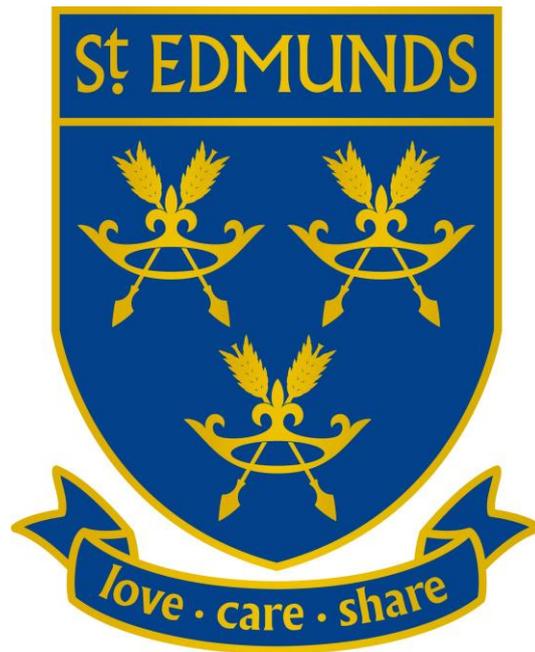


St Edmund's Catholic Primary School



EYFS Policy

January 2022

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Introduction and aims

St. Edmund's Catholic Primary School is a community of faith where we aim to keep Christ at the centre of everything we do. We celebrate the uniqueness of every individual nurturing them to achieve their full potential. Our understanding and experience of the love of God grows through our way of living, behaving, learning and teaching, which is inspired by Jesus.

Our Mission Statement encapsulated in "To Love, Care, Share", along with our Catholic values and the teaching of the Catholic Church, underpin the values of this policy.

Rationale

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their 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. 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." (The EYFS Statutory Framework, 2021)

The Early Years Foundation Stage applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. In our school, all children enter Reception, after an induction period, from the September of the academic year in which they will turn five years old. These children are in the final year of the EYFS.

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of the EYFS at St Edmund's Catholic Primary School.

Aims of the EYFS

In the EYFS we believe that all children are entitled to the best possible start in their school life, both intellectually, socially and emotionally, in order to enable them to develop their full potential.

We aim to support each child's welfare, learning and developmental needs by:

- Recognising that all children are unique and special in God's eyes, and build on the foundations laid by the family and the parish communities.
- Providing a safe, secure and caring environment where children feel happy and know they are valued by the staff looking after them,
- Understanding that children develop in individual ways and at varying rates – physically, cognitively, linguistically, socially and emotionally,
- Nurturing children's self-esteem and self-confidence,
- Teaching them to express and communicate their needs and feelings in appropriate ways,
- Encouraging children's independence and decision-making, supporting them to learn through their mistakes,
- Developing children's understanding of social skills and the values and codes of behaviour required for people to work together harmoniously,
- Supporting children to develop care, respect and appreciation for others, including those with beliefs, cultures and opinions different to their own,
- Understand the importance of play in children's learning and development,
- Providing learning experiences in play which reflect children's personal interests and areas of curiosity in order to encourage and develop their natural desire, interest, excitement and motivation to learn,
- Providing experiences which build on children's existing knowledge and understanding in order to challenge, stimulate and extend their learning and development,
- Providing effective learning opportunities in a range of stimulating environments, inside and outside.
- Providing a well-resourced environment that meets the needs of all children

Legislative requirements and non-statutory guidance

This policy is written with reference to:

Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework

Roles and responsibilities

Foundation Stage Leader

Siobhan Lovett

Foundation Stage Leader has strategic overview of the Early Years.

The Head teacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Head teacher and SLT will review all curriculum policies every two years and through monitoring and assessment procedures will look at the strategic overview of how this policy is being implemented.

The governing board

Curriculum governors will review this policy in conjunction with the Head teacher and monitor the policy's effectiveness.

Teachers

Teachers will ensure that their planning and teaching reflects the practice and procedures outlined within this policy, having regard also to the progression of skills map.

