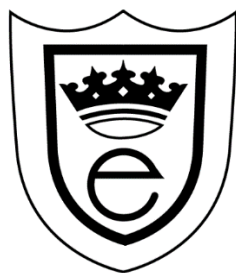


St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School



EYFS Policy

School Mission Statement and Values

Our mission at St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School is to educate our children to reach their full potential in the context of a Catholic community in which each individual shares, or is in sympathy with, the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Christian way of life.

Our core values of **equality, excellence, kindness, forgiveness, perseverance, friendship, courage, service and respect** were chosen by our pupils to be the overriding principles to which the whole school aspires, together with our golden rule, "Love one another as I have loved you" *John 13:34*.

We seek to make St Elizabeth's School a secure, happy and inclusive environment that is a place:

- of the highest quality teaching and learning;
- of compassion, co-operation and reconciliation;
- where each child is seen and appreciated as a unique individual;
- in which every child's talents are developed and their needs met;
- where mistakes are learning opportunities;
- in which all children are empowered to keep themselves safe and healthy;
- where endeavour and excellence are encouraged and celebrated;
- in which cultural diversity is respected and valued;

We value worshipping and celebrating together, sharing our Christian witness and drawing strength from and serving our local parishes and the wider community.

Date of Policy: November 2021

**Policy agreed by the Governors' Curriculum Standards and Pupil Progress Committee
November 2021**

Policy due for review: Spring Term 2026



St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

"Love one another as I have loved you"

EYFS Policy

Contents

1. Aims
2. Legislation
3. Introduction
4. Curriculum
5. Planning
6. Assessment
7. Teaching and Learning
8. The Learning Environment
9. Parents as Partners
10. Safeguarding and Welfare
11. Inclusion
12. Transition
13. Monitoring and Review

1. Aims

- To develop positive relationships with parents and carers, to build a strong partnership in supporting their children's learning and development.
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum with a solid and strong foundation in the three prime areas of learning, and the four specific areas of learning.
- To provide high quality learning experiences that correspond to each child's developmental stage guide children towards the achievement of the Early Learning Goals at the end of the EYFS.
- To provide a happy, safe and stimulating environment, one which provides challenge, and promotes a positive attitude to learning.
- To provide a caring and inclusive learning environment which is sensitive to the requirements of the individual child, including those who have additional needs.

2. Legislation

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) that applies from September 2021](#).

3. Introduction

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to achieve their full 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” (EYFS Statutory Framework 2021).

At St. Elizabeth’s we strive to encourage a love of learning in our pupils. Our broad curriculum has God at its centre and we strive to enable each child to flourish spiritually and academically

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception Year. We believe that early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives. We greatly value the importance that the EYFS plays in laying secure foundations for future learning and development.

At St. Elizabeth’s Primary School, children join us at the beginning of the school year, following their fourth birthday.

At St. Elizabeth’s Primary School, we endeavour to provide high quality early learning experiences that uphold and demonstrate the four key principles outlined in the EYFS statutory framework:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**;
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments**, in which their experiences respond to the individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- Children develop and learn **in different ways and at different rates**.

4. Curriculum

At St. Elizabeth’s Primary School our curriculum is underpinned by our Catholic identity and Fundamental British values. We follow the aims and objectives set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. We recognise that all areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

We ensure that the children receive a balance of adult led and child initiated activities, giving them the best chance of obtaining a good level of development at the end of Reception.

We recognise that three areas of learning are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three prime areas are:

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**
- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**

We also teach the four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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

We focus on the prime areas of learning first. The balance then shifts towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning, as children grow in confidence and ability. If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, we will discuss this with the child's parents/carers, and agree how best to support the child.

As well as the seven areas of learning, we ensure that our environment and delivery of the curriculum incorporates the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

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

5. Planning

“There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Practitioners ensure a strong foundation for children's development in the three prime areas before providing children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the prime areas of learning. This is particularly important in developing language and extending vocabulary.”

(EYFS Statutory Framework 2021).

At St. Elizabeth's Primary School, we support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum that enables each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential.

Staff also take into account the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience. Where a child may have a special educational need or disability, staff consider whether specialist support is required, linking with relevant services from other agencies, where appropriate.

In planning and guiding children's activities, staff reflect on the different ways that children learn and include these in their practice.

Children share in daily phonics, reading, writing and mathematics sessions. At all times, the characteristics of effective learning (playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically) are considered in our planning and teaching in order to meet each child's needs.

We ensure that children's next steps are met in our weekly planning, and also respond to their social and emotional needs as well as their achievement inside and outside of school.

6. Assessment

“Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support” (EYFS Statutory Framework 2021)

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning.

