

**St. John Bosco
Catholic Primary
School**



**EYFS
Policy**



St John Bosco Roman Catholic Primary School Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Our Mission Statement

At St John Bosco our school family prides itself in 'Caring for each other as we live, learn and grow in God's love'.

Legislation

This policy and all of our Early Years Foundation Stage practice and procedures are based on the requirements set out in the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (EYFS) which applies from 1st September 2021.

The 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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.'
(*Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage p. 5*)

There are four guiding principles that underpin both the statutory framework and EYFS practice at St John Bosco, these are:

- 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** with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- The importance of **learning and development**; children develop and learn at different rates.

Aims

We aim to promote a calm, caring, safe learning environment where everyone feels important, happy, secure and ready to learn. In accordance with this, our EYFS policy is designed to ensure:

- Children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes at least good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Strong partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Children are well prepared and confident about transitions both from Nursery to Reception and Reception to Year 1.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

Structure and Organisation of the EYFS

'A well-qualified, skilled staff strongly increases the potential of any individual setting to deliver the best possible outcomes for children.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 p.17)

At St John Bosco Catholic Primary the EYFS refers to our Early Years Foundation Stage Unit. This consists of our part-time morning and afternoon Nursery classes and one Reception class, where a maximum of 30 children attend full time.

In Nursery we offer a maximum of 16 places each session, which are delivered as 15 hours over 5 days each week. There are two Nursery Nurses and two Teachers working in the EYFS Unit throughout the day and we maintain an adult/pupil ratio of 1:13 within the Nursery at all times.

Curriculum

'Early years providers must guide the development of children's capabilities with a view to ensuring that children in their care complete the EYFS ready to benefit fully from the opportunities ahead of them.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 p.7)

The EYFS curriculum at St John Bosco is designed to build on existing knowledge and skills, whilst offering a wide range of purposeful indoor and outdoor experiences that foster natural curiosity, enthusiasm, motivation for learning and challenge. Our curriculum is carefully designed to not only meet all the requirements of the statutory framework 'Education Programmes' but also:

- Value parents as their child's first educator with every effort made to share the curriculum and offer tools and strategies to continue school learning at home.
- Promote and recognise the value of child-initiated play.
- Recognise the importance of both indoor and outdoor experiences.
- Nurture and develop strong, positive attitudes where children become proud and respectful of themselves, others and their environment.
- Develop the characteristics of effective learning:
 - **Creating and thinking critically:** children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.
 - **Active learning:** children keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy their achievements.
 - **Playing & exploring:** children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

We recognise that children in the EYFS learn best by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. Our outdoor area is used all year round and in most weather conditions. The children have daily opportunities for structured and free flow play both indoors and outdoors. This time is supported by an adult, who acts as a facilitator to children's learning.

Across the week children take part in balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences many of which are based on our half-termly topic focus. These experiences are set up and planned to cover the seven different *Areas of Learning and Development* and, where possible, follow children's interests. In Nursery there is a heavy focus on developing skills in the *Prime Areas* whilst in Reception class, for those children that are ready, a large proportion of adult-led learning focuses on elements within the *Specific Areas* e.g. Reading, Writing and Number.

Seven Areas of Learning & Development	
Prime Areas	Specific Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication and language• Physical development• Personal, social and emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Literacy• Mathematics• Understanding the world• Expressive arts and design

Planning

The EYFS team plan activities and experiences for children that enable them to develop and learn effectively across all areas of learning, as well as offering them opportunities to develop their cultural capital. They work together to develop a bright, inviting environment with strong continuous provision, and then plan enhanced provision to support this. There is no fixed timeframe for when enhancements are added to the provision as this often falls in line with children's interest and as such needs to remain fluid.

EYFS staff take into account the individual needs, interests and stage of development of each child in their care. They use this information to plan challenging, ambitious and enjoyable experiences for all children. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required; liaising with relevant services from other agencies, as appropriate.

At St John Bosco the EYFS classes follow a 2-year planning cycle. This is to ensure that, whilst children are still given the opportunity to build on prior knowledge and skills, children who attend our Nursery for two years or move from our Nursery into Reception, will not merely be repeating activities and experiences they have already had.

Class teachers have responsibility for planning additional adult-led activities and whole-class teaching sessions. A long-term 'Curriculum Overview' and medium-term planner ensure that children experience a broad, balanced, structured curriculum, which is appropriate for their age and stage of development throughout the year. Short-term weekly plans are based on these and interests of the children. Plans are extended and differentiated accordingly to ensure appropriate challenge for all children.

As children progress through the EYFS, small group work, adult-directed tasks and whole class work is planned as appropriate for the age and stage of the pupils. By the summer term it is expected that the length of teaching sessions and the balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities is adjusted to best prepare children as they move from Nursery to Reception and from Reception to Year 1.

Teaching & Learning

'Teacher should be understood to refer to any practitioner working with the child.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, p.11)

In line with the Statutory Framework we recognise that all practitioners working with the children in our EYFS Unit are 'teachers'. Accordingly all members of the EYFS staff team, under the guidance of the class teacher, are equally responsible for facilitating children's learning and play and for delivering adult-led activities.

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, p.16)

At St John Bosco we recognise that teaching and learning in the EYFS will look very different to teaching that may be seen across the rest of the school. Staff, including teachers, in the EYFS will not always be seen working with the whole-class or a group of children on an adult-led task, but may be found co-playing in the environment skilfully guiding and scaffolding play and this is equally as valuable.

