

Mission Statement Motto: *Building relationships with God and each other, working hard in faith and hope to give our best in all things*

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School



EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE POLICY

Date **Autumn 2024**

Review Date **Autumn 20 ?**

Core Values: *Respect, Honesty, Tolerance, Justice, Forgiveness*

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Mission Statement

Holy Cross is a Catholic school which seeks to build a closer partnership with parents, the parish and the wider community. We work hard to provide an environment which is secure, stimulating and happy and where everyone is appreciated and enabled to give their best. We encourage all to have respect for each individual, to be honest, tolerant, just and forgiving and to develop a closer relationship with each other and through this a closer relationship with God.

We recognise Jean Baptiste Debrabant's vision that

"A Christian based education is a sure hope for the future of religion and society".

INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the provision that Holy Cross Catholic Primary School offer to all pupils aged three to five years. Children within this age range are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The Foundation Stage has its own framework and is therefore treated as a separate Key Stage.

Early childhood education is valued in itself and should not be seen merely as a preparation in the next stage of learning.

Admission

The children are admitted to the Nursery on a 3-term basis. Entry to the Nursery can be obtained once the child has reached 3 years of age. The Nursery operates with one Teacher and a Nursery Nurse and a Teaching assistant. There are 26 places available. We offer both 15- and 30-hour places. We offer both morning and afternoon sessions depending on availability.

On entry to the Nursery the children need to be independent in their toileting and no longer needing to wear a nappy. If you are concerned that your child may have some health issues relating to this, please speak to a member of staff for further information.

The usual entry date for Reception is September. Entry to Reception will occur in the September of the academic year in which the child becomes five. There is one Reception class of which there are 30 places available.

OUR AIMS

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We believe that all children should be able to achieve their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and encouraged in a happy, caring and fun environment. We all work for our school to be a happy place where good behaviour is expected and where all children enjoy their learning journey.

The EYFS applies to children from birth to the end of the Reception year. The EYFS is based upon four overarching principles

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- ❖ A Unique Child
- ❖ Positive Relationships
- ❖ Enabling Environments
- ❖ Learning and Development

EFFECTIVE EARLY YEARS EDUCATION

Effective education requires both a relevant and practitioners who understand and are able to implement the curriculum requirements. Children develop rapidly during the early years – physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Therefore, practitioners should ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued. Early years experience should build on what the children already know and can do. No child shall be disadvantaged. Parents and practitioners will work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

To be effective, the early years curriculum should be carefully structured (recognising different starting points; relevant to levels of need). There should be opportunities for children to engage in activities planned by adults and those that they plan and initiate for themselves. Practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children informed by knowledge of how children develop and learn. Well planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process. For children to have rich and stimulating experiences, the learning environment should be well planned and well organised. Above all, effective learning and development for young children requires high quality care and education by the practitioner.

THE EARLY YEARS FRAMEWORK

The New EYFS Framework became statutory in September 2021
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.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

(Taken from the EYFS Framework)

The new curriculum has 7 Educational Programs. These along with the ELG are the statutory guidance that we follow. We also follow the non-statutory Development Matters.

The Educational Programs are the 7 areas of learning.
These are split into Prime Areas and Specific Area.

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The prime areas:

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

The specific areas:

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

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. In each area there are Early Learning Goals that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage.

The EYFS Framework also covers the Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Playing and Exploring

‘Children’s play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development.’ EYFS 2008

Through play, our children explore and develop learning experiences which help them make sense of the world. They practice and build up ideas, and learn how to control themselves and understand the need for rules. They have the opportunity to think creatively alongside other children as well as on their own. They communicate with others as they investigate and solve problems. They express fears and re-live anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Active Learning

‘Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.’ EYFS 2008

Active learning occurs when children are motivated and interested. Children need to have some independence and control over their learning. As children develop their confidence, they learn to make decisions. This provides children with a sense of satisfaction as they take ownership of their learning.

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Creativity and Thinking Critically

‘When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.’ EYFS 2008

Children should be given opportunities to be creative through all areas of learning, not just through arts. Adults can support children’s thinking and help them to make connections by showing genuine interest, offering encouragement, clarifying ideas and asking open questions. Children can access resources freely and are allowed to move them around in the classroom to extend their learning.

PLANNING

Planning in EYFS is based on the children’s interests and the unique child.

We have long term plans where we use topics to give us a starting point with children and to ensure we cover a range and breath of aspects within the EYFS. These alongside our RE topics give us the basis for the rest of our planning.

We then have our short-term weekly planning.

