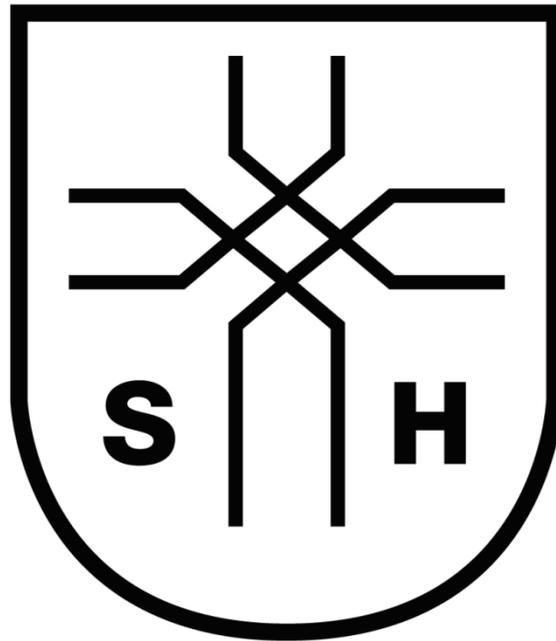


Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School



EYFS Policy

Date approved	January 2020
Date of next review	January 2021

Equality Act Statement:

1. We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.
2. We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
3. We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.
Please refer to St John the Baptist Multi Academy Trust Equality & Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their 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 important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile – Department for Children, Schools and Families 2012
The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. At Sacred Heart RC Primary School children are admitted to reception in the September following their fourth birthday.

Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. At Sacred Heart RC Primary School we greatly value the importance that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and a child's preparation for life. We are committed to provide a high quality early years education which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning is the foundation upon which young children build the rest of their lives. It is a single framework for care, learning and development. All children should be given the opportunity to experience the best possible start to their education to develop solid foundations which will ensure that they flourish throughout their school years and on into adulthood.

2. Aims & Objectives

We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, we will:

- Provide a happy, safe, stimulating and challenging programme of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- Develop excellent relationships with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their children.
- Provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child including those who have additional needs.
- The early-years education we offer our children is based on the following principles:
 - It builds on what our children already know and can do;
 - It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
 - It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the needs of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
 - It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
 - It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

3. Background to the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four themes:

1. A Unique Child
2. Positive Relationships
3. Enabling Environments
4. Learning and Development

A Unique Child

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates.

Children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others; we use praise and encouragement, as well as celebration and rewards, to encourage children to develop a positive attitude to learning.

We give our children every opportunity to achieve their personal best and planning is adapted to meet the needs of all groups and abilities. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

We work closely with parents, carers and other outside agencies to ensure all children's needs are met so they can access the curriculum and make good progress.

Inclusion

We value the diversity of individuals within the school and do not discriminate against children because of 'differences'. All children at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School are treated fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities. All children and their families are valued within our school.

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when planning for their learning.

In the EYFS we set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children'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 are in advance within their learning.
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

There may be children in the EYFS who have SEN and are at Early Years Action, Early Years Action Plus or with a statement for SEN. Personalised learning will be promoted for these children at all times. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be consulted and followed. Children will be given the opportunities to access learning objectives appropriate to their level of understanding and ability. SEN will be shown in the planning. (See SEN policy)

Gifted & Talented

There may be children in the EYFS who are gifted and talented. Personalised learning will be promoted to encourage all children to achieve their potential. Provision for Gifted and Talented children will not be merely differentiation through outcome. Children will be stretched and extended where appropriate.

Welfare

“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.”

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we understand that we are legally required to comply with certain welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for EYFS – September 2014.

We understand that we are required to:

- Promote the welfare of children.
- Promote good health, preventing the spread of infection and taking appropriate action when children are ill.
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children’s stage of development and individual needs.
- Ensure all adults who look after the children or who have unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.
- Ensure that the premises, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for purpose
- Ensure that every child receives enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences tailored to meet their needs.
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Children’s safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to be safe, make choices and assess risks. We provide children with choices to help them develop these important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children. (See Whole School Safeguarding Policy)

2. Positive Relationships

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we recognise that children learn to be strong, confident and independent from being in secure relationships. We aim to develop caring, respectful, professional relationships with the children and their families.

We recognise that parents and carers are a child’s first and most enduring educators and we value working with them in their child’s education through:

- Talking to parents/carers before their child starts school at our open Foundation Stage induction meetings.
- Providing a starter information pack about commencing Reception at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School. Outlining the school’s expectations in the Home-School agreement.
- Providing an induction meeting for Reception parents/carers to meet with staff to discuss school routines, expectations and to answer any questions parents/carers may have.
- Ensuring that parents/carers are able to discuss any queries or concerns, either face to face at the school gate or by telephone.

- Providing information through the school newsletters.
- Publishing a half-term overview detailing the areas of learning.
- Sharing the children's online 'Learning Journey' Tapestry with parents/carers and valuing the on-going contributions to this from parents/carers.
- Offering three parent/teacher consultation meetings per year at which their child's progress is discussed.
- Sending a written report on their child's attainment and progress at the end of their time in reception.
- Parents are invited to a range of activities throughout the school year such as whole school mass, Christmas productions and sports day.
- Offering opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning e.g. hearing readers.

