FCJ Primary School

EYFS Policy

Mission Statement

Teach the children with all the kindness and gentleness possible.

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Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education.

The FCJ Governors are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at every opportunity and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Rationale

At FCJ Early Years Provision, we believe that every child is a unique gift from God, created in His image and deserving of love, dignity and respect. Inspired by the vision of the Foundress, Marie Madeleine D'Houet and the order of **Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ)**, we strive to nurture children within a community where they feel safe, valued and inspired to flourish.

Through our Early Years provision, beginning at two years of age, we seek to develop confident, curious and compassionate learners who are encouraged to wonder, explore and develop a lifelong love of learning. We recognise parents as the first educators of their children and work in partnership with families to create a strong foundation for future success.

The FCJ Core Values underpin all aspects of life in our Early Years provision and are lived daily through our relationships, curriculum and learning environment.

Companionship

We foster a strong sense of belonging where every child feels welcomed, valued and included. Children learn the importance of friendship, cooperation and supporting one another within a caring community.

Dignity

We recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of every child. We promote self-worth, respect for others and an understanding that all people are created in the image and likeness of God.

Excellence

We have high expectations for all children and encourage them to achieve their personal best. Through encouragement, challenge and support, children develop confidence, resilience and a love of learning.

Gentleness

We nurture children within a safe, loving and supportive environment where kindness, empathy, forgiveness and understanding are modelled and encouraged.

Hope

We inspire children to approach new experiences with confidence, curiosity and optimism. Through faith and learning, children develop resilience and trust in their ability to grow and succeed.

Justice

Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of fairness, responsibility and service. They begin to understand how their actions affect others and learn to care for their community and God's creation.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based upon the statutory EYFS Framework and is underpinned by the following principles:

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

A Unique Child

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Practitioners in the EYFS:

- Understand and observe each child's development and learning, assess progress, plan for next steps.
- Support children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture.
- Identify any need for additional support.
- Keep children safe.
- Value and respect all children and families equally.

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

Positive relationships are:

- Warm and loving, and foster a sense of belonging.
- Sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interests.
- Supportive of the child's own efforts and independence.
- Consistent in setting clear boundaries.
- Stimulating.

Enabling Environments

We aim to create an attractive and stimulating learning environment where children feel confident and secure and challenged. The children have free flow daily access to an indoor and outdoor environment that is set up in discrete areas of learning with planned continuous provision. Effective continuous provision learning builds and extends upon prior learning and following children's interest. Effective planning of the environment is informed by observations of the children to ensure we follow their current interests and experiences. These observations are recorded in the children's individual learning journeys or on Tapestry.

Play-based learning is paramount and children direct their own learning from carefully planned opportunities provided by staff. Staff will enhance play and extend as needed to further individual learning.

Learning and Development

There are seven areas of learning and development of which three are "prime areas," and four "specific areas."

The prime areas are:

- **Communication and language**
- **Physical development**
- **Personal, social and emotional development.**

The specific areas are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive arts and design**
- **Religious Education**

The curriculum is rich and varied and driven by the interests and fascinations of the children; along with a range of other creative and engaging stimuli.

• Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

• Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

• Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

• Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

• Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems.

• Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

• Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

Spiritual Development

As an FCJ school, opportunities for spiritual development are woven throughout daily life.

Children are encouraged to:

- Wonder and ask questions.
- Experience awe and wonder in God's world.
- Engage in prayer and reflection appropriate to their age.
- Celebrate liturgical seasons and significant events.
- Develop gratitude and appreciation for others.

Spiritual development is nurtured through stories, celebrations, collective worship, outdoor learning and daily interactions.

Foundation Stage Assessment & Planning

Through careful assessments and observations, including information provided by parents and other settings, children's developmental levels are assessed through on-entry baseline assessment. Subsequent assessments are then tracked throughout the year using the Birth to Five Matters non-statutory guidance. At the end of the academic year the children will be assessed against the ELG using the language of 'Emerging' or 'Expected in preparation for progression in Year 1.