This consists of many factors and influences. We have our over arching topic for the half term and use that to base our high-quality language rich texts on. From here we will plan a range of activities to link into our continuous planning. Where the maths topics can be linked, we ensure the planning makes clear explicit links to ensure smooth and effective teaching across all the 7 learning areas.

Within the classroom environment there will be a mix of adult and child led activities, interventions, and small group opportunities for the children.

Practitioners provide ample opportunities for children to make choices about their own learning. Independent learning is developed through structured play and child-initiated activities. Plans are adapted according to the children’s interests.

Each week we have different focus children. We ask parents to send in a communication on their child and send in photographs. We then observe the child more closely in their week and plan more activities into the environment based around that child’s interests and needs.

We also have our RE topics which cover all aspects of the Catholic faith.

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PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP

Parents play an important role as the first educators of their children. We work very closely with the parents right from the first visit. We invite parents of nursery and reception children to come and have a 1:1 visit in the summer term. This allows us to spend time with the parent and child in the nursery setting to get to know them and allows them to visit the setting with their parent/ carer. In the September they then come back for a visit in small groups for a 'stay and play' session. We then stagger start the children to allow them to have time with the staff to feel settled in their new classroom.

We have an open-door policy and we encourage the parents to come into nursery at the start of the day to help settle their child and help build up a good partnership between parents and school.

In reception we continue this for the first term to help support transition.

We encourage parents to keep us informed of any changes to their child's situations and make sure parents know they are able to speak to us at any time.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

In addition to ongoing assessments the children are assessed termly. The criteria against which the children are assessed co-operates fully with the objectives throughout the non -statutory Development Matters documents. Progress is tracked through individual child records which indicate whether each child is performing at age related expectations.

The EYFS Phase leader also tracks progress for each Nursery and Reception cohort. Sonar is used to input the data and to analyse strengths and weaknesses. Actions are implemented to further develop and improve provision.

We use Tapestry and Ipad's to gather observations to allow for instant capture of 'wow' moments. These are printed out termly for the parents so they can see the children's learning opportunities.

The children don't have specific individual books for subjects apart from RE, where in both Nursery and Reception we have a class floor book to help record their understanding. Any other formal recording of work is photographed or kept as and when needed.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUSION AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

No child shall be excluded or disadvantaged because of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, special educational needs, disability, gender or ability. Any children with special educational needs are monitored and records are kept in line with the School's Special Educational Needs Policy.

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OUTDOOR LEARNING

AIM

To enable the children to use the outdoor area as a context for learning throughout the year.

OBJECTIVES

We aim to:

- *Use the outdoor area as a context and a natural resource for learning.*
- *Include the outside area when planning for learning.*
- *Enable children to access the outdoor area on a daily basis.*
- *Ensure that the outdoors offers children opportunities to develop large motor skills.*
- *Ensure that the children enjoy energetic activity outdoors and the feeling of wellbeing that it brings.*
- *Observe, assess and record the learning that happens in the outdoor area.*
- *Give children the opportunity to plan and have ownership for their learning in the outdoor area.*
- *Help children to care for the outside environment through the context of the outdoor area.*
- *Enable children to work independently and co-operatively.*
- *Enable the children to develop an appreciation of natural beauty and a sense of wonder about the world.*
- *Respect the outdoor environment and to care for living things.*
- *Enable children to manage and use the space and freedom afforded by the outdoor area.*
- *Give children the opportunity to be relaxed, have fun and enjoy the outdoor area.*
- *Use tools safely and effectively and to follow safety rules*

The staff will:

- ✓ *Facilitate access to the outdoor area on a daily basis through discussions with staff and phase meetings, planning and mutual agreement.*
- ✓ *Organise and provide the necessary resources as appropriate.*
- ✓ *Encourage children to use a variety of natural resources.*

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring of the EYFS will follow the school plan and EYFS action plan.

It will include:

- Monitoring staff
- Looking at Data
- Team meeting to discuss children's progress
- Learning walks
- Team meetings to continually evaluate our provision for the children.

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EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Visitors are welcomed to the EYFS to share their knowledge and provide the children with information about the topic that is being explored. The Parish Priest is frequently invited to visit the children to discuss the liturgical themes.

We bring in visitors throughout the year where it is relevant to our learning.

The children hatch ducklings and enjoy learning about the life cycle of animals. We link this to a visit to either Barleylands or Paradise wildlife park to support further learning.

We also have visits to the library for Reception children and the library come and visit nursery in school.

All visits are risk assessed in accordance with school policy.

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