Organisation

Induction

We aim to provide an induction programme that enables every child's first experiences of school to be happy, positive and fun. We will provide children with opportunities to become familiar with their classroom, its routines and expectations so that they feel confident about starting school.

- Visits to the school are welcomed and encouraged prior to application.
- We hold an Information Meeting for Parents in the June before the children start school. As part of this evening Parents will be informed about school expectations, have an opportunity to visit the Foundation Unit and meet their child's class teacher. They can buy some of the items of uniform and have opportunities to ask questions.
- We offer two 'Play and Stay' sessions for the children and their parents which gives the children the opportunity to meet with other children in their class and the staff who will be working with them.
- The Reception Staff and FS Leader visit a number of children in their pre-school settings before starting school.
- The Reception Staff visit all children for a 'Home Visit' during the first two weeks of September before the child starts school. This enables the staff to become familiar with the child, build a trusting relationship with the parent, and enable the teacher pass on school information to the parent.
- Children will be organised into two groups based on age and will start school within their group attending morning or afternoon sessions initially.

We operate a staggered part-time intake in September/October.

- For some children it may be appropriate for them to continue to attend school for half days even after the induction period is over. Teachers liaise carefully with feeder settings and parents to establish how to cater most successfully for such children.
- A gradual, well supported introduction to the various aspects of school life is catered for. The children are introduced to the routines of school which require more routine, socialisation and directed learning situations than will have been experienced before.
- The routine of the school day is introduced slowly, especially those aspects which take the children away from their normal EYFS environment, for example, PE and Assembly.

At St Edmund's we take in 60 Reception children, which are split into two classes. The Reception classes are located within the Foundation Stage Unit, where there is indoor and outdoor provision.

- Reception children attend school between 8.55am and 3.10pm.
- They have sessions through the day, broken up by a lunch hour, choosing activities and snacks.

Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

Curriculum planning

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Reception classes at St Edmund's Catholic Primary School we aim to provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment.

Our early years setting follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS statutory framework that applies from September 2021.

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. However, 3 areas known as the prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

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

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

These seven Areas of Learning and Development address children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all Areas of Learning and Development are all closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum.

Teaching and Learning

Children experience aspects of the National Curriculum throughout the day e.g. mental and oral work, shared reading and writing, as well as phonics, using the letters and sounds materials as appropriate.

- In each session they receive a whole class input followed by adult led activities as well as child initiated play activities, where they can access resources freely and are allowed to move around the classrooms to extend their learning.
- Once a day the children participate in handwriting and phonics sessions.

- Once a week the children participate in one to one reading and a Guided Reading session.
- The children participate in Physical Education lessons in the Hall and have access to apparatus in our garden area during choosing time.
- Our Computing TA/ Teacher supports children in class to develop computing skills

Play

We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is the fundamental way in which young children learn. Play can be enjoyed and be challenging. When playing, children behave in different ways. Sometimes, their play will be boisterous, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play. Through play, children will be developing skills across all the Prime and Specific areas of learning, working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.

In a secure environment with effective adult support they will be able to,

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world
- Practise and build up concepts, ideas and skills
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk to rehearse their feelings
- Take risks and make mistakes
- Think creatively and imaginatively
- Communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems
- Express fears to relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations

Adults in the setting will support play by:

- Planning and resourcing a stimulating environment
- Supporting children's learning through planned play
- Extending and supporting children's spontaneous play
- Extending and developing children's language and communication in their play.
- Listening to all forms of children's communication and their ideas and taking these into account when developing play and planning.
- Narrating children's play.
- Asking questions about children's play.

