

# St Joseph & St Theresa Catholic Primary School



## Early Years Parent Handbook 2022-2023

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## A Warm Welcome

We are delighted that you have chosen St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic School for the care and education of your child. Choosing a setting for your child is one of the most important decisions that you will ever make. Not only is it essential that your child feels safe, confident and happy in their new environment but you must also feel comfortable that their developmental needs are being met. At St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic School we firmly believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in their early years has a major impact on their future life and provides the foundation for children to make the most of their talents as they grow. We hope that this handbook will be a useful guide to help you settle your child into our school and to act as a reference document for the future.

## Our School Mission Statement

*"Growing together with Jesus"*



*Growing in the gifts, that God has given us  
On our journey together  
Developing as Jesus holds our hand.*

## Our School Mission Prayer

Today we are:

Growing in the gifts that God has given us,

On our journey together

Developing as Jesus holds our hand

Aware that we have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.

Amen

## Our School Aims

As a Catholic community, St Joseph & St Theresa Catholic Primary School is a place where God and our children are at the heart of all we do, where the Gospel values permeate all aspects of school and nursery life:

- **Every child in our care** will be supported to grow in Faith, to grow in Hope and to grow in Love. Growing in the Love of God, our children will become confident learners who have a desire to realise their aspirations. Our children will develop a passion for learning and its infinite possibilities in a nurturing, safe and loving environment.
- **Everyone is a learner.** We provide challenging learning opportunities that promote intellectual curiosity, creativity, and physical development along with moral and personal skills. By providing a rich, stimulating curriculum we: enable pupils to reach far and beyond their God given potential; we ensure that our pupils are happy, confident, and independent learners.
- **Everyone promotes self-esteem and self-worth** by showing mutual respect for others and developing an understanding of self in an atmosphere of trust. We create self-discipline through an awareness of the consequences of our actions, to nurture positive behaviour, secure in the knowledge of forgiveness.
- **Every person is a valued member of our wider community** who can act independently and make a positive contribution for the good of all; this is supported through the building of a caring partnership between home, school, parish, and community.



## Our Shared Catholic Virtues - Our Pupil Profile

Our pupils are growing to be...	How school helps our pupils to grow...	What this looks like within our Early Years Setting...
<b>Grateful</b> for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and <b>generous</b> with their gifts, now and in the future	By encouraging our pupils to know and be <b>grateful</b> for all their gifts, developing them to the full so that they can be <b>generous</b> in the service of others.	We are thankful. We say 'please' and 'thank you'. We share and take turns.
<b>Attentive</b> to their experience and to their vocation; and <b>discerning</b> about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.	By promoting the practice of <b>attentive</b> reflection and <b>discerning</b> decision making: in teaching, in the examen, prayer and retreats; and through the practice and example of school leaders and staff.	We take time during the day to reflect on our learning and the choices that ourselves and others make.

<b>Compassionate</b> towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and <b>loving</b> by their just actions and forgiving words.	By being <b>compassionate</b> and <b>loving</b> in the way pupils are treated, especially when a pupil is in trouble; and by opening pupils' eyes to those who suffer poverty, injustice or violence.	We take care of each other. We look after our peers if they fall over, miss their family or are feeling sad.
<b>Faith-filled</b> in their beliefs and <b>hopeful</b> for the future.	By passing on the living and <b>faith-filled</b> tradition of Jesus Christ; by having persevering <b>faith</b> in the pupils, and by encouraging them in turn, to have <b>faith</b> and <b>hope</b> in themselves and others.	We come together as a class to share our daily prayers. We encourage others to be their best selves.
<b>Eloquent</b> and <b>truthful</b> in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.	By developing an <b>eloquent</b> language which pupils can use to understand and articulate their emotions, beliefs, and questions, encouraged by the example of their teachers to be <b>truthful</b> in the way they represent themselves and speak about the world.	We talk about how we are feeling and learn about how different emotions affect us.  We are truthful within our actions and learn about right and wrong choices.
<b>Learned</b> , finding God in all things; and <b>wise</b> in the ways they use their learning for the common good.	By the breadth and depth of the curriculum; by excellence of teaching, and the creation of opportunities to become more <b>learned</b> and <b>wise</b> .	We talk about and reflect upon our learning and the learning of others.
<b>Curious</b> about everything; and <b>active</b> in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.	By leading pupils to be <b>curious</b> about the universe and all human activity, and to take increasing responsibility for their own learning, and by providing opportunities for them to be <b>active</b> in the life of the school, the Church, and the wider community.	We display characteristics of effective learning by being curious, active and attentive. We ask questions as we learn about ourselves, our families, the Church & the wider community.
<b>Intentional</b> in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and <b>prophetic</b> in the example they set to others.	By being a school community which is <b>intentional</b> in its way of proceeding to build-up quality of life; and which is <b>prophetic</b> in the way it offers an alternative vision of education and the human person rooted in the gospel.	We take part in activities within the wider school. We learn about our local community and how to help others.

