



# JUNCTION FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL

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## EARLY YEARS POLICY

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Date of Next Review: September 2024

Responsible Officer(s): Headteacher

## INTENT

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the period of education from birth to 5 years. In our Foundation Stage we have morning nursery, afternoon Nursery or 30 hour provision. We have two reception classes.

### EYFS Values and Vision

We encourage our children to be passionate for learning by creating an engaging, fun and relevant curriculum. We aim to nurture well rounded, respectful and confident children, who will develop skills for life-long learning. All children are encouraged to be Junction Farm STARS: Safe, Thoughtful, Adventurous, Respectful and Successful.

In Early Years we base our practise on the seven key features of effective practice:

- The best for every child
- High quality care
- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Assessment
- Self-regulation and Executive Function
- Partnership with Parents

We believe in providing children with a safe and stimulating environment where they can be themselves. We pride ourselves on listening to children and those who care for them and using this information to personalise each child's learning. We believe that every child is unique and should be treated so, allowing them the opportunity to develop and learn in a nurturing environment where they can play, learn and be successful. We strongly believe in first-hand experiences, valuing the importance of the outdoor environment and the development of children's thinking and problem solving skills. Our aim is to develop a love of learning and a promotion of enquiry and curiosity.

Having reflected upon the revised framework and considered all information available to us, we have personalised our curriculum and ensured it is ambitious in nature in order to meet the specific needs and aspirations of our children. With this in mind, alongside the Early Learning Goals and statements to support achieving these, we also have our 'Junction Farm School Ready'. These are aims that we believe will support the development of our children through their early years experiences and ensure that they are more than ready to move into Year 1.

Our curriculum is based on providing the children with an understanding of themselves, relationships with others and the wider world. We aim to provide children with an education which promotes diversity, a celebration of culture and a

love of the world around them. Our curriculum is designed around a language rich environment and aims to develop the foundations for excellent communication skills. Our curriculum intent is to provide the children with a range of familiar themes, linked to their experiences, as well as unfamiliar topics, to spark their interest and exploration of the wider world.

Both Nursery and Reception focus on the same themes throughout the year, staff ensure children are provided with a wide variety of opportunities to learn. Children in Reception have opportunity to revisit learning from Nursery to ensure 'sticky' knowledge is embedded in children's long-term memory.

We believe planning should be based around the needs and interests of the children and whilst long term planning is in place, we offer flexibility to change and extend based around children's interests. We aim to meet the children's needs through identifying and responding to the many 'teachable moments' that happen across the day, though we also recognise the importance of high quality adult-led activities and interactions.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Planning:

### Long Term Planning –

Broad half termly headings are set out at the beginning of an academic year. However, we offer flexibility and can change these based on children's interests and ideas. In Reception, before a new half term, the new theme is discussed with children and their ideas are used to plan. Key texts and questions are highlighted by staff and children are provided with learning opportunity possibilities. A record of the children's ideas is made and placed on display in the classroom. At the end of the half termly focus, children review their learning and reflect on the information they have encountered.

Short term (weekly) plans are made for Phonics, Literacy and Mathematics. We also follow the 'Letterjoin' and JIGSAW schemes of work. Each half term we focus on a musician or composer, as well as an artist. Our Understanding the World provision and focus is based on key texts and our chosen half termly theme. Physical development is taught by experts and activities are tailored around the half termly focus.

Key to successful EY practice is our pedagogy and our enabling environment. At Junction Farm Primary School, we have carefully planned our continuous provision to ensure it meets the needs of our children. Our provision ensures the children's gaps in learning are addressed and that there is sufficient challenge to ensure children remain engaged and active learners.

## **Pedagogy –**

Children learn in a variety of ways and our teaching reflects our understanding of learners' needs. Staff ensure our environment is 'language rich' with narration, questioning, discussion and role play at the heart of our practice. Children are provided with a balanced amount of focussed teaching together with time for self-initiated learning through our continuous provision both indoors and outside. In Reception, our 'Rainbow of Possibilities' provides challenge and focus through open-ended questions and tasks to be completed independently over the course of the week. Staff use the 'Rainbow of Possibilities' to embed previous learning and skills ensuring children have opportunity to extend understanding and gain 'sticky' knowledge.

## **Environment –**

Our continuous provision areas are based on the principle of using high quality resources that provide a range of open-ended learning opportunities to ensure the children can follow their interests and meet their next steps. We fully recognise the importance of the outdoor environment and ensure children have access to the wide range of opportunities this provides as often as possible. We ensure children access Forest School on a weekly basis in Reception, and at relevant times in Nursery.

## **Assessment –**

On-going formative assessment is at the heart of outstanding EYFS practice. At Junction Farm Primary School, EYFS practitioners aim to engage and be involved with children during their play-based activity, across all areas of learning. Through this, teachers are able to gather a clear picture of where children are in their learning and any gaps they may have.

We provide effective and focused intervention for those children who are finding learning challenging and are not on track to meet expectations at the end of the year. This will be provided in an inclusive way and support from parents is also enlisted at an early stage to ensure that the children have every chance to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

We use the See Saw online learning journal to record and share the children's learning with their parents.

