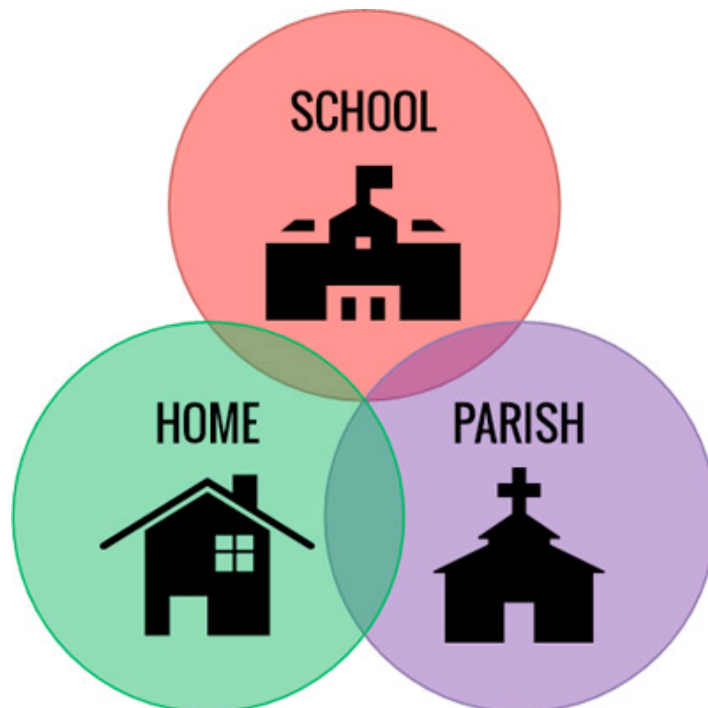




St. Edward's Primary School

Policy for Developing Effective Relationships between Home,
School, Parish, and the wider Community

2021-2022



“Such is the grace of God and such is our faith, which we must transmit to...children so that, once adults, they can do the same for their children” - Pope Francis

St Edward's Primary School

Developing Effective Relationships between Home, School, Parish, and the wider Community Policy

Mission Statement

"Live, Love and Serve."

At St Edwards we endeavour to develop and care for the whole child through our teaching and sharing of the Catholic faith.

We aim to develop an awareness of God's love for each person in the school community, through our work and prayer.

We aim to show our love of God in the way we care and value each other and ourselves.

In the delivery of the curriculum, we aspire to equip children with those skills necessary to become contributing members of society and responsible adults.

We recognize and encourage our pupils' individual gifts and talents.

St Edward's staff will aim to provide a good quality of education striving to achieve the very highest standards for all its pupils and, at the same time, to develop lively critical minds.

We will aim to develop each pupil's appreciation of education as a lifelong and enjoyable process.

St Edwards School wishes to work in partnership with the parish and families, local schools and community groups recognizing that only by working together can the school make its contribution towards the development of committed Christians and active members of the Church.

The Catholic School's Contribution to the Common Good, Community Cohesion and the Mission of the Church

St. Edward's RC Primary The Holy Name of Mary Parish Church

"This is what the Lord asks of you: only this: that you act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8)

Rationale:

In nurturing the human wholeness of all our children, we believe that effective, respectful relationships are essential between parents, school, parish and the appropriate local communities. As a Church school, we welcome and acknowledge our responsibility to promote community cohesion, global education and sustainable development.

Our Catholic school is an important part of the mission of the Church in education and in service to the common good. This policy helps to clarify roles and responsibilities.

Instrument of Government:

St. Edward's Primary School has been designated by the Secretary of State as being a school with a religious character. This designation is expressed in law in the school's Instrument of Government. Our school ethos statement, part of the legal Instrument and the same as every other Catholic school in England and Wales, reads as follows:

St. Edward's RC Primary School,

The school was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with canon law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and in accordance with the Trust deed of the Diocese of Middlesbrough and in particular:

- a) Religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, disciplines and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church
- b) Religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church
- c) At all times, the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ

This policy, which is supported by the work of Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, enables us to evidence and further secure the religious character of our school and helps us to further deepen the quality of Catholic education as articulated in our school Mission Statement: Live, Love and Serve!

The Home:

We will seek to assist parents who are the primary educators of their children, in nurturing their children to wholeness and if they so wish, in the religious formation of their children.