At St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic School, all of our classes are named after our shared Catholic Values as set out within our Pupil Profile. Within Early Years, we use class mascots to introduce and embed our Catholic Pupil Profile shared values. This makes them accessible to our youngest learners.

### Nursery Class - The Curious Creators

We are curious and active within our learning. We use our imaginations to create during our play.

This is our class mascot, his name is Curious Clive. Your child will have a turn at taking him home.



### Reception Class - Our Hopeful Helpers

We have hope and faith in ourselves and others. We are helpful towards others. We are compassionate and loving towards our peers as well as the children within Nursery.

This is our class mascot, his name is Hopeful Hector. Your child will have a turn at taking him home.



*“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”. Source: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: 31<sup>st</sup> March*

## **Early Years Curriculum Intent**

**Our children will develop language acquisition** and expand their vocabulary to become confident and effective communicators.

**Our children will extend their understanding** in personal, social, and emotional development to become resilient and self-assured learners.

**Our children will gain a deep understanding of what is meant by a healthy lifestyle** and how this affects how we learn and develop.

**Our children will be taught how to manage their feelings and behaviour** in a range of situations.

**Our children will develop their knowledge** in early literacy and mathematics.

**Our children will acquire a range of physical key skills** to develop their co-ordination skills and whole-body strength as well as to strengthen their fine motor skills.

**Our children will acquire a range of artistic key skills** including drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, textiles, printing.



**Our children will explore the world around them** and deepen their understanding of living things and the environment.

**Our children will experience** a curriculum immersed in story and literature.

**Our children will begin to transfer their learning** (taught skills) into the wider environment especially the outdoors and become competent problem solvers.

## Our Early Years Team

### **Mrs Bennett - Nursery Class Teacher**

Did you know that 90% of the human brain develops by the age of 5 years old? I find this amazing and with this staggering fact in mind, I cannot imagine a better and more fulfilling place to be than within the Early Years. Early Childhood Education is meaningful and when your children are in our care, we give them an abundance of love and attention. We nurture and strengthen those vital lifelong skills such as social and emotional, problem-solving skills as well as the ability to have patience and develop empathy. Being present in their lives and validating your child's big emotions builds the foundation of their future. I am so proud and feel extremely lucky to be a part of the wonderful team that supports that. Early Years is an amazing place to be!



### **Miss Brown - Reception Class Teacher**

Early Years is the foundation to a child's education. Within the Early Years, children begin their educational journey by learning through play, which is a holistic approach where children learn and grow as an individual. It is a great honour to teach Reception and watch children transition and become more independent and unique learners. I wanted to be an Early Years teacher to enhance my teaching experience and see where the journey of learning begins. The Early Years has a unique approach to learning which is child led, immersive and play-based. Providing the children with new experiences and skills that they will carry into their journey through education is a great privilege and the reason I love being a Reception teacher so much!

### **Mrs Lowry - Early Years Practitioner**

Working in Early Years isn't just a job, it's a vocation. It sets the foundation for all future learning and is a stepping stone to their life-long learning journey. Whilst your child is in our care, we become an extended family not only for your child but for their parents as well. We thrive to create a learning environment that allows each and every child to feel happy, to belong and to develop holistically.



