



# The Federation of St Joseph's and St Thomas More Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary Schools



## Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Statement

### Intent

We want children who join our school family to thoroughly enjoy their first year at school and in our EYFS we provide a safe, caring and engaging environment where children can learn and grow in all areas of their development. It is underpinned by the core values of our mission statements and is driven by an understanding of and proactive response to our schools' distinctive ethos as Catholic schools and to the culture and diversity of our local and wider communities. Our aim is that our children leave the Reception class with a love of learning, growing independence and are well prepared to start the National Curriculum in Year 1.

We have 5 clear aims which are intertwined with physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing.

**We are ready to learn:** children develop a positive, confident attitude to learning. They are both physically and emotionally ready to learn.

**We are resourceful:** children show initiative, ask well thought out questions and are prepared to use a variety of strategies to learn.

**We are reflective:** children are curious, able and willing to learn from their mistakes and can describe their progress.

**We are resilient:** children are prepared to persevere and stay involved in their learning, even when the process is challenging.

**We are reciprocal:** children help each other and work as a team.

The Federation of St Joseph's and St Thomas More Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary Schools is committed to meeting the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework and the requirements of the Bishops of England and Wales. Through the seven areas of learning we provide topics that excite and engage children in their learning, building on their own interests and developing their experiences of the world around them. We recognise that all children come into our school family with varied experiences and all staff ensure that the learning opportunities provided widen their knowledge and understanding of the world, setting ambitious expectations for all children. We value our indoor and outdoor classroom equally and have designed our learning environment to provide free access to a wide range of resources in our continuous provision which are equipped to promote imagination and creative skills.

Our curriculum celebrates diversity and supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children with particular needs including SEND are fully supported enabling them access to the curriculum and allowing success in making progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

Experiences for pupils in EYFS are:

- Inclusive
- Fun
- Challenging
- Engaging
- Real and experiential
- Relevant to their context



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- Influenced by them
- Progressive
- Values-led
- Safe

The EYFS curriculum is designed to include:

- A clearly articulated learning journey with a purposeful outcome
- An engaging stimulant for learning
- Opportunities for pupils to contribute to planning the learning journey
- Real experiences
- Application of basic skills including computing
- Cross-curricular learning

## Implementation

The EYFS curriculum at The Federation of St Joseph's and St Thomas More Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary Schools has been designed to ensure that children receive their curricular entitlement in a way which is meaningful to their:

- context
- stage of learning
- capabilities
- interests
- prior experiences

Pupils work on the Early Learning Goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as they transition from Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 1. The EYFS Framework is delivered using an integrated topic approach. Evidence Me is an online observation and assessment tool used by all Early Years staff to record daily learning activities. We share children's learning journeys and celebrate success with parents and carers through Evidence Me, Class Dojo and the school Twitter page.

Phonics is taught in small, phased groups using Read, Write Inc, a systematic synthetic phonics programme which staff have regular training in. As a school we promote reading for pleasure and as a staff we are, 'Teachers Who Read.' This approach to sharing a love and passion for books filters into the EYFS with a dedicated Storytime, library visits and topics being introduced with a 'book hook.' Stories are revisited to embed over the year and activities such as story mapping, role play and writing are regularly delivered. Literacy opportunities are promoted in the continuous provision activities inside and out of the classroom.



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Teaching for mastery is the basis of mathematics lessons in which children develop their reasoning, investigative and problem-solving skills. Maths is taught in a dedicated daily lesson following the White Rose Maths scheme and Numberblocks. Pupil's investigative skills are developed using NCETM and NRICH with regular real life maths opportunities during snack time and registration and in continuous provision activities. We have a focus on using concrete resources and manipulatives which children have free access to. We strive to develop mini mathematicians who can apply what they have learnt to real life experiences.

Pupil's spirituality and morality is developed through our robust RE curriculum. We follow Come and See, a Catholic Primary Education programme which addresses, 'The Big Questions' and within each topic we Explore, Reveal and Respond. Pupil's are introduced to scripture, religious art and music and our learning is enhanced with regular visits to our school church for Mass.

