

**St Joseph Catholic Primary School,
Carterton**

Early years' review report

July 8th, 2021

Reviewed by Sally Hughes

Early Years Consultant

The school was inspected by Ofsted in January 2020 and was judged as **Requiring Improvement**.

Early years was judged to be **Requiring Improvement**.

There had been a period of instability in teaching staff in the early years at St Joseph. There had been four reception class teachers during the three years leading to the Ofsted inspection of 2020.

During the review SH:

- Observed the quality of teaching and the impact this has on children's learning both inside and out.
- Examined some children's books from 2020/2021
- Examined relevant EY documentation – data, action plan and SEF.
- Held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher/EYFSCO and nursery nurse.

Since the last review of October 2019, the deputy headteacher has taken on the full time role of reception class teacher and early years lead. She started in reception class in September 2019 together with the nursery nurse. The nursery class opened again in September 2020.

Outcomes of the review:

There has been significant and rapid improvement in practice and provision since the review of 2019.

Provision and practice in the early years is now consistently good.

Strengths:

- EYFS is extremely well led and managed. The deputy headteacher is the early years co-ordinator. Both members of staff in early years, are passionate and driven, to provide the very best of education for the children, in their care.
- Children's personal development is promoted highly effectively. Children are provided with opportunities to develop emotional intelligence as well as life skills e.g. resilience and empathy. The behaviour of the children in reception class is good. This is due to high levels of engagement. The children are developing very positive attitudes to learning and to life.
- High aspirations of the EYFSCO and nursery nurse have brought about rapid and consistent improvement in practice, provision and outcomes.
- Both members of staff provide children with excellent opportunities for communication and language development.
- The members of staff are extremely knowledgeable about early years. The well-planned range of CPD in early years has impacted positively on provision and practice.
- All children, in nursery and reception are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- In this highly literate environment children are developing a love of books and reading.
- The curriculum is broad and rich and cultural capital is promoted extremely well.

Recommendations for development:

- Both members of staff to visit an inspirational early years setting in another school.
SH recommends St Edburghs Bicester.
- Include the detail of the rich curriculum and effective promotion of cultural capital in the early years' SEF.
- Include the vast range of CPD in the early years SEF.
- Display alphabet line in nursery.
- Display emotions and feelings board in reception class.

The deputy headteacher took on the role of early years lead teacher following a fall in numbers on roll and a redundancy of staff. There are currently 13 children in reception class. The nursery class re-opened in September 2020 with 8 children. Since starting in early years in 2019, the deputy headteacher and nursery nurse have attended a wide range of relevant early years training including maths, reading, phonics, early adopters, early help assessment, changes to Ofsted and Rosenshine. The full-time nursery nurse who is currently undertaking her degree, which will lead to QTS, is a very able and confident early year's practitioner who clearly understands how young children learn. This is a very successful partnership. Both members of staff work full time with the children in early years. This has brought about consistent provision of high-quality teaching and learning.

The environments in both nursery and reception and in the outdoors is truly enabling. Resources are stored and labelled to encourage children to be motivated to learn and can also make choices in their learning. This is working well, and the children are showing high levels of independence and engagement in their learning. Continuous provision is well planned and organised to enable this level of independence.

Planning is thorough and often ambitious. The lead teacher who is also literacy co-ordinator in the school has adopted a 'storytelling' approach to the curriculum. This is working very well and through this, children are developing a love of books. This is evident throughout the whole of early years. The curriculum is exciting and children are deeply engaged and sustain good concentration. Cultural Capital is promoted effectively through a vast range of exciting opportunities regularly planned for the children e.g. walking to town to 'slay the dragon', hatching eggs, gardening, baking scones for St George's day, making green smoothies on St Patrick's day and cookies on Canada day.

Teaching in reception class and nursery is strong. Staff model a good use of language, introduce new and exciting vocabulary and they question children to think more deeply and encourage them to think critically and creatively. They provide children with detailed rich conversations and as a result, children are learning to turn take in conversations. A programme of intervention NELI, the Nuffield Early Language Intervention, is in place for those children who are at risk of falling behind in communication and language.

Children in nursery enjoy using the number wall in their play. They recognise and know numbers securely to 5 and beyond.

Phonics is taught through letters and sounds. Planning is thorough and lessons are sequenced to reinforce and move children's learning on in readiness for the next stages. The children are using their phonic knowledge well, in independent writing and in their reading. Children read often to the teacher and as a result are reading well. The cosy and inviting reading areas enhance these early stages of literacy. Children are developing a love of reading. The class teacher read the story of The Paper Bag Princess to the class in an engaging and exciting way. The children loved it. They all listened and joined in.

Staff promote children's personal development effectively. In nursery the children self-register on a feelings board where they are able to communicate how they feel when they arrive at nursery. They can change how they feel throughout the day, by moving their name to appropriate feelings pictures. Children are developing positive attitudes to learning because they are motivated, engaged and happy. They show respect to each other and to adults and children display very good manners. Expectations of behaviour for learning are high because staff share these explanations clearly and calmly. Children share in tidying up the environments, positively. They are quickly developing their understanding of social situations and rules because the two members of staff provide a narrative to their learning,

always giving the children a reason for doing things. Children are developing life skills well, through Commando Joes programme, including obstacle courses and den building which promote and strengthen characteristics of self-awareness, empathy, positivity and resilience. Children learn to co-operate as they work as a team. They learn to keep on trying and not to give up. These developing characteristics can be seen in children's independent play.

In 2018, 47% of the cohort achieved a good level of development and in 2019, 54%. This year 85% should achieve a good level of development. This increase in data reflects the exceptional improvement in provision and practice in the early years.

Practice and provision now need to embed, as the school continues on its journey to outstanding, in the early years.

Children get off to a wonderful start to their learning, in the early years at St Joseph, Carterton.

SH feedback to the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the nursery nurse.

Provision and practice in the reception class at St Joseph, Carterton was reviewed by Sally Hughes, Early Years Consultant, on 08/07/2021

12/07/2021