



Mission Statement:

The Sacred Heart is a Community committed to the education of its pupils in a Catholic Christian ethos, where each person is invited to serve God and others in faith, hope and love.

Aims:

- To foster spiritual growth in Christian faith and values
- To value, appreciate and enjoy learning
- To work for excellence
- To further curiosity and creativity
- To aspire to high ideals
- To stimulate generous service of others

Early Years Education Policy

Introduction

At the Sacred Heart School we firmly believe that Early Years Education is the foundation upon which children build for the rest of their lives

It encompasses all aspects of learning and this Policy document aims to outline the purpose, nature and management of Early Years education at our school

The implementation of this Policy is the responsibility of all members of staff but especially the Head of Early Years, the Head of the Lower School and classroom assistants working with them

Aims and Objectives of Early Years Education

In the Policy 'Early Years' refers to children under the age of 5 and to all children in the Reception Year. In the National Curriculum this is referred to as YR. This stage of education is referred to as the Foundation Stage

- a At the Sacred Heart School the Foundation Stage is concerned with personal, social and emotional development; communication; language and literacy; mathematical skills; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creativity
- b Children will encounter the National Curriculum where appropriate to their stage of development
- c We view each child as an individual with specific needs and encourage every child to reach his / her full potential

Implementation

The curriculum at the Sacred Heart School balances experiences in all areas of a child's development:

- Personal Social and Emotional
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Problem Solving Number and Reasoning
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

Please see Appendix:

Equal Access:

All children at the Sacred Heart School have equal access to the curriculum. However:

- α We recognise that the children's progress will be at different rates and individual achievements vary
- β Some children will exceed expectation while others, especially those and Special Education Needs, will require extra help and support
- χ Boys and girls are given equal access to the curriculum and encouraged to take part in all activities at the Sacred Heart School

Health and Safety

- a Particular emphasis is given to personal health and hygiene
- b Safe use of equipment is encouraged at all times
- c Once the children have settled in school they are encouraged to integrate with the older children, through Assemblies, at playtimes and during lunchtime

Role of Parent and Induction Process

- a At the Sacred Heart School we welcome parents to stay with their children until they are settled. We work closely in partnership with parents to ensure that every child fulfils his / her potential
- b Before starting at the Sacred Heart School children have the opportunity to visit the school to become familiar with the surroundings and staff
- c The Reception teacher is available to talk to any parent, after school, but it is advisable to make an appointment through the School Office
- d The Friends of the Sacred Heart School extend a warm welcome to new parents and children at events like the Fete and Summer Ball
- e In the first few weeks of the academic year great emphasis is placed on the social and emotional well-being of the child to enable him / her to settle down at school happily

Assessment

- a The Foundation Stage staff make regular observations and notes which lead to assessment of the individual child's needs and achievement
- b When children reach statutory school age more formal assessment takes place

Background Information

This document was prepared with reference to the:

'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage' QCA 2000

'Foundation Stage Profile @ QCA 2003

and relevant materials from various 'Norfolk Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership' courses
Every Child Matters

See also: Parents Information Booklet for new Lower School families
More details regarding areas of development on this site

Personal, Social and Emotional

- a Children are encouraged to establish positive relationships with other children and the adults they come into contact with at school, through working together and through meaningful play
- b Children are taught to work and play together co-operatively. We encourage them to take turns, to share resources and equipment fairly and to share adult time and attention
- c Children are made aware of behaviour which is acceptable in the school and behaviour which is not acceptable
- d Children are encouraged to consider the physical and emotional needs of others
- e They are encouraged to become independent in matters such as dressing themselves, looking after their belongings and personal hygiene
- f Children are expected to take control of their feelings and express them in acceptable ways
- g Children are taught in mixed ability classes. They are taught by a qualified teacher in the Reception Class, with additional support
 - i Children have the opportunity to become involved in a wide range of first hand experiences leading to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and concepts. Concentration and perseverance are encouraged

Communication, Language and Literacy

- ∞ Children are encouraged to listen attentively, to talk with increasing confidence about their thoughts and experiences, to explore and enjoy stories, songs and poetry and to use their own pictures and writing to communicate their ideas and feelings
- ∞ A variety of strategies are used to teach early reading skills

Problem Solving, Number and Reasoning

- a Children are taught to use simple mathematical language to describe shape, position, size and quantity
- b Through a variety of practical activities they are taught to sort, match, compare, order, sequence and count and to record their results

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- a We aim to foster in the children a sense of curiosity about the world around them
- b Children are encouraged to use their observational skills and develop the language to talk about their environment
- c They are given the opportunity to work on the computer and use other technology where appropriate
- d They are encouraged to use skills such as cutting, joining, folding and using tools

Physical Development

Children use large and small apparatus to promote confidence and competence and they work with a wide range of materials, construction games and tools to develop their manipulative skills
Activities within the classroom and further afield are planned to encourage full active participation of all the children, whatever their ability

Creative Development

- At the Sacred Heart School children are given the opportunity to express ideas, experiment and exercise their imagination using a wide range of resources
- a They are introduced to stories, Art and Music, from a variety of different cultures
 - b They work creatively with a range of materials to represent what they see, hear, touch and feel about their environment
 - c They have the opportunity to respond to music in a variety of ways, to explore dance and use their imagination through drama and structured play

(Prepared June 2008; Reviewed September 2008; 2009, 2011, PP /Sr F ; Next Review due: Sept.2012