### **Miss Gilbert - Early Years Practitioner**

It's a privilege to be a part of the beginning of children's learning journeys and helping to shape their minds. Throughout this time children learn many new skills through their play and develop their interests.

Working within early years is always fun and very rewarding when seeing children achieve their goals, whilst also gaining confidence and independence.

Having daily interactions with the children, witnessing the pride they feel when they are able to do something for first time and taking part in many creative activities are just some examples of why I love working in early years.

I feel it is always important to create an environment where children feel safe, can have fun, build friendships and be given the opportunities to learn and grow!

### **Mrs Roden - Early Years Practitioner**

Working in Early Years is a privilege. Every day I am reminded at how lucky I am in getting the chance to support your little ones as they grow. Seeing them achieve their goals with pride and excitement which is expressed to you when they finish nursery and tell you about their day. It truly is a dream job and an honour to be able to teach through play in partnership with the children. Every child is unique and should have the best chance to reach their full potential in an environment which they feel safe and secure in; a home away from home - We strive for this at our nursery. Together we are like a box of crayons, each one unique but together we create wonderful piece of art where memories are made.



### **As an Early Years Team, together we...**

**We value every child** and believe that every pupil can and will make progress.

**We value expert knowledge** about how to support learning and offer a curriculum that promotes equality and gives every child a fair chance to succeed.

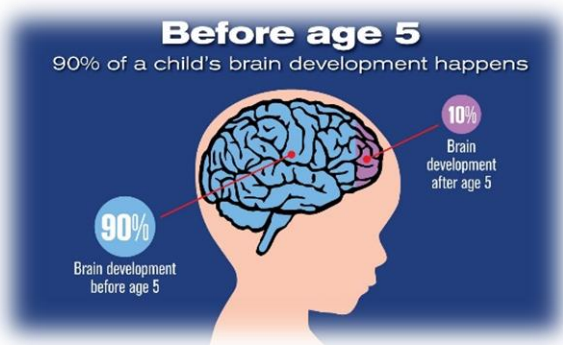
**We value play** and consider play to be an essential part of our early year's curriculum and is one of the keyways that our young children learn.

**We value and see the richness of real-world activities** and everyday experiences within our early years setting which includes our outdoor learning areas and Forest School provision. Such everyday experiences include cleaning, gardening, shopping, and food preparation. We also value visits beyond our setting and endeavour to provide our children with memorable experiences to stimulate varied and rich conversations.

**We value the previous experiences** that our children have had previously to starting at St Joseph and St Theresa's and therefore we gain as much background information as we can to build up a picture of the uniqueness of each child and family within our care.

## The Implementation of our Early Years Curriculum

We follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage [Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)



Scientific research has recently determined that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a synapse in the brain, unless it is done through play, in which case it takes between 10-20 repetitions.

At St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic School, we organise our curriculum to ensure that our pupils are not merely covering content but are achieving a **depth** to their learning which enables them to use their skills and understanding in all areas of the curriculum. Our definition of progress is the **widening and deepening** of essential knowledge, skills, understanding and learning behaviours. Therefore **our curriculum is ambitious**. Careful sequencing enables our pupils to build their learning over time as we understand that young learners do not develop in a fixed way. Their development is like a spider's web with many strands, not a straight line. At St Joseph & St Theresa's we understand that brain development and synapse formation are at their highest when a child is deeply engrossed in something that fascinates them, challenges them and makes them happy.

## Our Progression Model in Approach and Skills

As our pupils settle and begin to become more confident, short adult led or guided activities are woven into the day to support and strengthen attention and concentration skills. Our youngest learners are often driven by their interests. Therefore, our **plans are flexible, and skill based**. This then allows them to be transferrable to fit current interests and fascinations. Our highly skilled Early Years Team constantly discuss, review, and create a balance of adult led and child-initiated tasks to ensure that by the end of the Reception year, our pupils are fully ready for their next phase in education and for more formal learning within KS1.





