



Early Years Foundation Stage

Vision

Our vision is to be a school which transforms and inspires the minds and hearts of those we teach, and through these young people to transform the wider world. We want everyone associated with our school to find inspiration and encouragement to grow in knowledge and wellbeing, to have lots of different experiences and grow in the love of learning.

We are a small and nurturing family school with a strong Catholic ethos. Within our Early Years, we believe that every child is unique and should be treated so allowing them the opportunity to develop and learn in a safe and nurturing environment where play and learning is combined. We pride ourselves on listening to children and those who care for them and using this to personalise each child's learning. We provide children with a safe and stimulating environment where they can flourish. We are committed to giving our children the best possible start to their school life through developing a positive attitude to learning that will support them through life.

Intent

At Sacred Heart Primary we recognise the need for a well- planned Early Years curriculum so that children's experiences build seamlessly and consistently on previous learning. Our Early Years curriculum ensures that strong foundations are laid in Nursery with a strong focus on the prime areas. Across Early Years children develop their skills and knowledge through engaging topics which start with a hook and have clear outcomes. We recognise the importance of children contributing to their learning and their regular contributions shape the focus of topics which extends learning opportunities further. We place high importance on quality texts which are at the heart of our Early Years curriculum and further enrich topics and develop language. We value the importance of visits, visitors and real-life experiences which are provided through purposeful play.

Our Early Years use Birth to Five matters to inform planning recognising the stage where children are. We have set clear milestones throughout Early Years to assess learning and ensure children are given the additional support if needed. Throughout Early Years there is a balance between play and formal teaching to ensure our children are ready for Year 1. Throughout Early Years we place a high focus on early language development, reading, writing, phonics and maths as well as social development.

Implementation

We have high expectations of our pupils and we are consistent in our approach to behavioural expectations. We ensure that children understand what it is to be a good friend through caring for others, taking turns and listening to the ideas of others. This is supported through a range of activities including board games where rules are taught and modelled and children experience both winning and losing.

Throughout Early Years we have considered carefully the structure and routines of the day so that children feel safe, secure and happy. We are aware of utilising all opportunities to support children's development e.g. independence, teaching self-care through recognising healthy snacks etc.

We know how important it is for children to be confident and independent and we promote and support this across the setting from fastening coats to choosing their own activities.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and story time is a valued part of our routine. Stories are chosen to develop the love of reading as well as to enhance the curriculum. Children are encouraged to join in with stories and rhymes as well as join in with predictable phrases using language they have heard modelled. Children are given a book to take home to share with families. In Reception children are also given a reading book which links to their phonic phase. Within Reception reading is taught through guided reading sessions which ensures children can revisit key words as well as discuss the books they have read.

Across Early Years children will have a discreet daily phonic session following the Read Write Inc synthetic phonics programme. The children start in whole class and then assessed every half term and then taught in small groups in line with their phonic knowledge/reading fluency.

We recognise the importance of play and children have access to both indoor and outdoor provision throughout the day. We value the importance of outdoor provision to explore the natural world as well as develop their physical skills. Continuous provision is planned for to ensure a range of different activities and experiences. Gender stereotyping will be challenged within play to ensure that every child experiences a range of learning activities. Each area has a long-term plan with key learning, language and suitable resources for that age and stage. The provision is enhanced with resources which develop interest, curiosity and learning further by linking these enhancements to the topic. Play will always be purposeful and will either be child initiated, adult directed or adult led depending on what is deemed most effective by the teacher. Across Early Years importance is placed on role-play to support language development as well opportunities to extend a child's imagination. Within reception this includes opportunities beyond those of everyday contexts.

Across Early Years, teaching will be a balance of whole class teaching, teaching in groups, partner work and play. Teaching will build on previous learning and children will be swiftly moved on from their starting point. Children will have frequent opportunities to consolidate their growing knowledge. Children will be challenged

across all areas of learning and given the opportunity to share their own learning through our plan-do-review sessions. Interventions will be planned and given to pupils who need extra support. Their learning will be broken down into smaller steps and they will be given further time to embed and practise these skills.

Birth to five and the Early Learning Goals guide our long-term planning together with the possible termly/half termly topics although activities are planned around the children's current needs, schemas and interests to ensure all areas of the EYFS curriculum are embraced.

Weekly Planning focuses on day-to-day organisation of activities. It considers that children's learning is not necessarily sequential and that they may need time to consolidate, repeat and extend their learning in their own way. All planning is evaluated on an on-going basis and adapted in response to the children's needs and interests.

During the children's first half term in the Nursery and Reception classes, the teacher assesses each child's development and learning attainment against the criteria set out in Development Matters and the EY Framework. Baseline assessments are completed for Reception children within the first six weeks of them starting school. It is also a time for the teacher to discover the unique personality and interests of each child. We make regular assessments of children's learning and use this information to ensure future planning reflects individual or group needs. The teachers and teaching assistants keep observational records and use these to record examples of each child's work and are recorded on Tapestry. These records are passed onto year one teachers to ensure a smooth transition. We have termly parents' stay and play sessions that take place in the autumn and spring terms, to ensure parents/carers are informed of their child's progress and next steps in learning. In addition to stay and play sessions, parents receive an annual report that offers detailed comments on each child's progress linked to the Characteristics of Effective Learning. It highlights the child's strengths and development needs.

Impact

At Sacred Heart Primary First School, our children leave Reception in line, or above, what is expected of them at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are fully equipped to start Year 1. We have laid strong foundations within the prime areas and specific areas. Children will leave reception with the ability to read, write and use numbers independently. At the end of our foundation stage children will also leave with a readiness to learn showing the characteristics of resilience, perseverance, concentration, taking turns and co-operating. Children develop to manage risks and enjoying being independent in managing their own learning.

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Subject Leader: Mrs S. Murdy