All staff in the Foundation Stage aim to develop good relationships with all children, interacting positively with them and taking time to listen to them.

3. Enabling Environments

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development, where the children feel confident, secure and challenged. The children have daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Play-based learning is paramount and children have opportunities to direct their own learning with planned opportunities provided by staff.

We plan a learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, that encourages a positive attitude to learning and reflects the individual's interests, passions and abilities. We encourage the children to make their own selection of the activities on offer, as we believe that this encourages independent learning. We ensure that resources and spaces are safe to use and checked regularly.

The Learning Environment

The Reception classroom is organised to allow children to explore and learn securely and safely. There are specific areas that offer a range of different experiences that allow them to engage, explore and investigate.

Children have access to both inside and outside area across the day; this has a positive effect on the children's development. Reception have their own outdoor learning area.

4. Learning and Development

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape educational provision in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. None of the areas of learning can be delivered in isolation from the others. Our children's learning experiences enable them to develop competency and skill across a number of learning areas.

They require a balance of adult led and child initiated activities in order for most children to reach the Early Learning Goals at the end of EYFS. 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.

The three Prime areas are:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

Staff will also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

Specific Areas:

1. Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Understanding the world
4. Expressive arts and design

Children's development levels are assessed and as time progresses in Foundation, the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas.

However, if a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, staff will discuss this with the child's parents/carers and agree how to support the child.

Children in the Foundation Stage also participate in a daily phonics sessions, following the guidance in the DFES "Jolly Phonics" and "Letters & Sounds" phonics programme.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

We ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

Playing and exploring – children will have opportunities to investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

'Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.'

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas, 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.

Active learning – children will have time and space to concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their achievements.

'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. Children need some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Creating and thinking critically – we encourage and support children to have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

"When children have opportunities to play 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."

Children should be given the opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning. Adults can support children's thinking and help them make connections by showing interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open ended questions. Children can

access resources and move around the classroom freely and purposefully to extend their learning.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals provide the basis for planning throughout the Foundation Stage and are described in the DfE's Statutory Framework. The supporting document Development Matters helps teaching staff break down the curriculum into age appropriate objectives that will help the children reach the Goals.

The planning is based upon themes with discrete directed teaching of phonics, maths and reading. However, planning, which is based upon a different topic and acts as vehicle of interest to deliver the children's next steps in learning, also therefore responds to the needs, achievement and interest of the children. Our medium-term planning identifies the intended learning, with outcomes, for children working towards the Early Learning Goals. This medium term planning is shared with parents and carers in the form of the half termly newsletter.

Observations

Foundation Stage staff are trained to use observations as the basis for planning, observing children to identify their achievements, interests and next steps for learning. These observations then lead the direction of the planning. Relevant and significant observations are recorded in the children's online Learning Journeys, Tapestry.

Assessment

During the first term in Reception, the teacher assesses the ability of each child using a baseline assessment. These assessments allow us to identify patterns of attainment within the cohort, in order to adjust the teaching programme for individual children and groups of children.

The Foundation Stage Profile is the nationally employed assessment tool that enables teachers to record their observations at the end of the Foundation Stage, and to summarise pupils' progress towards the Early Learning Goals. It covers each of the seven areas of learning contained in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

We record each child's level of development against the 17 Early Learning Goals as Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. We make regular assessments of children's learning, and we use this information to ensure that future planning reflects identified needs.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage takes the form of both formal and informal observations, photographic evidence and through planned activities. Assessment is completed regularly and involves both the teacher and other adults, as appropriate. The collection of assessment data in the Foundation Stage Profile is a statutory requirement. We keep a record of children's progress for each term, aiding assessment and tracking of children through the school. We record each child's level of development to be just working towards, comfortably working within or securely working within the Development Matters age-bands.

At the end of the final term in Reception we send a summary of these assessments to the local authority. Parents and carers receive this information at the end of term along with their child's end of year report. The child's next teacher uses this information to make plans for the year ahead.

Teaching & Learning Styles

The features of effective teaching and learning in our school are defined in our policy on teaching and learning. They apply to teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage just as much as they do to the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 or 2.

The more general features of good practice in our school that relate to the Foundation Stage are:

- the partnership between teachers and parents, carers and other settings that helps our children to feel secure at school, and to develop a sense of well-being and achievement;
- the understanding that teachers have of how children develop and learn, and how this must be reflected in their teaching;
- the range of approaches that provide first-hand experiences, give clear explanations, make appropriate interventions, and extend and develop the children's play, talk or other means of communication;
- the carefully planned curriculum that helps children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage;
- the provision for children to take part in activities that build on and extend their interests, and develop their intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities;
- the encouragement for children to communicate and talk about their learning, and to develop independence and self-management;
- the support for learning, with appropriate and accessible space, facilities and equipment, both indoors and outdoors;
- the identification, through observations, of children's progress and future learning needs, which are regularly shared with parents;
- the good relationships between our school and the other educational settings in which the children have been learning before joining our school;
- the clear aims of our work, and the regular monitoring of our work to evaluate and improve it;
- the regular identification of training needs for all adults working at the Foundation Stage.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of those working in Reception to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head teacher and EYFS co-ordinator will carry out monitoring on EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule. The Governing Body will also be part of this process.