### Progression in Skills - Our EYFS Curricular Goals

'Settle in and become a confident learner'

<p><b><u>Basic Level</u></b> First Milestone</p>	<p>Pupils separate confidently from their parent at the start of the session and become involved in play. They make a strong relationship with key adult(s) within setting and use this adult as a 'secure base' throughout the session.</p>
<p><b><u>Advanced Level</u></b> Second Milestone</p>	<p>Pupils take part in pretend play. They communicate and negotiate with their peers. They ask for help from familiar adults as and when needed. They respond positively to adults setting challenges within their play.</p>
<p><b><u>Deep Level</u></b> Third Milestone</p>	<p>Pupils persevere with difficulties. They make comments about their learning and show pleasure and pride in their achievements. They play more collaboratively and talk about, reflecting upon their learning.</p>

Our Early Years Curriculum is planned to move the nature of our pupils thinking to a **higher order deep level of understanding** rather than simply acquiring new facts and knowledge.

We do not cap learning but encourage all children to challenge themselves further.

Repetition is important for pupils to master a new skill. We use our learning environment as the 'third teacher' in developing & embedding key, lifelong skills.

**'Practise Makes Permanent'**

# Early Literacy

## Nursery Rhymes

**"If children know eight nursery rhymes by heart, by the time they are four years old, they're usually among the best readers by the time they are eight." Mem Fox**

Nursery rhymes provide bite-sized learning opportunities for young children to develop key developmental skills and are often the trigger for hours of creative and open-ended play. They are a powerful learning source in early literacy and enable children to become interested in the rhythm and patterns of language. Many nursery rhymes are also repetitive which can support the development of memory and kick-start the practice of listening and speaking. Nursery rhymes provide other key benefits such as:

**Communication and Language Development:** Rhymes are fantastic vocabulary boosters. They often feature a pleasing rhythmic pattern and simple repetitive phrases that babies and young children find easy to remember and repeat. In order to develop their phonological awareness, children need to be repeatedly exposed to spoken language and nursery rhymes provide the perfect way to do this.

**Physical Development:** The opportunity to 'act out' a favourite rhyme will be a welcome activity for active minds. Physical participation in action songs encourage children to develop their fine and gross motor control skills as well as balance, coordination and the skills needed to follow simple instructions.

**Numeracy:** Counting songs (e.g "Five Currant Buns", "10 Fat Sausages") help to develop a familiarity with number sounds and words in a way that is fun and interesting to a young child. Songs such as 'When Goldilocks Went To The House Of The Bears' also introduce the concept of scale, size and order. Familiarity with counting songs provides the foundation for crucial numeracy skills and awareness.

**Understanding the World:** Children find many nursery rhymes very relatable to their own everyday experiences and will enjoy sharing these moments such as a trip to the park with Daddy to feed the ducks (Five Little Ducks), or sharing a picture book with a Grandparent about boats (Row Row Row Your Boat). Parents can encourage conversations with their child around these experiences, helping to practise and embed the language between the nursery rhyme and the lived experience.

**Creativity:** The act of singing a rhyme or engaging with it physically, encourages children to express themselves in a creative way and to find their own personal 'voice'. Role play opportunities present themselves with different characters and events within the rhyme that children can respond to. Open-ended play opportunities are also possible with paint, ply dough, wet sand or loose parts.

### **Four easy ways to introduce rhymes into your home:**

1. Rhymes can be sung or chanted at any time throughout the day. They are short and quick making them easy to slot into the daily routine.
2. Choose a simple rhyme and use it to accompany one of your daily routines such as a walk to the park or a craft activity.
3. Have a 'Rhyme Of The Week' and make a point of singing the rhyme 2 or 3 times each day. Most nursery rhymes take no more than 1 or 2 minutes to sing so this is any easy way to build up lots of repetition.

4. Share picture books of rhymes with your children and encourage them to talk about the characters and the events that unfold within the rhyme.
5. Look out for everyday rhyme objects that your child can explore: cookie cutters (Five Currant Buns), small world characters, a toy tea-pot and cup and saucer (Polly Put The Kettle On, I'm A Little Teapot), rubber ducks (Five Little Ducks) or even puppets.