We believe that when parents love and care for their children, they are witnessing to a profound experience of the love and care of God. In all our relationships with parents, guardians and caregivers, we will assist them to become aware of God's presence in the midst of family life and to further develop this awareness.

Our home/school agreement recognises this primary role of parents and the school's responsibility to nurture this role.

"The first and primary educators of children are their parents. Schools should seek to help parents be more conscious of their role and establish partnership. It is impossible to do too much along these lines" - Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School

"The family is the basic cell of society. It is the cradle of life and love, the place in which the individual 'is born' and 'grows'. ... We cannot make too great an effort to prepare parents to be catechists of their own children" - Christifideles Laici

"It must be emphasised that the pastoral intervention of the Church in support of the family is a matter of urgency" - Familiaris Consortio

The School

At all times our school will serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ. This will be explicit in all we say and do. Our school will be a place where God is recognised, named and celebrated.

We recognise the limitations of the school and acknowledge that faith development is a gradual, life long and community process. For the Catholic child, this is primarily a partnership of home, school and parish. **As a Catholic community we believe that the education of children to and in faith essentially takes place in the home, supported by the local faith community.**

We welcome and acknowledge our responsibility to affirm and nurture the faith of those children within our school of other Christian Traditions and other World Faiths. We further acknowledge our responsibility to nurture positive personal beliefs and values in all our children, whatever their background, emphasising the need for each of us to grow in love, confidence and responsibility, and to be at peace.

We will provide:

- a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith
- an experience of living liturgy in the Catholic Tradition
- practical and realistic support systems for parents
- an experience of a Christian serving and caring community
- a knowledge and understanding of other Christian Churches and other World Faiths
- opportunities to nurture and affirm the spiritual development of **all** our pupils

We acknowledge that:

- Religious Education 'can become empty words falling on deaf ears, because the authentically Christian witness that reinforces it is absent from the school climate' - Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School
- '...without love, it will do me no good whatever...' 1Corinthians 13:3
- "The parish must rediscover its vocation which is to be a welcoming family home where those who have been baptised and confirmed become aware of forming the people of God" - Catechesis in Our Time (CT)

The Parish

Our school is rooted in the Eucharistic community of The Holy Name of Mary from which it was derived. The school is an integral part of the mission of the parish.

The role of the parish in accompanying families in their journey of faith will be accomplished through:

- Knowing, visiting and encouraging families
- Providing welcome, information and pastoral support
- Providing catechetical resources and programmes
- Celebrating in liturgy, sacraments and prayer
- Ensuring that **all** who visit our church and school are welcomed

We believe that the parish community must continue to be the prime mover and pre-eminent place for catechesis.

"Catechesis takes place within a community living out its faith at a level of space and time not available to the school; a whole lifetime" - Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School

"The parish must rediscover its vocation which is to be a welcoming family home where those who have been baptised and confirmed become aware of forming the people of God" - Catechesis in Our Time

The Local and Wider Community:

We acknowledge that some of the pupils in our school are members of other Christian Churches and other World Faiths.

We will promote respect for the rights and dignity of **every** pupil in our school and celebrate, affirm and nurture their faith as appropriate.

Local ministers and religious leaders will be invited to participate in school celebrations and liturgies and encouraged to affirm and support pupils as appropriate.

At all times the school shall seek to contribute to the common good and community cohesion where the rights of all parents and children are respected, and diversity is valued.

Implementation and Evaluation

Specific action to implement this policy is evidenced in both Sec 5 SEF and Sec 48 DSEF and the SIP

This policy will be reviewed every two years.


Catholic Life Co-Ordinator: Mrs C Gardner

Date: July 2021

(Review date July 2023)

Appendix 1: That's a Good Idea!

