

St Elizabeths Catholic Primary School

Early Years Policy Statement



Living, loving and learning together in partnership following Jesus' example.

*'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full'
John 10:10*

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support 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." (Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2012)

When parents choose to send their child to our school they want to know that we will keep them safe and help them to thrive. By following the Early Years Foundation Stage framework we can provide parents with that assurance.

The EYFS principles which guide our work are grouped into four distinct but complimentary themes:

A Unique Child recognises that every child is a competent birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. The commitments are focused around development; inclusion; safety; and health and well-being.

Positive Relationships describes how children learn to be strong and independent from the base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person. The commitments are focused around respect; partnership with parents; supporting learning; and the role of the key person.

Enabling Environments explains that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The commitments are focused around observation, assessment and planning; support for every child; the learning environment; and the wider context - transitions, continuity and multi-agency working.

Learning and Development recognises that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

We believe that young children:

- Are enthusiastic and receptive learners with a natural curiosity.
- Are more likely to reach their full potential if they are happy and secure and have a sense of wellbeing.
- Learn most effectively through play, active investigation, first hand experiences and talk.
- Need time and space to engage in activities in depth and time to consolidate and reflect on their learning.
- Should feel safe to make and learn from their mistakes.
- Are unique individuals and are entitled to learn at their own pace and in their own way.

We believe that the adults working in the EYFS should:

- Be appropriately trained and have a clear understanding of how children develop and learn.
- Support the child in their learning, taking into account their individuality and needs.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Have shared purposes, expectations and practice and communicate effectively as a team.
- Recognise that first hand experiences, play and talk are the main ways through which young children learn about themselves and the world around them.
- Take a lead from the children's interests.
- Challenge stereotypical behaviour and attitudes.
- Encourage children to question and enquire.
- See observation as essential to enable them to intervene sensitively and purposefully in children's learning.
- Have regular opportunities for professional development.

The EYFS curriculum should be developed so that it:

- Is informed by the children's interests and curiosity.
- Meets the needs of the "whole child".
- Builds upon previous experiences.
- Values and promotes independent learning.
- Is "open ended" and adaptable.
- Challenges and sets high expectations for learning.

The indoor/outdoor learning environment should:

- Be safe, secure, welcoming and stimulating.
- Maximise learning opportunities.
- Foster independent learning and play.
- Promote a positive self image.

This approach ensures that the EYFS meets the overarching aim of improving outcomes and reflects that it is every child's right to grow up safe; healthy; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution; and with economic well-being.