



St. Ethelbert's RCP School **EYFS Policy**

Love, Care, Share...

Love learning as friends;

Care for our community as neighbours;

Share our faith in Jesus as disciples.

Aim

At St. Ethelbert's, we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, thereby giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and help every child to reach their full potential.

As outlined in the EYFS Framework: *'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.'*

We adhere to the Statutory Framework of the EYFS and the four guiding principles that shape practice within Early Years settings:

- 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 their 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**

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Provide a balanced curriculum, across the seven areas of learning, using play as the vehicle for learning;

- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. We provide early intervention for those children who require additional support;
- Work in partnership with parents;
- Plan challenging learning experiences, based on the individual child, informed by observation and assessment;
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in activities that are adult-initiated and child-initiated, supported by the adult;
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out;

Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning, to enable the children to achieve and exceed the early learning goals.

All the seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas 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 areas are the **prime** areas:

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

Children are also supported through 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**

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they play, explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development.

Our environment is carefully planned and resourced to enable children to access resources independently. Adults play alongside children, scaffolding their learning, developing their ideas and offering challenge. Detailed continuous provision plans, which are displayed in the different learning areas, form the basis of our long term plans. These plans are reviewed by the Headteacher.

On a daily basis, we work 'in the moment'. Using individual next steps to inform interactions, adults observe, plan and review as they play alongside children. These interactions may be as short as a minute or can last much longer.

In Reception, daily Phonics is planned for and children work with an adult in groups of between 4 and 15. Once children are able to blend words for themselves, they read to an adult at least twice per week.

There are whole group times at the beginning and end of the morning and afternoon sessions, when children listen to and discuss stories, learn mathematical concepts, sing and take part in RE activities

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the EYFS:

'Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities'

Observation and Assessment

As part of our daily practice, we observe and assess children's development and learning and as far as possible respond immediately. We record our observations in a variety of ways and all staff are expected to contribute and discussions take place. Significant observations of children's achievements are collated in their own personal learning journey, which are shared regularly with parents. We hold informal weekly Stay and Play sessions for parents, where we share the children's Learning Journeys and discuss next steps for children. Once per term, every child is a 'focus' child and parents are asked to complete a pro forma on which they can celebrate their child's successes and indicate what they think their child needs to learn next.

Within the final term of Reception, we provide the parent's with a written report based on their child's development against each of the Early Learning Goals and the characteristics of their learning. The parents are then given the opportunity to discuss these judgements with the Reception teacher in preparation for Year 1 if they wish.

Safety

Children's safety and welfare is paramount. We create a safe and secure environment and provide a curriculum which teaches children how to stay safe, make choices and assess risks. We have stringent policies, procedures and documents in place to ensure children's safety.

We promote the good health of the children in our care in numerous ways, including the provision of nutritious food and drinks (milk or water); we follow whole school procedures when children become ill or have an accident.

Inclusion

At St Ethelbert's, we value each child as an individual, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of individual children and supports them at their own pace, so that most of our children achieve and even exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception. We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and, in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies.

Parents as Partners and the Wider Context

We strive to create and maintain partnership with parents and carers as we recognise that together, we can have a significant impact on a child's learning. We welcome and actively encourage parents to participate confidently in their child's education and care.

Working with other services and organisations is integral to our practice in order to meet the needs of our children. At times, we may need to share information with other professionals to provide the best support possible.

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

Transitions

Transitions are carefully planned for and time given to ensure continuity of learning. At any transition, we acknowledge the child's needs and establish effective partnerships the adults that care for them.

Reviewed September 2025