## Reading

To be ready for school, children need to have a good vocabulary, understand how books work and have the curiosity, imagination and eagerness to learn about the world around them. Sharing rhymes, books and stories every day helps develop these skills, making the transition to school more successful.

What are the benefits of reading for children?

Children who read frequently and who are read to regularly, improve their reading skills; it is definitely a case of "practice makes perfect".

**Other benefits of this enjoyable pastime include:**

- **Bonding:** Reading provides great opportunities for you and your child to spend time together. Children feel secure when they are being read to, and showing your child a positive attitude towards books helps children to view literacy in a positive way.
- **Language development and vocabulary expansion:** Research has shown that babies who are read to and talked to score higher in language skills than babies who are not. Children learn new words as they read and absorb information on how to structure sentences and how to use words and other language features effectively in their writing and speaking.
- **Improvement in listening skills:** Children need to concentrate in order to comprehend when they are being read to. When they are listening, they are more likely to sit still and this develops a longer attention span.
- **Cognitive development:** Reading is a much more complex task for the human brain than watching television, for example. Reading strengthens brain connections and builds new connections; this helps to build skills such as problem-solving and reasoning.
- **Development of imagination and creativity:** Books and stories open up a whole new world to your child; many stories go beyond the real world and employ fantasy elements that get children thinking outside the box. They use their imagination to "see" what a character or place looks like. Often children already have vivid imaginations, so reading serves to further feed their creativity.
- **Social and emotional development:** Reading to children can teach them how to cope with difficult or stressful experiences and provides an opportunity to talk about real-world situations in age-appropriate ways. As children develop they begin to imagine how they would feel in that situation and this helps them to develop empathy. Reading teaches children about the world around them and helps them to model what happens in various situations. By reading a variety of books, children can learn about people, places, and events outside of their own experience and develop the skills to deal with something new. Reading also has a beneficial impact on a child's mental health as they can explore their emotions by observing a feeling or situation from a distance through the story in a book.
- **It is fun:** As children develop a love of reading and being read to they become immersed in the stories, they can laugh at every funny anecdote, get excited as the story unfolds and be surprised by plot twists and turns.

# Essential Foundations for Learning

## **A Healthy & Balanced Diet**

Encouraging children to eat well and learn about food in their early years not only protects their health when they are young, but also sets the foundations for their future health and wellbeing. Please ensure that your morning routine includes giving your child enough time to sit and eat a healthy and substantial breakfast. **Children should not be arriving at nursery or school eating snacks or chewing gum.**

Research confirms that healthy eating habits in the years before formal school age, are very important because they influence a range of health and development outcomes in later life.

## **Exercise & Physical Activity**

Regular physical activity during the early years provides immediate and long-term benefits for physical and psychological wellbeing. We should minimise the amount of time our children spend being sedentary. Physical activity includes all forms of activity, such as walking, active play and active games. **Children are more likely to maintain a healthy weight if they are physically active for at least 180 minutes (three hours) each day, as recommended for children aged under five years in the UK.**

## **Oral Health**

It is recommended that children should go to the dentist with their parents as soon as possible. You should then take them regularly, as often as your dental team recommend. **If your child has not attended a dentist appointment within the last 6 months, you will need to book an appointment ASAP.** Cleaning your child's teeth should be part of their daily hygiene routine. You may find it easier to stand or sit behind your child, cradling their chin in your hand so you can reach their top and bottom teeth more easily. **It is important to supervise your child's brushing until they are at least seven.** Make brushing a routine - just before your child goes to bed and at least one other time during the day.

## **Establishing a Bedtime Routine**

Children aged 3 to 5 years old, should get between 10-13 hours (including naps) of sleep every night. Below is an example of a good bedtime routine that should help children to fall asleep.

