual and we celebrate and welcome differences within our school community. The ability to learn is underpinned by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and values. We provide enhancement opportunities to engage learning and believe that every child's first experiences of school should be happy and positive, enabling them to develop a lifelong love of learning.

Throughout their time in EYFS, the children develop a sense of belonging to our school community, ready to transition to Year 1. They have the confidence and skills to make decisions and self-evaluate, make connections and become lifelong learners.

We intend:

- To work in partnership with parents and carers to encourage independent, happy learners who thrive in school and reach their full potential from their various starting points.
- To understand and follow children's interests and provide opportunities throughout our EYFS curriculum to support learning, consolidate and deepen knowledge and ensure children meet their next steps.
- To create a stimulating indoor and outdoor environment which supports children to repeat and consolidate learning.
- To prepare children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage and ensure children make at least good progress from their starting points.
- To ensure a smooth transition into the Reception class and onto KS1.

Our curriculum in Early Years is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all pupils. Our curriculum intends to enhance the cultural capital of every child. Our curriculum enables all children to have the opportunities and experiences that they need in order to develop positive well-being, positive relationships and positive attitudes to be able to become capable, confident, resilient and self-assured as learners in our school. It is designed to form the foundation and the initial building blocks for the curriculum that the children will experience throughout the rest of the school in Key Stage 1 and 2.

Through the seven areas of learning we provide topics that excite and engage children, building on own interests and developing their experiences of the world around them. We recognise that all children come into our setting with varied experiences and all staff work hard to ensure that the learning opportunities provided widen their knowledge and understanding of the world, setting ambitious expectations for all children.

The curriculum celebrates diversity and supports the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Those children with particular needs, including SEND, are supported appropriately allowing them to be successful.

2. Implementation Strategy

Children in Reception class follow the EYFS curriculum, which has seven main areas of learning.

The Prime Areas: -

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

The Specific Areas: -

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

The teaching of these areas of learning is practical and playful with support and challenge from adults in whole class sessions, small groups and working with individuals. There is a combination of adult-led, teacher taught sessions as well as a wealth of stimulating continuous provision opportunities for child-led learning through play. Throughout all of these areas of learning and at the heart of the EYFS Curriculum are the "Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning". We strive to develop these key characteristics of "Playing and Exploring", "Active Learning" and "Creating and Thinking Critically" in order to give the children the skills that they will continue to draw upon throughout their development.

Our learning environments, both inside and outside are also adapted regularly to meet the different and developing needs of the children in our care. We aim to ensure that these areas are always stimulating and exciting and that, importantly, they are accessible to all children, regardless of where they are on their learning journey. The environments are developed to promote independence and allow them to access the curriculum independently and confidently with the necessary level of support and challenge where appropriate.

We strongly believe that the beginning of our children's educational journey and igniting the flame for learning is imperative in developing a love for learning.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- Daily phonics, Literacy and Maths teaching sessions
- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend every child's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;

- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources which reflect diversity and are free from discrimination and stereotyping;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding exceeds their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

We strive to involve parents to engage in school life and support their child's learning. We do this through parent workshops, termly overviews, monthly school newsletters, website with a class page, Head of School coffee mornings, reading record books, contact books, parent evenings, school report and using Tapestry Online Learning Journal. Parents are kept up to date and well informed through the use of Tapestry. Tapestry is used to share children's learning as well as communicating with parents and sharing ideas and resources about how to support their child's learning at home. Parents are actively encouraged to engage with Tapestry as well. During the Autumn Term, parents will be invited to a teddy bears picnic to support their transition with starting school.

3. Religious Education within EYFS

We acknowledge that the ethos, working practices and quality of relationships between adults and children greatly influences children's attitudes and behaviour. To that end, staff endeavour to be good role models for the pupils. Children learn most powerfully through their experiences in the home, school and their locality - through these experiences they are led to an awareness of God Our Loving Father. Prayer forms an important part of the child's life in school, as it is through prayer that relationships with God are strengthened and developed. Children are encouraged to pray privately, spontaneously and to use the formal prayers of the Church which are introduced at appropriate times throughout the year. Children in the Reception class join in the prayer life of the school family by participating in assemblies and masses. The Diocesan Strategy for the Foundation Stage is followed and children are given an insight into multi-cultural festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year through focused curriculum weeks.

4. Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships with those involved with the child and other settings, including nurseries and childminders.

From Nursery to Reception

At St Joseph's we have many feeder pre-schools and nurseries; we attend information exchange meetings and may visit some local nurseries/pre-schools to smooth the transition process.

During the summer term prior to a child's entry into the Reception year, the following procedures have been put into place to ensure successful transition

- Parents are invited to a meeting to ensure they know about school procedures and any concerns they may want to express.
- The children are invited to visit the Reception class for a taster session.
- The EYFS Leader and Teaching Assistant carry out a home visit in September.

When children start school in the Autumn term we operate a staggered entry system and half days to enable children to have time to settle into their new class.

From Reception Class to Key Stage 1

Reception children visit the Year 1 class and meet their teacher during the summer term.

During the final term in Reception, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile is based on on-going observation, all relevant records held by the setting, discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

Each child's level of development is assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The profile indicates whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective teaching and learning, during the hand over meeting, so that staff can discuss each child as individuals as well as looking at data.

5. Impact

We strive to ensure that every child's progress across the EYFS is good from their varied starting points. Children enjoy their learning and they participate eagerly and enthusiastically. They are beginning to manage their own feelings and behaviour, and understand how these have affect others. The impact of our curriculum is measured by assessment procedures which allow us to measure outcomes against all schools nationally. We measure the percentage of pupils achieving age related expectations throughout the academic year, put supportive interventions in place if and when needed. Staff use observations to make formative assessments which inform future planning and ensure that all children build on their current knowledge and skills at a good pace. Summative assessment compares children's attainment to age related expectations using month bands in Development Matters.

This is tracked using the whole school pupil database to ensure rates of progress are good or exceed expectations for all children, including vulnerable groups such as those with SEND, disadvantaged or summer born children. We regularly work in partnerships with other local schools to moderate our assessments. The impact of our curriculum will also be measured by how effectively it helps our pupils develop into well rounded individuals who embody our values and carry with them the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will make them lifelong learners and valuable future citizens.

During each assessment window, teachers update the progress children have made onto St Joseph's pupil database which allows us to assess the impact of teaching and evaluate whether it has been enough. Evidence of children's learning including observations, work samples, photographs and contributions from parents are kept in workbooks as well as Tapestry Online Learning Journal.

Our curriculum and its delivery ensure that all children make good progress. During their time in our EYFS, we strive to ensure children make good progress so that we meet the national expectation for Good Level of Development (GLD) at the end of the year. Pupils also make good progress toward their age-related expectations before transitioning into Year 1. We believe our high standards are due to the enriched play-based exploration alongside the rigour of assessment and adult led teaching as the children move through their early years – a rich diet of balanced learning experiences is undoubtedly the best way to develop happy, curious children.