Assessment

Planning, Monitoring and Assessment

- Teachers liaise with local nurseries and feeder settings with regard to each child's development before entry to St Edmund's. Reports and records are passed from feeder settings to Reception class teachers where available.
- Staff ensure an inclusive EYFS setting where all children have equal access to all parts of curriculum.
- Staff develop and maintain an effective partnership and positive relationship between parents and school that will have a positive impact on children's learning and development.
- Staff regularly share information about the children with parents through an open-doors ethos, letters home, texts, emails reading records, Google Classroom and meetings.
- Each week three children are selected to have their 'Special Week.' Throughout their week children can choose to learn about a topic of choice.
- Information gained through recording and assessment is shared with parents, other school staff and outside agencies as appropriate.
- Teachers encourage parents to support their child's learning at home.
- Staff encourage parental involvement helping with activities such as trips and other events.
- We use the EYFS Framework and the Development Matters age bands to support planning, monitoring and assessment of each child's development.
- Topics are planned so that children will experience activities within each topic as they progress through the EYFS. Topic planning takes place on a half-termly basis.
- Throughout the FS we plan activities to give children learning experiences and opportunities to work towards the Early Learning Goals and prepare them for the National Curriculum.
- Teaching and learning will take place within the classroom and outside areas. Within these areas children will participate in a variety of activities, both with an adult and independently.
- On-going teacher assessment helps to monitor each child and takes place through observations, discussions, photographs, record keeping, termly assessments and work completed in books.
- Samples of the children's work are kept in the child's book or Year Book. Every child has a Year Book which contains examples of their achievements and work throughout the year.
- We observe children in different teaching and learning contexts that include both adult focused activities and child-initiated play, both formally and informally, indoors and outdoors.

- We use observation to support our knowledge of individual children and their abilities, needs, interests and learning styles, and evaluate children's progress and identify priorities and next steps in their learning and development.
- We carry out baseline assessments during the child's first half term at school and track each child's progress throughout the year.
- Assessments are recorded on entry and at the end of each term on ScholarPack – the School's Management Information System.
- Reception teachers attend regular moderation training in order to standardise teacher assessment judgements with regard to the EYFS Profile.
- The EYFS Profile is used to summarise children's attainment at the end of the EYFS. The EYFS Profile outlines each child's attainment in relation to the 17 Early Learning Goals.
- An end of year report summarising the achievements from the EYFS is sent to parents including a short narrative describing the child's three learning characteristics.
- Data is discussed with the Year 1 teachers so that they can continue to support the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals if they have not already done so, before they can access the National Curriculum.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

At St. Edmund's we believe that all children matter and have equal rights - irrespective of the child's special educational need(s), disability, gender, creed or ethnicity, consequently, we aim to be a fully inclusive school. We give our children every opportunity to participate in a wide range of experiences in order to help them to achieve their best. We do this by taking account of each child's learning style, communication needs, disability and range of life experiences when we are planning for their learning.

Teachers liaise with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) to address the needs of specific children whose progress is not as expected or where children face particular challenges. Where necessary, with parental consent, the expertise of outside agencies is called upon for extra assessment, support and advice.

In the EYFS we have realistic and challenging expectations and meet the needs of all our children through:

- planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests and develop their self-esteem and confidence through a creative curriculum and learning environment
- using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs
- providing a wide range of opportunities and environments to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively
- providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which each child's contribution is valued
- monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary

It is vital that all children in the school are safe. Within our nurturing environment we provide children with opportunities to help them develop the skills they need to keep themselves safe. Children should be allowed to take risks, but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards both in the real and virtual world.

Parents and carers may bring their child into the Early Years' area in the morning from 8.45am to help ease the transition from home to school.

Additional opportunities and Community Links

In FS we take the children on local trips to the local library, shopping centre and our parish church. We may also take the children on other Educational trips linked to the curriculum and the children's learning e.g a visit to a farm.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Foundation Stage Leader will take responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy in school practice on a day to day basis. They will be involved in book scrutinies, moderation and liaising with the governors in the curriculum committee.

Covid-19 Amendments

Parents drop off their children at the gate from 8.45-9.00am and pick up time is at 3.10pm. Parents enter through the Reception gate and follow the one way system when leaving the premises. Children are asked to bring in their own water bottle every day. When entering the building the children are asked to sanitise their hands. This occurs when children exit the building and re-enter after being outside.