Specialist teachers and instructors support music and physical education.

The outdoor environment and the local community are considered an opportunity for active learning for all our pupils. The school grounds have been developed so they can enrich different curriculum areas and further development is planned to support pupil well-being. Children have the opportunity to garden, cook and use their talents to shine in performances for parents and carers. Our Year 6 buddies provide pastoral support to our youngest children on their journey through school.

Pupils have opportunities to share their learning with each other, their parents and carers and other learners through school-based and external exhibitions, performances, competitions and events involving other schools. Developing their independence and motivation as learners and their sense of responsibility as future citizens is at the heart of all our teaching and learning.



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Learning journey	<p>The learning journey is explicitly shared with children in order to ensure they connect to the ‘big picture’ of their learning, i.e. knowing what to expect.</p> <p>Teachers use their professional judgement in making decisions how this should be shared and what to include.</p> <p>Teachers may choose not to share all aspects in order to create suspense and curiosity for parts of the learning journey.</p> <p>Each class will have displays which include representations of the learning journey which is referred to and added to as the unit of work progresses. This display could take many different forms.</p>
Engaging provocations for learning	<p>Teachers identify an entry point to the learning in order to motivate and engage children. This can take many forms, for example: a trip, object, story, painting, question, a child, a visitor, video, newspaper, music, poem or artefact from home.</p>
Pupils’ contributions	<p>Input from pupils is seen as an integral part of the learning journey.</p> <p>Pupils may undertake a pre-learning task prior to the unit starting to help the teacher structure the planning; alternatively this type of activity may take place once some initial teaching has taken place and children have been introduced to the topic. This is essential to ensure that the curriculum meets the ongoing and varied needs of children.</p> <p>Pupil voice is used throughout the unit to steer learning. Where children pose questions to be answered, teachers use these to ensure that children take responsibility for and develop ownership of their learning.</p> <p>Pupil voice is used on different levels and for different purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to discover what pupils already know</li> <li>• to find out what pupils might like to learn</li> <li>• to explore interests and motivations</li> <li>• to enquire how pupils might prefer to learn</li> </ul> <p>These inform the structure and design of a unit of work.</p>
Experiences	<p>Teachers actively plan for experiences which enhance and enrich learning. These can be in-school and out of school experiences. The purpose of the experiences is to add value to the learning journey.</p>
Strategies to engage children	<p>Opportunities for speaking and listening include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking to others</li> <li>• talking with others</li> <li>• enquiry- based learning</li> </ul> <p>A creative approach, ICT and kinaesthetic opportunities are all strategies used to engage pupils in the learning process.</p>



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Outcome	Each unit of work has outcomes which are shared with children. These may be driven by pupil voice. The outcomes provide purpose and relevance for the learning in a unit of work, e.g. performance, video, book, installation, experiential day, classroom transformation, art work and local community events.
Reflection and review	Teachers plan for some reflection and evaluation at the end of each unit of work. These focus on two key aspects in an age-appropriate way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what has been learnt</li> <li>• how it has been learnt.</li> </ul> The purpose of this reflection is to enhance pupils' ability to be able to identify how they learn and how they know what they know (meta-cognition) and be able to develop as reflective learners. There are opportunities to review prior learning in lessons. (The <i>Elephant, Dog, Fish</i> approach provokes pupils to recall learning from previous years, (elephant,) previous weeks, (dog,) or very recent lessons, (fish.))
Theme days, weeks and whole school activities	Opportunities within and outside school are planned to enrich and develop the children's learning.
After school clubs and events	Additional opportunities are provided to extend and enhance curricular opportunities.

## Impact

The following outcomes are used to measure the impact of our EYFS curriculum:

- Pupils who are ready to learn
- Pupils who are resourceful and confidently apply their learning
- Pupils who are reflective and have relevant key skills
- Pupils who are resilient
- Pupils who are reciprocal and work as a team
- Pupils' standards and achievements in a range of subjects
- Pupils who understand
  - themselves
  - their relationship with others
  - society
  - the environment



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