Staff meet regularly to discuss observations made and use them to plan the next steps in learning. In addition to the learning opportunities outlined in the long term planning we use the outcomes from observational assessment to inform planning for children, acknowledging their interests and facilitating their next steps in learning.

At the end of each half term, staff use our own curriculum trackers as a benchmark for children's progress and development. Staff complete trackers which put children

into one of two categories 'On Track' or 'Not on Track'. Children who may need further support are then invited to catch up clubs, action plans are made and provision is enhanced to ensure all children have the opportunity to succeed.

### **A Rainbow of Possibilities (Reception)**

In order to support the children's development of Characteristics of Effective Learning and their self-regulation strategies we plan extra activities each week. The activities are based on each area of the Early Years curriculum. Each activity is designed to ensure learning is embedded and skills are developed. Children complete the 'Rainbow of Possibilities' tasks independently. Each time a child completes an activity, they are awarded a smiley face on their individual rainbow record cards. If a child collects all the smiley faces for the week, they are given a rainbow token. Children are able to use their token to collect a small prize from our Rainbow shop, or alternatively save their tokens for a greater, more substantial prize. As a result, children are taught from a very early age how to save and control a budget, preparing them for later life. The Rainbow of Possibilities tasks are introduced to the children at the beginning of Autumn 2. The first half term is designed to provide children with the opportunity to 'find their feet' and become confident with the classroom environment.

### **Timetable –**

In Nursery, morning and afternoon sessions are planned to offer children similar opportunities. 30 hour provision pupils stay in school for lunch where they have the option of school dinner or packed lunch. At the beginning of each Nursery session, children enter the setting, engage in independent learning before opportunity for whole class or group input time. Children then engage in play- based learning in the Nursery areas, as well outdoor provision time.

In Reception, focussed work is completed in the morning sessions, as well as independent learning both indoors and outside. Each morning, children take part in Phonics and Mathematics lessons. Afternoon sessions have more fluidity where children are encouraged to explore between the two Reception classrooms. Teacher input is based on other areas of the Early Years Curriculum. Staff also take the time to play with the children, extending and developing understanding through modelling, questioning and challenge.

Reflection time, story time and rhyme time are all timetabled into the Reception day. Ensuring children are given opportunity to learn new language, practise their communication skills and begin to develop a love of reading.

### **Reading –**

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and our aim is to encourage a love of reading. Children are exposed to a range of quality books that not only develop a

love of reading, but have been chosen specifically to develop their oracy, vocabulary and comprehension. The books on our EYFS Reading Spine are embedded in our provision through activities and story sessions. Children in Reception are encouraged to vote on which story book will be read at the end of each day. Teachers choose two story books, talk about the blurb, the front cover and what the story may be about. Children then vote on the text of their choice. Teachers demonstrate how votes are counted and use this as a teaching opportunity to extend Mathematics, as well as introducing democracy at a young age.

### **Phonics –**

Children are taught using a systematic, synthetic approach to phonics. In Nursery, Phase 1 is taught, where children learn to discriminate between different sounds. Where children are confident in their knowledge, Phase 2 sounds are introduced. In Reception, staff begin teaching Phase 2 sounds in the Autumn term. Each week, two new sounds are introduced. Two lessons a week are based on reading phonics, whilst the other two lessons are based on writing. Parents are invited to attend a phonics workshop in the first half term of the Autumn term to ensure they are confident to support their child at home. Parents are also provided with a pack of Phase 2 and 3 phonemes as well as phoneme frames.

### **Mathematics –**

Children in Reception take part in daily Mathematics sessions. Lessons are planned to ensure children experience numbers and the number system in a variety of ways. High quality learning environments and meaningful interactions with adults, support children in developing mathematical thinking and discussion. During Mathematical inputs, teachers plan sessions which also develop fluency, revisit key concepts and address misconceptions.

In Nursery, children develop a love of maths through games, songs, rhymes, and play using concrete manipulatives. There is a focus on the following counting principles and one to one correspondence. Ten Town is used to introduce children to numbers and their formation. Children's fine manipulative skills are a focus to develop 1-1 correspondence so children count each object only once.

### **Experiences –**

When introducing a new book or story, we endeavour to provide children with an experience which will hook their interest in the text. Experiences may be visits, theme days, visitors or anything memorable which will capture the children's interest.

Throughout the academic year both Nursery and Reception go on days out as well as inviting people into school to help the children learn more about the world around them. Trips, experiences and visitors are invaluable to the children, providing them with opportunities different from their everyday school life.

## IMPACT

The impact of the EYFS curriculum is reflected in having happy and confident children transitioning into Year 1. Children enter Year 1 with firm foundations in all the Early Years Foundation Stage subjects and are ready for more formal learning. They are secure in their surroundings and excited to be taking the next step.

We measure progress and children's learning across the year through formative and summative assessments which are based on the teacher's knowledge of the child, photographs and videos recorded on See Saw. Our Good Level of Development is above Local Authority and National averages. Children at Junction Farm Primary School succeed, having developed a love of learning in the EYFS.

The judgments of our school are moderated with other schools in our Trust. The Early Years staff from our Trust schools work together across the year to support collaboration and best practice. The teaching and pedagogy are reviewed and evaluated regularly through team meetings, latest training and research.