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children’s learning. All our observations are recorded in the children’s individual via Tapestry. The learning journeys and include teacher, parent and child voice. Learning journeys contain a wide variety of evidence that we share with parents at each parent consultation meeting.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child **starts reception**, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’)

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

We encourage all parties to contribute to discussions, assessment and children’s learning journeys. The baseline takes into account information received from parents during home visits, as well as other records from pre-schools and child minders. Parents have access to WOW slips throughout the year, whereby they can record their own child’s significant learning moments outside of school.

7. Teaching and Learning

At St. Elizabeth’s Primary School children in the EYFS participate in whole class, small group and individual activities, with increasing times as the year progresses, in order to accommodate children’s needs and stretch their learning.

The early years education that we offer our children is based on the following principles:

- It builds on what our children already know and can do;
- It ensures that no child is excluded or disadvantaged;
- It offers a structure for learning that has a range of starting points, content that matches the need of young children, and activities that provide opportunities for learning both indoors and outdoors;
- It provides a rich and stimulating environment;
- It acknowledges the importance of a full working partnership with parents and carers.

“Play is essential for children’s development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults”

(EYFS Statutory Framework 2021).

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child’s emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Our ultimate aim is to help and guide the children to become independent, enquiring and evaluative learners. We follow children’s interests, in order to fully engage them in taking charge of their own learning. Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences, which help them make sense of the world.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for year 1.

8. The Learning Environment

At St. Elizabeth’s Primary School, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development. We always make sure that the learning environment inside and outside is planned effectively, to meet the requirements of all areas of learning.

We ensure that the classroom is well organised into clearly defined areas, which allows the children to explore and learn securely and safely. We encourage children to engage in purposeful, challenging activities with or without the presence of an adult.

The pupils in Reception Class have their own outdoor area and have many opportunities to work in the outdoors. Being outdoors offers opportunities for exploring and learning things differently to when pupils are indoors. The children can explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant. The children have access to sand, water, climbing equipment, writing opportunities, mud kitchen, construction and role play.

9. Parents as partners

“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”
(EYFS Statutory Framework 2021).

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

We pride ourselves on having outstanding relationships with parents and other parties. 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 and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development. The EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities

We hold stay and play sessions for children and their families in the summer term prior to the children starting school. The stay and play sessions continue throughout the year. The aims of the sessions are:

To support transition and to give them the opportunity to spend time with their teacher, before starting school.

To provide information for parents that supports their child's development

We also invite parents to an induction meeting. We offer parents regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress.

We have an 'open door' policy whereby we have daily discussions with parents regarding their children. We encourage parents to talk to the child's teacher if there are any concerns and hold parent's meetings during the Autumn, Spring and Summer term, to discuss the child's progress. We actively encourage parents to take part in their child's learning experiences including stay and play sessions, homework, themed half-term projects, Christmas productions and assemblies.

We draw on our links with the community to enrich children's experiences by taking them on outings/trips and inviting members of the community into our setting.

10. Safeguarding and Welfare

“Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, when they have positive adults caring for them” (EYFS Statutory Framework 2021).

At St. Elizabeth's School, we understand that we are legally required to comply with welfare requirements as stated in the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2014.

- To provide a setting that is welcoming, safe and stimulating where children can grow in confidence;
- Promote good health;
- Manage behaviour effectively in a manner appropriate for the children's stage of development and individual needs;
- To ensure that all adults who look after children, or who have unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so;
- Ensure that the setting, furniture and equipment is safe and suitable for the purpose it was intended for;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

At St Elizabeth's Primary School, it is important to us that all children in school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules and limits and to help them understand why they exist.

We use the Zones of Regulation to support children to self-regulate and to help them to understand their feelings.

We encourage children to take risks and highlight the importance of keeping themselves safe by teaching them how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological wellbeing of all children (More information can be found in the school's safeguarding policy).

We promote a healthy lifestyle by providing fresh fruit for the children daily, and encourage them to make healthy choices about what they eat. School dinners are also provided for free for all children in Reception, Year One and Year Two.

11. Inclusion

At St. Elizabeth's Primary School, we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. We recognise that children develop in different ways, at varying rates. We value the diversity of individuals within the school and treat children fairly regardless of race, religion or abilities.

We believe that all our children matter. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best. We set realistic and challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

We use a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs and use resources which reflect diversity. We monitor children's progress and take action to provide support as necessary. We focus on removing barriers to learning and aim to identify any learning difficulties at an early stage.

12. Transition

Starting school can be a difficult time for young children; we therefore plan this time carefully to support children to settle into their new class quickly and happily. During the summer term children are invited in to attend stay and play sessions with their parents, in order to develop familiarity within the setting and with the practitioners. We also hold an induction meeting, and parents are offered a home visit.

We have a good relationship with our feeder nurseries and visit the children in their homes prior to starting with us in September.

13. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed and reviewed every three years and more frequently if required.