- Eating dinner as a family around the dinner table. This is also a great opportunity for your family to share positive things about their day that they are grateful for.
- Quiet time in the evening - no TV, phones or tablets for at least an hour before bedtime, as this reduces production of melatonin, the hormone that helps us fall asleep
- Bath or wash time and brushing teeth
- Story time in your child's bedroom, with low lights and curtains closed
- Snuggled into bed with a favourite toy
- Say your prayers and a kiss goodnight
- Lights out

Discussing time, clocks and numbers offers an ideal opportunity to talk about bedtimes and wake-up times in your home. Bedtime should be the same time every night - it is also important to get up at the same time each day, to anchor and reset the body clock.

## Our Partnership with our Parents

The most important person in your child's life is you! Parents have a fundamental role to play in their child's education and together, as partners, we can make their St Joseph & St Theresa's journey a huge success. We pride ourselves on our parental partnerships and involve you fully in your child's learning and development.



We use the 'Evidence Me' App to share and receive snippets of learning and those all-important 'WOW' moments!

We aim to achieve this by:-

- \*Keeping you informed and updated
- \*Gaining in-depth information about your child
- \*Welcoming you into our Learning Environment
- \*Involving you in your child's learning.

We strongly believe that effective communication and partnership with parents is key to establishing a safe, welcoming, and purposeful environment in which the children feel confident and secure and able to reach their full potential.

Parents will...	The Early Year's Team will	Support & advice can be found ...
Ensure that my child has a substantial breakfast before arriving at school or nursery.	Encourage your child to try different fruits at snack time. Discuss & promote a healthy diet.	<a href="http://www.pacey.org">www.pacey.org</a> <a href="http://www.dentalhealth.org">www.dentalhealth.org</a>
Limit 'screen time' and provide opportunities within the day for my child to partake in physical activity.	Provide daily opportunities for outdoor learning and physical activity.	<a href="http://www.foundationyears.org">www.foundationyears.org</a>
Read regularly to their child to develop a love for reading and the English language.	Read daily with your child, making links with other known stories, nursery rhymes and real life experiences.	<a href="#">g</a> Join Burntwood library where you child can borrow books to enjoy at home.
Support & supervise my child when brushing their teeth each morning & evening. Book an appointment at the dentist for my child.	Promote good oral health and discuss ways to maintain good health. Provide reward charts for parents to use at home.	Brush your teeth song - enclosed in year group hand book
Establish a consistent bedtime routine which includes sharing a bedtime story together.	Discuss any concerns with parents and support/ refer where needed.	Reward charts enclosed in year group handbooks Class pages on website GP & Health Visitor

## Our Rainbow Snack Chart

Throughout the year, your child will have the opportunity to try a range of healthy snacks. We will add these to our 'Eat a Rainbow' EYFS classroom display.

Please inform the Early Year's team if your child has any food allergies and complete all necessary forms for the office.



## Our Phonic & Early Reading Sessions

Our structure of teaching letters and sounds is derived from the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' programme.



Alongside this, we also place great value and importance on pupils reading for enjoyment.



We recognise that this starts with the foundations of acquiring those all-important speaking and listening skills, ability to recite a range of Nursery Rhymes, alongside lots of opportunities to engage with books that fire their imagination and interest.



## Mathematics



Our Mathematics Curriculum provides a strong grounding in essential number skills so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children are taught to count confidently, **develop a deep understanding** of numbers within 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. We provide frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this

understanding. In addition, to this, rich opportunities are provided to develop spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. We aim for our pupils to develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, to look for patterns and relationships, to spot connections, to 'have a go' as well as talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.



## Forest School "The best classroom and richest stockroom is only roofed by the sky"

**Margaret McMillan**



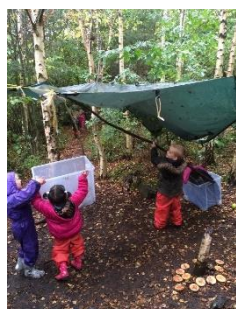
**Mrs Bennett**  
Forest School Leader  
Level 3 FSA Trained



**Mr Somerfield**  
Forest School Leader  
Level 3 FSA Trained



**Mrs Lowry**  
Forest School Leader  
Level 3 FSA Trained



At St Joseph & St Theresa's we are proud of our 'Forest School' provision. Our Forest School Leaders are Level 3 trained and our Early Years children access this provision weekly, supported and facilitated by the rest of our Early Years team.