Carefully planned timetables and routines are set in advance for each class. These are written to allow children extended periods in self-chosen play where they have the opportunity to develop focus and master skills uninterrupted. Timetables are based on the needs and age of each cohort and are therefore adapted termly, or sooner if necessary. All timetables and routines

remain flexible across the year to allow for unforeseen circumstances and to ensure that no valuable learning opportunities are missed; such as unexpected snowfall.

Assessment

'Assessment should not entail prolonged breaks from interaction with children, nor require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement and should not be required to prove this through collection of physical evidence.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, p.18)

At St John Bosco, ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process and is used to identify levels of achievement, interests, learning styles and inform future planning. Staff use the non-statutory *Development Matters* document as a basis to assess pupils and all practitioners are expected to show an understanding of what the pupils know and can do and what their next steps in learning are.

Assessment takes a variety of forms with formative ongoing methods ranging from notes made during adult-led activities, to snap shot observations of children when they are engaged in play, which are recorded electronically on *'Evidence Me'*. Parents and carers have access to these records online and are encouraged to make their own contributions.

To ensure we meet the needs of all pupils within the setting, the EYFS team meet regularly to discuss children's progress and this is fed back to senior leaders. Actions taken following these discussions also vary but could lead to adapting timetables, the environment and/or planning to ensure we continue to be ambitious for all pupils.

Summative assessment is carried out four times over the academic year – 'On entry' and at the end of each term. Assessments are carried out across the *Seven Areas of Learning and Development* with teachers making a 'best fit' judgement to decide which 'band' a child is working within (*Birth-3/ 3-4 year olds/ Children in Reception/ Early Learning Goals*) and whether they are 'on track' with expectations.

The mandatory **Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA)** is undertaken within the first 6 weeks that a child starts Reception. The automatically generated reports are not routinely shared with parents and carers but will be supplied upon request.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the **EYFS Profile (EYFSP)** for each child. The profile reflects ongoing observations and discussions with parents and/or carers. Pupils are measured against the 17 *Early Learning Goals*, indicating whether they are:

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

The EYFS Profile judgements are moderated both in school and externally within a cluster of other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. The EYFS profile is then shared with the Year 1 teacher and the data is submitted to the Local Authority. The results of the profile and a brief description of the *Characteristics of Effective Teaching & Learning* for each child are also shared with parents and/or carers.

Working with families

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. We inform and meet regularly with parents and carers to ensure children's transition into school, and their journey through the EYFS, is a happy experience and allows them to reach their potential with the support needed.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with life in the EYFS, and encouraged to be involved in their child's learning and development, in a variety of ways. We encourage an effective two-way flow of communication through:

- Our "open door" policy, whereby parents/carers can come and discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner either before or after school or nursery.
- The 'Early Years Echo' monthly newsletter
- Observations on *Evidence Me*
- Individual Reading Records
- Family Library
- Weekly 'Learning Log' (Homework from Autumn 2 onwards)
- 'Next Steps News' (Target Cards)
- Half-termly 'Curriculum Knowledge Organisers'
- Phonics/ Reading/Writing and Maths workshops
- Subject support leaflets
- 'Stay & Play' sessions
- Termly parent meetings
- Pre-entry home visits
- Annual Reports, which includes the EYFS profile

Safeguarding and welfare procedures

'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.' (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021, p.21)

At St John Bosco we place a strong emphasis on the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our children. We recognise the importance of positive relationships; with children being encouraged to become well-rounded and sociable through the modelling of positive interactions and language at all times throughout our school family.

We employ a child-led problem solving approach to conflict resolution and hold children responsible for their actions and behaviour. We teach about honesty, co-operation and respect. While teaching children to be assertive, we balance this with empathy and understanding for others and support children to solve their friendship problems independently, where possible.

In the EYFS we teach children how they can keep themselves safe, at an age appropriate level, through focuses such as road safety, sun safety and e-safety. We promote wellbeing, and good health in general, through our curriculum and routines. Children learn about how they can contribute to taking care of themselves by talking about:

- Good sleep routines
- Sensible amounts of 'Screen Time'
- Personal hygiene including oral health; with children taking turns to take the 'Brush Buddy' bag home to promote teeth brushing.
- Being active
- Feelings
- Mental Health and Wellbeing; with children taking part in a weekly wellbeing activity as part of the school's 'Wellbeing Wednesday'

In line with the whole school policy, all EYFS practitioners have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues and are familiar with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' documentation. The EYFS team are trained to understand the school's safeguarding and policy and procedures and recognise their own responsibility within these. Further details about safeguarding, child protection and our welfare procedures are outlined in our school safeguarding policy.

Equal Opportunities

As in all aspects of school life, at St John Bosco, the school community will be treated at all times with the requirements of equal opportunities in mind. No person will be disadvantaged by reason of race, class, gender or ability. This does not mean that all children will necessarily have an identical provision as, for example, those with Special Needs or who speak English as an Additional Language may receive additional support or have separate programmes of work. However, all pupils will receive an educational provision which is equally suited to their needs. For specific reference to Special Educational Needs or Equal Opportunities see the whole school policies.

Monitoring arrangements

It is the responsibility of all the EYFS practitioners to follow the principles stated in this policy. There is a named Governor responsible for the EYFS. This governor has the opportunity to discuss EYFS practice, policy and procedures with the practitioners and provide feedback to the whole governing body; raising any issues that require discussion. The Head teacher, EYFS Leader and Subject Leaders carry out monitoring of the EYFS through observation and discussion as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Senior Leadership Team every year. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board for ratification.

Signed: _____

Designation: _____

Date: March 2024

Review Date: March 2026