

Guidance for parents from September 2026

Please note this guidance may change in Keeping with any new EYFS/government Guidance



St. Michael's Family Centre, (OfSTED No: EY 411778)

Registered as a charity

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Welcome

This 'Parents Welcome Pack' is provided to help you and your child to settle in and enjoy your time with us in the Family Centre

We understand that this can be a difficult time for parents, and we would like to support you as much as possible to make this an enjoyable experience for you and your family.

We hope you find this pack beneficial.



Our Aims and Objectives

- To provide a safe, caring, stimulating and happy environment. We nurture each child to flourish in their own individual way and support them to reach their full potential recognising that each child has their own unique starting point.
- To promote equality and diversity; our policy opposes any discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, ability, sex or religion.
- To work in partnership with parents and other professional bodies, to ensure a non-discriminatory environment for staff and parents alike, to eliminate any issues that may arising from race, culture, language and religion so that all children are treated as individuals.
- To provide opportunities for all children to be active learners and to be stimulated to learn through play, discovery, enjoyment, awe and wonder, through free play; thus, allowing the child to develop through the EYFS.
- To share information and advice with parents, welcoming you into the nursery to have either formal or informal discussions – confidentiality is respected. Our main form of communication is Tapestry (Please see addition information for more details)
- To provide carefully planned activities for learning and development to ensure each child can be both confident and enthusiastic maintaining the welfare of the child. These will include a mixture of child-led and adult directed activities promoting all areas of the EYFS learning and development.
- This is balanced with free play indoors and outdoors where children can choose their own play activity, moving around freely making choices, building and developing their own friendships.



How our Nursery works

The Family Centre has 4 rooms which are separated by age.



Tiny Owls Room – For children from 6 months to approx. 18 months

Barn Owls Room – For children between the ages of 18 months to approx. 2.5 years



Snowy Owls - For children between the ages of 2.5 years to school age

Wise Owls - For pre-school and school aged children



Welcome to the new term at St Michael's please find our most up-to date information
for All Parents September 2026

Key questions and answers:

Will my child have a keyworker?

Each child is allocated a keyworker and she will spend more time with your child getting to know them and support them in activities. The purpose of this role is to ensure your child has a familiar adult with whom they can build a secure and trusting relationship.



What will my child be doing while in the Family Centre?

The ethos of the family centre is that children learn through play – therefore the staff will spend time planning play based activities and experiences for your child to join in with to enable them to play and learn. We use an in the moment planning approach which means that staff will observe the children's development and interests and then plan activities to further their development. All of the children will have time taking part in both child chosen activities and adult directed activities to support their play and learning, this includes whole group activities like Circle time / story time and snack time. We use both verbal and visual communication systems with the children to help them to develop an understanding of our routines. Examples of our visual timetables can be seen in the individual rooms and staff can provide you with more information about these on request. We have developed an Elizabeth Jarman communication friendly approach therefore all of our rooms and staff use both verbal and visual communication systems with the children to help them to develop speech, language and communication to include our routines and expectations for behaviour.

Will my child access outside play-time?



Each room and group of children have time for outside play. To maintain the safety of the children in the outdoor play space each room will have a designated time for outside play. We will have a number of safe activities for children to choose from outside. Note in extreme weather we may not use the outdoor area.

Security – How is my child kept safe?

Security of your children when in our care is of the utmost importance to us. As well as maintaining the correct staff/children ratio, we have other safety features in place.

All staff are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and have all received training to carry out their role.

Staff are also required to alert to, and report, anything they feel constitutes inappropriate behaviour by other members of staff.



- Staff will sign your child or children in on the registers.
- We ask that all parents at the time of registering to advise us of who will be collecting your child and this is recorded on the child's "personal file". (Please note: if your child is to be collected by a person other than the usual parent or carer, we will not allow the child to leave the nursery unless we have not been notified by the parent/carer of the change).
- All staff have a full and relevant qualification or are working towards being qualified and have safer recruitment checks completed including references and "enhanced" Criminal Records Bureau checks prior to commencing work with us.
- All areas in the indoor and outdoor Family Centre are subjected to rigorous risk assessments.
- We do have childcare students on placement with us and have DBS checks and are never left unattended with the children.

For more information on our health and safety procedures and practices please refer to our Health and safety policy

How will the children arrive and depart from the family centre?

To maintain the safety of children and parents as the corridor and reception area can become very busy and congested we ask that you follow a 1 way flow therefore we ask that:

Parents to arrive at the main door at booked/allocated time ring the bell and they will be let in by a staff member.

We ask that where possible parents do not arrive early as this causes congestion and health and safety issues if you need to wait then we ask please be mindful of others arriving and leaving and do not let in other parents or adults.



