

Elworth C of E Primary School



'Love God, Love Learning, Love One Another.' Matt 22:36-39

Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

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Reviewed By:	Mrs S. Buckley
Approved By:	Mr N Garratt
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Nominated Governor:	Mrs H Jones

'Love God, Love Learning, Love One Another.' Matt 22:36-39

At Elworth we embrace The Church of England's vision for education which is 'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good.' When Jesus was asked which was the greatest commandment, he responded with '*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind*' and '*Love your neighbour as yourself*' (Matt 22:36-39). These timeless words are at the heart of our vision, nurturing our community and shaping the ethos of our flourishing school.

School's theologically rooted Christian mission

At Elworth we create a stimulating and caring environment, grounded in Christian belief and practice, so that all members of our school community can flourish. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of diversity within modern Britain. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding experience for everyone; it should be enjoyable. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. Our six Christian values underpin all that we teach : Courage, Community, Perseverance, Generosity, Compassion, Friendship. Our school rules are: To be Ready, To be Responsible and To be Respectful. These are embedded in each child's mind so that they are fully prepared for living each day successfully. We aspire that all our children are a blessing beyond the school walls, beyond their families, beyond their local community, as global citizens. To achieve this the children and adults at Elworth embark on an exciting and adventurous journey together joining in with God's redemptive work in our lives and throughout the world and learn to be advocates for change.

Introduction

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. At Elworth CE Primary School the children join our Reception class in the autumn term after their fourth birthday.

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity.

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

“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.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

1. Aims

It is every child’s right to grow up safe, healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and with economic wellbeing. The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve these five outcomes.

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. Each child is valued as an individual and teaching and learning is based on the understanding that children develop at different rates.

At Elworth C E Primary School, we aim to:

- Provide a safe, challenging, stimulating, caring and sharing environment which is sensitive to the needs of the child including children with additional needs;
- Provide a broad, balanced, relevant and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in Key Stage 1 and beyond;
- Use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress;
- Enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence;
- Work in partnership with parents and guardians and value their contributions ensuring that all children develop to their full potential, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability;
- Provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development;
- Provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs, which are inclusive rather than parallel.

2. Seven Key features of effective practice

At Elworth CE Primary school our Early Years Foundation Stage is based upon these key features of effective practice.

1. The best for every child

- All children deserve to have an equal chance of success
- High quality early education is good for all children. It is especially important for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- High quality early education and care is inclusive. Children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. All children promptly receive any extra help they need, so they can progress well in their learning.

2. High-quality care

- The child's experience must be central to the thinking of every practitioner.
- Young children thrive when they are loved and well cared for.
- Practitioners know that starting school, and all other transitions in the early years, are big steps for small children.

3. The Curriculum: What we want children to learn

- The curriculum is a top-level plan of everything the setting wants the children to learn.
- Planning to help every child to develop their language is vital.
- The curriculum is ambitious.
- Depth in early learning is much more important than covering lots of things in a superficial way.

4. Pedagogy: helping children to learn

- Children are powerful learners. Every child can make progress in their learning with the right help.
- Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through high quality play. Sometimes practitioners make time and space for children to invent their own play. Sometimes they join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning.
- Older children need more of this guided learning.
- A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important aspect of pedagogy.

5. Assessment: Checking what children have learnt.

- Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know.
- Effective assessment demonstrates practitioners' understanding of child development.
- Accurate assessments can highlight whether a child has a special educational need and needs extra help.

6. Self-regulation and executive function

- Executive function includes the child's ability to hold information in mind, focus their attention, think flexibly and inhibit impulsive behaviour
- These abilities contribute to the child's growing ability to self-regulate:
 - Concentrate their thinking

- Plan what to do next
- Monitor what they are doing and adapt
- regulate strong feelings
- be patient for what they want
- bounce back when things get difficult.
- Language development is central to self-regulation

7. Partnerships with parents

- At Elworth we endeavour to have strong and respectful partnerships with families. This sets the scene for children to thrive in the early years.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2>

3. The Characteristics of effective teaching and learning

In planning and guiding the children's activities all our practitioners observe and reflect on the different ways that the children learn.

These are formally known as the characteristics of effective learning and are described using the following three key characteristics:

- Playing and exploring – how the child investigates and experiences things, or their 'have a go' attitude;
- Active learning – how the child concentrates and can keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy their own achievements;
- Creating and thinking critically – how the child develops their own ideas, makes links between their ideas, and develops strategies for doing things.

4. The Areas of Learning and Development

At Elworth CE Primary School we follow the curriculum as outlined in the EYFS statutory framework (last updated 2025).

There are seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are 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:

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

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

The specific areas:

- Literacy.

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

Each area of learning is implemented through carefully planned, purposeful play in which our highly skilled practitioners have considered the individual needs, interests and stages of development of each of the children. The children learn through a range of teacher directed and child-initiated activities which take place both inside and outside the classroom. Our practitioners make ongoing judgements when balancing the range of child-initiated and adult-led play activities in our classes. We focus on building positive relationships with the children where the children feel supported and learn to be strong independent learners.

“Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development. Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to ensure a strong foundation for children’s development in the three prime areas. The specific areas of learning provide 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.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

5. Planning

Good planning is the key to making children’s learning effective, exciting, varied and progressive. We focus on empowering all learners to learn for life and deliver our topics using a narrative immersion approach which puts stories and drama at the heart of our Early Years Curriculum. The Narrative Immersion approach allows the children to take ownership of their own learning through a weekly story box ritual where the children brainstorm what is going to be learnt in response to a story character’s problem. The Narrative Immersion approach enables thematic teaching and learning as well as embedding early literacy skills in a language rich environment. The approach provides a context for learning and gives it added value and purpose.

6. Assessment

At the start of the reception year, the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) will be completed. It is a short assessment, taken in the first six weeks in which a child starts reception.

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Practitioners observe pupils and make regular assessments to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. We also take into account observations shared by parents and or/carers.

Assessment in the EYFS takes the form of recorded observations. Observations of the child are made through photographs, videos and comments using Tapestry. Observations are matched to the aspects of learning as well as the characteristics of learning.

Assessment is about noticing what children can do and what they know. It is not about lots of data and evidence.

Parents and guardians can access their child's electronic learning journey at home and can comment/ add to the learning book where appropriate.

At the end of the EYFS, practitioners 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 (expected)
- 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/ carers.

The profile is moderated internally and in partnership with other local schools to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

7. Home and School Links

We recognise that parents and carers are a child's first and most enduring educators and we aim for the schools and parents and carers to work closely during the foundation year. This can have a very positive impact on a child's development but relies on a two-way flow of information and knowledge.

We will develop this working relationship between the school and parents and carers as follows:

- We will hold a welcome meeting for all new parents.
- We will hold a parent consultation early in the year to establish how a child is settling into the school environment.
- We will keep parents updated with topics and events with a termly newsletter, our class page on the school website as well as X.
- We will operate an "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. If our teachers have concerns about the progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss them.
- Parents will be able to access their child's electronic learning journal at home using their e-mail address and password. They will be able to contribute to the learning journal with observations from home.
- We will conduct workshops for parents and carers to enable them to be familiar with the teaching methods used in school to make it easier to emulate them at home.
- There will be opportunities for parents and carers to visit the school on a volunteer basis to assist with the children's learning.

8. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Children with special educational needs will be supported as appropriate to enable them to access the curriculum fully. This includes children that are more able and those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. The school's SENCo is Mrs Buckley and she is responsible for providing additional information and advice to staff and parents and for arranging external intervention and support as necessary.

<http://www.elworthce.cheshire.sch.uk/page/send/11831>

In line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, we will provide all children, regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities, gender or ability with equal access to all aspects of school life to ensure that every child is valued as an individual. All staff are role models and are aware of the influence they have in promoting positive attitudes and use that influence to challenge stereotypical attitudes.

<https://www.elworthce.cheshire.sch.uk/page/policies/1605>

9. Transition

Nursery to Reception

On receiving the details of our September intake, prior to a child entering Reception, the following arrangements are in place:

- New Parents Evening – Staff talk to parents/ carers and share important information about getting ready for school and starting school. Parents have a tour of the school and visit the Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms.
- Home Visits – Two members of staff visit the family home to meet and observe every child in an environment that is comfortable and familiar to them, staff talk to their parents/carers and share information that will support the child's transition. The child is provided with the Starting school booklet.
- Foundation staff will contact pre-school settings from which September's intake will be taken.
- Dual-Experience 'Stay and Play' sessions - Each child and their parents and carers will be invited to spend some time at Elworth C E Primary School during the summer term in order to familiarise themselves with both the staff and the classrooms. These contribute to a smooth transition into school.

[Transition Links for new parents](#)

Reception Class to Key Stage 1

Transition will start, during the Summer Term, in our Reception classes where there will be a shift towards more adult led activities. Children will have opportunities to meet with their Year 1 teacher through a range of planned activities including story times and 'Meet the Teacher' sessions. During this time, the EYFS Profile is completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, staff and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This informs the dialogue between Reception and Year 1 teachers about each child's stage of development and learning needs and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

Transition meetings are held during the summer term which provides opportunities for Reception and Year 1 teachers to discuss each individual child.

The Year 1 teacher organises the Year 1 classroom so it mirrors the summer term Reception class. This ensures that the children who did not meet the ELG at the end of reception have activities that they can independently access at their appropriate level.

10. Safeguarding and welfare procedures

Our safeguarding and welfare procedures are outlined in our safeguarding policy.

<https://www.elworthce.cheshire.sch.uk/page/policies/1605>

11. Leadership and Management

All EYFS staff are kept well-informed with any changes and attend all local authority training. The EYFS Team leader monitors teaching and learning across both reception classes.

Priorities relating to the EYFS will be identified in the school improvement plan as appropriate and a detailed action plan is used as a working document to constantly improve standards.

It is expected that all staff and governors are aware of the requirements of the Foundation Stage and the importance of the key stage in relation to the children's learning and its impact on raising standards across the school. EYFS has a specific link governor. All action plans are emailed termly to this governor who visits the setting regularly.

[EYFS Statutory Framework 2025](#)

[Development Matters - Non-statutory curriculum guidance for the early years foundation stage](#)