Forest School is a child-centred learning process that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. It is a long-term program that supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on practical experiences which inspire a

deep and meaningful connection to the natural world. The whole process helps learners to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.

Our approach to risk means that learners constantly expand on their abilities by building self-belief and resilience. At St Joseph & St Theresa's we believe that risk is more than just potential for physical harm, but a more holistic thing. There are risks in everything we do and we grow by overcoming them. Our Forest School approach helps our pupils to become healthy, resilient, creative and independent learners.



To ensure your child is comfortable and prepared for our weekly Forest School sessions, please bring your child dressed in their usual school uniform (black jogging bottoms/leggings, a white polo neck t-shirt and their black PE Kit hoodie), then look below for the additional recommendations to ensure your child is warm enough during their Forest School session. On sunny days, we ask you to apply a first layer of sunscreen before you drop your child off. We will then apply as required.

Autumn/ Spring	Summer	Winter
Waterproof trousers and coat. Long sleeved t-shirt or top underneath polo t-shirt Fleecy zip up jacket (in the backpack, just in case) Two pairs of socks. On the bottom, one thin cotton sock, and the top, a thick wool or fluffy bed sock Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (that you don't mind getting wet and muddy!) Spare PE trousers & socks in backpacks.	Waterproofs trousers and coat Pair of school PE kit jogging bottoms or leggings One pair of socks Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (that you don't mind getting wet and muddy!) A sun hat for sunny days Sun cream Spare trousers & socks in backpacks.	Waterproof trousers and separate warm coat (no 'all in ones' please). Base layer - thermals Fleece or other warm tracksuit bottoms (in line with school uniform) Additional top layers: long sleeved t-shirt underneath polo shirt; fleece jumper/jacket Neck scarf, hat and gloves (spares to be packed in a <b>named</b> backpack.) Four pairs of socks. Two pairs to wear (on the bottom, one thin cotton sock, and the top, a thick wool or fluffy bed sock) and two spare pairs to be packed in the backpack Extra Jumpers to be packed in backpack for really cold days Wellies, snow boots or sturdy warm outdoor boot.

## **EYFS Assessment & Reporting Arrangements**

The EYFS Statutory Framework was published on 31 March 2021 by the Department for Education (DfE) and legislation laid in Parliament. This is the revised and final EYFS framework that all registered nurseries, childminders, schools and pre-schools in England follow.

### **Key objectives of the reforms**

The reforms to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have been a number of years in the making. The aim was to strengthen the early year's curriculum, assessment and practice to improve outcomes for all children and close the gap for disadvantaged children. This is particularly crucial in light of the recent COVID pandemic.

The changes were developed with childhood development experts using the latest evidence on what is most important for supporting the learning and development of our youngest children. The government reformed the framework to transform early years curriculum and assessment, focusing on what matters most for children's outcomes:

- A strong and holistic curriculum that puts early language development at the heart of everything.
- A streamlined and effective assessment process through a revised EYFS profile and removing statutory local authority moderation, which will reduce unnecessary workload and cement the EYFSP as a tool that is designed to support children's transition to Year 1.
- A new requirement to promote good oral health.

The Government understands that the past few years has been a particularly difficult and challenging time for the early year's sector, with children's learning disrupted across all ages. The intended aims of the reforms - focusing on children's outcomes and reducing unnecessary evidence gathering and paperwork so practitioners and teachers can spend more time interacting with children in their care - will provide a powerful basis for supporting children's learning and wellbeing beyond COVID-19.

### **Reception Baseline Assessment**

The EYFS framework includes statutory guidance for the administration of the Reception Baseline Assessment. This is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception. The assessment will take place within the reception year and is, therefore, included within the overall EYFS statutory framework.

### **Reporting Arrangements for the End of the EYFS**

In the final term of reception, the EYFS Profile will be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for year 1.