Planning and guided children's activities will reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice.

We support children in using the three Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

The Leuven Scale of well being and Involvement

High levels of wellbeing and involvement are paramount in ensuring that a child reaches their full learning potential. We use the Leuven Scales as an indicator of wellbeing and involvement and develop our provision and curriculum to tailor to the needs of each individual.

Ignatian Pedagogy - The Jesuit method of Teaching and Learning

The hallmark of learning in an FCJ school is that care for the individual is paramount; we teach a person first and a subject second. This fundamentally means that the staff know the pupils well and are aware of the influences which affect their growth both personally and as learners. Knowledge of the context in which learning takes place is paramount to successful teaching and learning. Experience is the starting point for successful learning and engages the whole person - mind, heart and will in the learning process. This combined with dynamics of reflection and action allows for successful learners to grow, flourish and thrive as independent learners.

The Principles of Teaching and Learning for All

Alongside Ignatian pedagogy, in our school, Rosenshine's principles for effective instruction underpin the foundations for teaching, learning and assessment of the curriculum. The importance of giving students sufficient time to practise retrieving information and ask questions, following the delivery of curriculum content, builds upon prior knowledge and understanding to secure firm foundations. Teachers carefully sequence concepts and model learning through clear stages of practice. In our school, information is not learnt once, students must continue to rehearse it by summarising, analysing, or applying their knowledge across a range of contexts.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We are committed to ensuring all children can participate fully in our provision.

In our EYFS provision we are committed to:

- Value diversity and celebrate differences.
- Adapt provision to meet individual needs.
- Work closely with families and external agencies.
- Provide appropriate support for children with SEND.
- Monitor children's progress to ensure all children achieve their potential.

Reasonable adjustments are made to enable every child to access learning and participate fully in school life.

Expectations for Behaviour

We are a UNICEF Rights Respecting Gold school; our school behaviour policy supports and reflects this.

As the children enter our Foundation Stage from a range of different settings, the initial part of the autumn term is spent familiarising the children with the expectations for behaviour and routines within the school setting.

Correct behaviour will be modelled to the children and incorrect behaviour addressed in a fair, age-appropriate and gentle way. If an individual child continues to display behavioural tendencies that are not in accordance with the behaviour policy for the school, then through support of the parents an

individual behaviour plan may need to be introduced for a short period of time. As a result of this the child will be added to our SEND register and we may refer to outside agencies for additional support and guidance.

Refer to the RRS behaviour policy for further information

Rough and tumble play and fantasy aggression

Young children often engage in play that has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play; some children appear preoccupied with these themes, but their behaviour is not necessarily a precursor to hurtful behaviour or bullying.

- We recognise that teasing and rough and tumble play are normal for young children and acceptable within limits. We regard these kinds of play as pro-social and not as problematic or aggressive.

- We will develop strategies to contain play that are agreed with the children, and understood by them, with acceptable behavioural boundaries to ensure children are not hurt.

- We recognise that fantasy play also contains many violent dramatic strategies, blowing up, shooting etc., and that themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies' and as such offer opportunities for us to explore concepts of right and wrong.

- We can tune in to the content of the play, perhaps to suggest alternative strategies for heroes and heroines, making the most of 'teachable moments' to encourage empathy and lateral thinking to explore alternative scenarios and strategies for conflict resolution.

Play-based Learning

Through play our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world. They practise and build up ideas and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They can think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They can express fears or re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations. We deliver learning for all the areas through, purposeful play and learning experiences, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence they learn to make decisions. It provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

Children should be given an opportunity to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through the arts. Adults can support children's thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions.

Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around the classroom to extend their learning.

