

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

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Date of next review	June 2026	Owner	Executive Principal
Type of policy		LGB approval	June 2025



Introduction

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, our curriculum is designed to place pupils' learning at the heart of all we do, ensuring progress for every child. As a Catholic school, the teachings of the Gospels guide our approach, promoting respect, support, and a love of learning.

Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is at the heart of our school's Planning, Policies, Practice and Ethos. As a Rights Respecting School we not only teach about children's rights but also model rights and respect in all relationships. This policy is underpinned by:

Article 3: Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child

Article 29: The right to become the best that you can be.

Article 31: Every child has the right to play and rest.

Objectives

This teaching and learning policy is intended to promote consistency and high standards and the achievement of the school mission statement. At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School we aim to provide a caring, supportive and stimulating environment with high quality teaching, whilst promoting:

- ❖ Bible Teachings
- ❖ Gospel Virtues
- ❖ British Values
- ❖ Rights of the Child
- ❖ Characteristics of Effective Learning
- ❖ Citizenship

Aims of our Curriculum

For all pupils to:

- ❖ Become fluent and confident readers and to develop an appreciation and love of **reading** whilst gaining knowledge across the curriculum.
- ❖ Use embedded **basic skills** across the curriculum including Reading, Writing and Mathematics.
- ❖ Be **enthused by the curriculum** and have a positive attitude to learning.
- ❖ Retain key **knowledge** in all curriculum areas and be provided with opportunities to apply skills taught.
- ❖ Become **independent, resilient and divergent** learners so they are ready for secondary school (and beyond).
- ❖ Be **challenged** and make **progress** across all areas of the curriculum (including disadvantaged pupils and those with a special need and/or disability).
- ❖ Have a broad and lasting knowledge of subject specific **vocabulary**.
- ❖ Learn how to be a better global citizen and understand the impact they can have on society.

- ❖ Have a wide range of **life experiences** that enhance their learning (including trips and extra-curricular activities).

Teaching and Learning Rationale

We base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment and robust educational research. Our prime focus is to develop further their knowledge and skills. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs (SEN) we use the SEN toolkit to support learning and progression and ensure high quality teaching is taking place. We have high expectations of all children, and believe that all children should be included in the full range of educational opportunities and that their work here at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School should be of the highest possible standard.

All staff work hard to establish positive working relationships with the children that they are teaching. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We praise and reward children for good effort and, by so doing, help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school Pastoral, Care and Discipline Policy.

Learning environment

Creating a stimulating, safe and welcoming learning environment is crucial for children to be able to progress and achieve their full potential. Learning environment guidance is provided for staff to follow to ensure consistency and high standards throughout the school.

Independent learning

The Holy Cross Characteristics of Effective Learning (CEOL) are linked to 'how' children learn and motivate children to become resilient and independent learners. The Gospel Virtues are intertwined with the Characteristics of Effective learning targets to ensure our faith is always shining through everything we do. The characteristics are set for each Key Stage with progression planned in across the year groups and each classroom has an interactive display dedicated to COEL. The display shows the characteristic for the specific class with photos of children on them to show which target they are currently working on. A chart is kept to record when and how a child has met one of the COEL targets.

Planning

We use:

- The National Curriculum/EYFS Framework
- Skills Progression Maps
- RE Scheme of work (Archdiocese of Birmingham)
- White Rose Hub
- Grammarsaurus

The school's Curriculum Overview Map for each class shows how themes are distributed across the years in a sequence which promotes curriculum continuity and progress in children's learning.

Short term planning is the responsibility of individual teachers who build on the medium term plan by taking into account the needs of the children in their particular class. We endeavour to make links across the curriculum.

Staff save their planning weekly into the Shared Planning Folder. Planning is monitored by the Senior Leadership team regularly.

Lesson Structure

Teachers are clear that their role is to teach in a way which makes it possible for all children to engage successfully with tasks at the expected level of challenge. We strive to have the following in all of our lessons:

1. A review of previous learning using retrieval practice strategies.
2. New material presented in small steps, with teachers ensuring that each step is mastered before moving on (via teacher explanation)
3. Where possible new material is introduced via high quality reading materials and techniques.
4. Teachers asking a variety of questions, and using a range of questioning techniques, to establish children's understanding.
5. Teachers model clearly, using equipment, visual and/or other aids to show children how to solve problems and gain knowledge of new concepts and skills.
6. Time for children to do guided practice. (teacher modelling techniques)
7. Teachers check all children's understanding in a variety of ways.
8. Children have a high rate of success, with enough mistakes to show that they are being challenged.
9. Scaffolds are provided for all. This is through adaptive teaching.
10. Children are given opportunities to practise independently.
11. There are regular reviews of learning.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment exists to equip the staff with the correct information in order for all children to succeed. It ensures more effective teaching by providing the evidence for closer matching of tasks to the child's needs. It assists the children by providing them with an indication of what stage they have reached in the learning process. It helps to identify future planning and teaching strategies. It also helps us to recognise and move on from success.

Assessment for learning is:

- Part of effective planning
- Affects learner motivation
- Focuses on how students learn
- Promotes commitment to learning objectives and success criteria
- Central to classroom practice
- Helps learners know how to improve
- Encourages self assessment
- Recognising progress from a child's previous best

We use these strategies to link assessment to better teaching and learning:

- Evaluation of daily and weekly planning to inform next lessons
- Assessment tasks e.g. writing, mathematics, reading: results from question level analysis is used to inform future planning
- Use of data from formal assessment
- Use of standardised assessments and White Rose Hub assessments

- Use of the SEN Toolkit to ensure children are making progress and to better support and enhance learning for children with special educational needs.
- Use of a tracker to track all children in line with end of year expectations, using knowledge of their previous attainment (all the way from EYFS) and set aspirational targets.

Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. We work hard to inform and support parents in how they can help further their children's learning and confidence at school. Parents' briefing meetings with teachers are held at the start of the year to outline specific year group information and expectations. Inspire Workshops are held during the academic year to offer parents an opportunity to work alongside their child. Parents' evenings are held to discuss pupil progress and strategies for further improvement.

The school makes available information to parents at the start of the academic year about the topics each class will be following in English, Mathematics, and in the Foundation subjects on the school website. Information about homework expectations is available on the website so that parents know what will be given to children each week.

As children begin at Holy Cross Catholic Primary they follow our induction process which gradually introduces the child to their new teacher and class and to the sort of experiences they will be having in Reception class. Parents are provided with important information from the class teacher. Parents can share any concerns they may have. They also receive information about helping their child with early English and Mathematics skills.

Parents receive a mid-term report in the Spring term and are given the opportunity to discuss their child's current progress and ways to support their child better at home. Parents then receive a detailed school report in July. This outlines the child's achievements during the year, how they are achieving relative to expected levels and how they can improve and develop in the future. Parents may discuss any concerns they have with teachers at any point in the year; this is encouraged.

We also hold workshops throughout the academic year which parents are invited to attend. During these workshops we show and model the ways in which we teach certain areas of learning to ensure consistency and allow parents to support their children better e.g. mathematical mindset, calculation policy, grammar knowledge.