The Profile will reflect practitioners' own knowledge and professional judgement of a child to inform discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

More information can be found by accessing the following websites:

<https://www.gov.uk> and <https://www.foundationyears.org>

## **Child Protection & Safeguarding**

At St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, all members of staff and governors recognise and understand our individual & organisational responsibilities and duties with regards to keeping children safe. We work with other agencies and families in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with statutory guidance.



**Designated Safeguarding Lead - Ms Walker**

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead - Mrs Schneider & Miss Palmer**



St Joseph & St Theresa's adopt the Staffordshire County Council Policy for Child Protection and follow the guidelines outlined in the Keeping Children Safe in Education document. Parents wishing to read any of our policies should visit the school website:

<https://www.st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk/about/school-policies/>

Or alternatively contact the school office on [office@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk) or 01543 227220

All families experience difficult times - family break downs, loss of employment, bereavement etc. If your family needs help and support please speak to Ms Walker, Mrs Schneider or Miss Palmer and we will do all we can to support you and your child, including finding external agencies who may be able to help you. You can also access help and support through the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's website:

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/>

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/children-and-families/>

If we have a concern about a child in our school we will firstly contact those adults with parental responsibility to discuss these concerns. However, if we feel a child or another adult would be put at risk, then we may contact Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (formally known as First Response) without parental permission.

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child at our school please speak to one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs); alternatively you can contact Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (SCAS) yourself on 0300 111 8007

## **Support & Local Parent Groups**

<http://www.sparkburntwood.co.uk>

<https://www.familiesonline.co.uk/local/south-staffordshire/clubs-and-classes/other-club-and-classes>

<https://www.thebestof.co.uk/local/lichfield/burntwood/community-hub/local-guides/mother-and-toddler-groups>

## **Ideas & Useful Websites to Support your Child in Early Years**

<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk>

<https://www.stokespeaks.org>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

Information and supporting documents can also be accessed via our *Class Pages* within the school website:

<https://www.st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk>

## Tax-Free Childcare

### *What is Tax-Free Childcare?*

Tax-Free Childcare is a government scheme to support working parents with childcare costs. If eligible, you set up an online childcare account which you can use to pay your childcare provider directly. For every £8 you pay in, the government will pay in an extra £2. You can get up to £2,000 per child per year, or £4,000 for disabled children. You can use Tax-Free Childcare to pay for:

- Registered childminders, nurseries and nannies
- Registered after-school clubs and play schemes
- Home care workers working for a registered home care agency.

### *What is 30 Hours Free Childcare?*

Working parents of 3 and 4 year olds in England may be entitled to up to 30 hours of free childcare, for 38 weeks of the year (or fewer hours over more weeks). This is an additional 15 hours of free childcare on top of the 15 hours universal entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds in England.

### *Am I Eligible for Tax-Free Childcare/30 Hours Free Childcare?*

You will be eligible for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare if:

- Your child is under 12 years old, or your child is disabled and under 17 years old for Tax-Free Childcare.
- You may be able to claim 30 hours if your child is 3 or 4 and not taking up a state funded reception place. (30 hours is available in England only.)
- The child you're applying for usually lives with you - you don't have to be their parent.
- You live and work in the UK, unless you're a Crown servant or member of the HM Armed Forces posted overseas.
- You, and any partner, are working, and each earning at least the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage for 16 hours a week - in 2017-18 this is £120 if you're over 25 - but less than £100,000 a year each.
- If you're under 25 or an apprentice, you should expect to earn the equivalent of 16 hours, at the National Minimum Wage or Living Wage which applies to you.

You can still apply for Tax-Free childcare and 30 hours free childcare if you're:

- On paid sick leave.
- On paid ordinary or additional maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or getting Maternity Allowance, for another child.
- On paid shared parental leave.
- On paid annual leave.

You can also apply for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare if you're not working but expect to start a new job in the next 31 days.

You can't get Tax-Free Childcare and tax credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers at the same time.

However, you can apply for 30 hours only, and still receive tax credits, Universal Credit or childcare vouchers.

For further information please visit <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

*If you wish to pay your nursery fees by tax-free childcare, please contact Miss. Palmer on 01543 227220 to discuss this.*

Childcare  
Choices