Outdoor Learning, Safety and Risk Assessment

Outdoor learning is an integral part of the Early Years curriculum and is embedded within the daily experiences of all children from our Two-Year-Old Provision through to Reception. We recognise that young

children learn best when they are actively engaged in meaningful, first-hand experiences and are provided with opportunities to explore, investigate and take appropriate risks within a safe, stimulating and well-managed environment.

Our outdoor provision is viewed as an extension of the classroom, offering rich and varied learning experiences that support all seven areas of learning and development.

We provide daily access to high-quality outdoor learning experiences where children can:

- Explore and engage with the natural environment through observing seasonal changes, caring for plants, investigating minibeasts and appreciating the beauty of God's creation.
- Develop gross and fine motor skills through climbing, balancing, running, digging, mark-making and manipulating a range of outdoor resources.
- Take managed risks and solve problems, developing judgement, perseverance and resilience in a safe and supportive environment.
- Investigate, experiment and make discoveries through open-ended play, scientific enquiry and exploration.
- Strengthen communication and language skills through collaborative play, storytelling, discussion and shared experiences.
- Build confidence, independence and self-esteem by making choices, overcoming challenges and reflecting upon their achievements.
- Develop social skills by learning to cooperate, negotiate, share resources and work together towards common goals.
- Enhance their physical and emotional wellbeing through regular exercise, fresh air and opportunities for active play.

As an FCJ school, outdoor learning also provides valuable opportunities to nurture children's spiritual development. Through experiences of awe and wonder, children are encouraged to recognise God's presence in the world around them and develop a deep appreciation for the gift of creation.

Living out the FCJ values of **Companionship, Dignity, Excellence, Gentleness, Hope and Justice**, children learn to care for one another, respect living things, persevere through challenges and become responsible stewards of God's world.

Safety and Risk Management

We believe that children need opportunities to encounter challenge and experience managed risk as part of healthy development. Carefully supervised risk-taking helps children develop confidence, resilience, decision-making skills and an awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe.

To ensure children's safety whilst promoting adventurous play and exploration, we:

- Carry out regular and comprehensive risk assessments of all indoor and outdoor learning environments.

- Conduct daily safety checks of outdoor areas, equipment and resources before children access them.
- Ensure all equipment is age-appropriate, well-maintained and regularly inspected.
- Provide appropriate levels of supervision, taking account of children's ages, stages of development and individual needs.
- Teach children how to identify hazards and make safe choices during play and exploration.
- Follow the school's health and safety, safeguarding and educational visits procedures.
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained in paediatric first aid and emergency procedures.
- Promote safe use of tools and equipment through direct teaching, modelling and supervision.
- Adapt activities and environments where necessary to meet the needs of all children, including those with SEND.

Children are encouraged to learn how to assess risks for themselves, for example when climbing, balancing, transporting resources or exploring natural materials. Staff support children to think critically about safety, enabling them to develop increasing independence, responsibility and self-regulation.

Transitions

We recognise that successful transitions contribute significantly to children's wellbeing and achievement.

We support transitions through:

- Home visits and induction opportunities where appropriate.
- Close liaison between settings and classes.
- Sharing information with parents and carers.
- Induction visits between the settings.
- Induction visits for new children.
- 'Stay and Play' visits.
- Induction and settling visits - Little Companions
- Developing familiarity with new environments and adults.

Particular attention is given to transitions from:

- Home to Two-Year-Old Provision
- Two-Year-Old Provision to Nursery
- Nursery to Reception
- Reception to Key Stage One

Parents as partners

We recognise that parents are children's first and most enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We recognise the role that parents have played, and their future role, in educating the children. Parents will be kept up to date with their child's progress through regular

Tapestry learning journey updates, parent consultation meetings, twice yearly short reports detailing progress and a comprehensive end of year report (Reception and Pre School).

In Little Companions parents are kept up to date through daily interactions with key workers and updates throughout Tapestry both for learning and daily care diaries.

This policy is to be referred to alongside other supporting policy documents within the school and updated in accordance with current good practice in Early Years teaching.