Some Examples of Good Practice in Home / School / Parish Links / Community Cohesion / Global Education

- ✓ Regular prayers for the parish/es offered during school mass or assemblies.
 - ✓ Prayers of the Faithful during Sunday Eucharist sometimes refer to the needs of the parish schools.
 - ✓ School services sometimes held in the parish or parishes on a rota basis. Parish services sometimes held in school.
 - ✓ A place available for quiet, personal prayer in the school.
 - ✓ Parishioners invited into the school chapel.
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- ✓ A distinctively Christian welcome sign for all who enter the school – such as “Peace to all who enter here”.
 - ✓ A high quality focal point in the school's entrance area that reflects the Catholic nature of the school and the liturgical season.
 - ✓ Advent/Lent/Easter Family Liturgy held in the deanery or parish church.
 - ✓ A notice board in a prominent place in school containing parish news; weekly bulletins; names of people who are ill; forthcoming parish events.
 - ✓ A section of the parish newsletter or parish notice board allocated for regular news about school. Information could include welcome to new staff, new pupils and prayer intentions.
 - ✓ Two pupils from each parish as parish contacts; collecting bulletins and taking school newsletters back to the parish.
 - ✓ Times of parish mass, etc. on school newsletters.
 - ✓ Communicating, through a newsletter, the content of each term's R.E. to parents, including suggestions of how parents can support their children.
- ✓ The RE newsletter stapled to parish newsletter each term to keep parishioners informed.
 - ✓ School and parish together celebrating 'Moments that Matter' with parents.
 - ✓ School [as well as parish] welcoming newly baptised members of the faith community.
 - Baptismal anniversaries remembered.
 - ✓ Catholic Support Agency contacts available through school.
 - ✓ Leaflets in Church
 - ✓ Supporting family prayer life with booklets, suggestions and ideas.
 - Send a prayer card home in November so families can write the names of those who have died they want to remember. They will be prayed for in school.
 - Create a 'tree of remembrance'. Buy a decoration/light to remember the dead. Have a tree lighting ceremony at the end of November.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Inviting parents and parishioners into school for prayer and special liturgies. • Prayer for parents/parishioners during Advent – 10/15 minutes in front of the Advent wreath at the beginning or end of day • Voluntary mass/stations of the cross/rosary at lunchtime/before school for children/staff/parents/parishioners. • Using liturgies and ideas from, 'Journeying Together' e.g. welcome liturgy for reception where children have a Yr. 6 'special friend'. This child then plays a role in the 'Goodbye' liturgy for Yr. 6 leavers. • Parental involvement in liturgy – praying with parents and parishioners. • Encourage parent/parishioner participation by providing them with a leaflet so they can join in. • Involvement by both partners in planning joint liturgy • Parents meet priest in school – not just sacramental preparation. • Development of chaplaincy team – not just priest • Employ a lay chaplain who would have links | <p>with the parish e.g. SVP and RE Co-ordinator. Part of the role would be to help staff prepare liturgies/masses etc. They would also listen to children, parents and staff as friend or adviser.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission Statement reviewed regularly – all stakeholders involved including parish and parents. • Joint school – parish mission statement • Link person for home / school / parish communications • A member of staff on the Parish Council. ✓ The relevant section of school development plan could be shared with the parish council on an annual basis. ✓ Home / school / parish development team – action plan • Youth worker for schools / parishes • Service of welcome for newly baptised children • Shared fundraising between home/school/parish e.g. 'Romanian shoeboxes'/ Cafod • Joint project e.g. tending the Church grounds or painting the school or parish hall. • Create or work together on a 'quiet garden' or 'peace garden', to be | <p>used by school/parish/parents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint 'mission' with the parish • Housebound 'adopted' • Pastoral care partnership. • School and parish – adult formation / Alpha – Journey in Faith • Parish and school help to support family life relationships through various programmes. Involve 'Marriage and Family Life' ministry if appropriate. • Celebrations involving the whole community. • Service of commissioning for a new headteacher/teacher in the parish. • Service of welcome for a new member of the school community. ✓ All new parents and staff to the school gifted with a gesture or symbol of welcome from the parish community/ies. (A school prayer leaflet and/or bible, for example). ✓ A member of the parish to be included in welcome liturgies and meetings. • Baptismal anniversaries remembered. |
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- Sacramental preparation – prayer partners
- Prayer sponsors given prayer card with child's name
- Prayer sponsors invited to a post communion party
- Service of Reconciliation for the whole school community.
- Wider parish community involvement in school eg. reading partners, sewing groups, invited speakers etc.
- Use of ICT suite for adult education – parents and parishioners
- Create links between the school and SVP and support them financially.
- Involve parents and parishioners in making 'story bags'. The RE story can be linked to the literacy strategy.
- One week every year the school/parish and home to explore global and other Faith issues together.
- Parents/parishioners invited to give talks in school, e.g. history etc.