Please do not leave buggies or other items in the reception area as this is a shared area with the school and causes safety issues.

Could parents aim to say goodbye to children at the door to the child's room and not enter the room unless it is essential to pass on information (please be mindful of the other children in the room and ensure that doors are kept closed to keep the children safe)

How to maintain our 1-way flow

For parents of children in **the Tiny and Barn Owls** could you leave via the main door that you came in.

For parents of the children in the **Snowy and Wise Owls** please leave using the fire exit door at the end of the corridor near the Snowy/Wise Owls (this lead directly to the outside and car parking area)

Note the: school/family centre car parks **is not** be used by parents – there is limited parking directly outside the family centre however it is important that you take care when using this to drop off and pick to avoid injury to children or other adults.

What happens at if my child needs to sleep or rest? (safe sleep)



From Sept 2026 we have new EYFS guidance for rest and sleep for our children which means we have needed to revisit and revise our policy and made changes to include that all children under 1 year old will be required to sleep in a cot with no comforters. All staff have updated their knowledge of the safe sleep requirements as on the Lullaby Trust this means it is important that you work with your child and help them to self-settle and sleep in a cot to meet this expectation. (A copy of our Safe sleep policy can be made available on request)

Will my child have snack & or lunch?

Note during snack and lunch time in keeping with EYFS guidelines the children will have staff sitting with them that are paediatric first aid trained

All children attending our Centre's will be offered snack in the morning and or afternoon this will consist of a selection of fruits alongside a food with carbohydrates for example toast or pitta bread – and either milk or water - the children help to prepare snacks. The staff complete simple cooking activities with the children so they may have this for snack-time. **Note allergy and other diet/food requirements will be met - we are a NUT FREE CENTRE.**

Lunch time - the children will need to bring a healthy packed lunch in keeping with our healthy eating policy – more details of this can be found on our website. **Please ensure that you label your child's lunch box and for the Barn and Snowy Owls that it is put on onto the trolley in the corridor.**



Lunch time is used to develop social skills as well as self-help skills the children sit in social groups with the staff.



**Tiny Owls have lunch together in the Tiny Owl Room
Barn Owls have lunch together in the Wise Owl Room
Snowy Owls have lunch together in the Wise Owl Room**

After the children have eaten lunch, they will go back to their normal room or outside to play.

Note for children in the Barn & Snowy Owls arriving between 8am and 8.30am they will attend breakfast club and be together in a family group in the Wise Owl room where they will be offered a selection of healthy option /non-added sugar breakfast cereals and have time to play (Please do not send your child chocolate cereals)

All children will use separate drinking cups, which go through the dishwasher daily. For our younger children could you provide a suitable water bottle (ask a staff member for advice). To maintain the EYFS guidance we do not give the children juice and request that you do not send juice for your child – water is available at all times for the children to access and drink.



What do I need to bring?

Note we have limited storage space therefore only bring a bag that will hang on your child's coat peg

Outdoor clothing: Please ensure that your child has a coat and suitable footwear for outdoor play as well as indoor play.



Nappies:

If your child is in nappies and attends full days could you please bring a small bag of named nappies – for those that attend sessions please bring spare nappies for each session

Spare clothes:

We mindful that your child may get messy/wet or have a toileting accident – therefore a bag of spare clothes can be brought in each session. Please ensure that they are named.

If your child has a favourite toy or comfort item they will be encouraged to put this in the toys from home box as these are only used to maintain physical well-being

What happens if my child is ill?

It is important that you inform us of any medical issues that may impact on your child's care and learning for example asthma/ diabetes / allergies etc.

If your child is ill and unable to attend could you please telephone and let us know – all non- attendance will be followed up with a telephone call in keeping with the EYFS guidance.

For infectious illness such as Chicken Pox or D&V the child should be kept off to conform to the NHS guidelines.

If your child is taking or requires prescribed medication whilst attending with us you will need to complete a medication consent form to allow staff to administer the medication – Note we are only able to administer prescribed medication – for which the child has been taking for 48 hours prior and the child must have been taking this for 48 hours prior to attendance and us giving the medication.



Each room has a first aid box and **all staff** are **paediatric first aid trained** and able to respond to any accidents or injuries that may occur while your child is with us.

What happens with Fee's and Payments?

Childcare
Choices
Supporting families
with childcare costs
childcarechoices.gov.uk



We accept the 30-hour working parent funding entitlements as well as 15-hour funding entitlements and top up fee's can be paid for hours attended over and above the funded entitlement which will be invoiced each month.

Please refer to our attendance and fee's policy as all booked sessions & hours are chargeable.

 **Any further Questions? Please don't hesitate to ask our staff will be happy to help.**

Contact us on: 01553 770439 or E-mail: office@stmichaelsfamilycentre.co.uk