Early Years Foundation Stage Policy

Date of last review	September 2026	Review Period	Annual
Date of next review	September 2027	Owner	EYFS lead
Type of policy	Statutory	Governor approval	



"Give instruction to a wise person and he will be yet wiser, teach a just person and they will increase in learning," Proverbs 9:9

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we believe every child deserves the best possible start in life. A safe, happy, and nurturing early childhood lays the foundation for future success and personal growth.

Rooted in the teachings of the Gospel, our curriculum places Christ at the centre and is designed to help every child grow spiritually, academically, and personally. We aim to develop pupils who are respectful, resilient, and confident, ready to embrace challenges and celebrate success.

Our broad and balanced curriculum fosters creativity, independence, and a love of learning. Through rich classroom experiences and meaningful extra-curricular opportunities, we help pupils build self-esteem and form a strong sense of belonging within our Catholic community.

At Holy Cross, we are committed to forming lifelong learners who are empowered by faith and prepared to make a positive difference in the world.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) applies to children from birth to the end of the reception year. In our school, all children join us, at the beginning of the school year in which they are five.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

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

A Unique Child

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we believe every child is a capable and confident learner who develops at their own pace. We encourage positive attitudes to learning through praise, encouragement, celebrations, and rewards.

Our approach is inspired by educational theorist Lev Vygotsky, who highlighted the importance of social interaction in learning. He introduced the idea of the *Zone of Proximal Development*—what children can achieve with support. Our Early Years staff act as guides, gently challenging and

supporting each child to reach their full potential by recognising their individual strengths and helping them grow beyond their comfort zones.

Inclusion

At Holy Cross, we value every child and their family. We celebrate diversity and treat all children fairly, regardless of race, religion, ability, or background.
In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), we create a supportive, inclusive environment where every child can thrive. We plan learning experiences that reflect children's unique needs, interests, and life experiences—whether they have special educational needs, disabilities, are more able, or come from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds.
We support all children by:

- Building on their knowledge, interests, and confidence
- Using varied teaching strategies tailored to individual learning styles
- Providing engaging and inclusive learning opportunities
- Creating a safe, welcoming space where every child is valued
- Using diverse, non-discriminatory resources
- Offering extra challenge or support where needed
- Tracking progress and adjusting support accordingly

Your child's safety and wellbeing are our top priorities. We teach children how to stay safe, make good choices, and manage risks in a safe, age-appropriate way.

Welfare

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we know that children learn best when they feel safe, healthy, and cared for. Building strong, positive relationships and meeting each child's individual needs is at the heart of what we do.

We follow the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to ensure your child's wellbeing, which includes:

- Promoting children's welfare and keeping them safe
- Supporting good health and managing illness or infection appropriately
- Managing behaviour in a way that suits each child's age and needs
- Ensuring all staff are properly vetted and suitable to work with children
- Keeping our environment, furniture, and equipment safe and fit for purpose
- Providing fun, challenging learning experiences tailored to each child
- Keeping up-to-date records, policies, and procedures to ensure everything runs smoothly and safely
- Ensuring there is a minimum of one member of staff who is Paediatric First Aid trained on the premises at all times.

Your child's safety, happiness, and development are our top priorities.

Safer eating (EYFS Framework 3.64-3.72)

- Whilst your child is eating there will be a member of staff who is paediatric first aid trained in the room/ lunch hall.
- All allergies and dietary requirements will be collected and all relevant members of staff made aware.
- Allergy lead to ensure that the kitchen and lunch staff are made aware of any allergies.
- All children will be in sight and hearing of a member of staff when eating.

Banned dog breeds (EYFS Framework 3.82)

- Banned dog breeds listed in section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 are not allowed on the premises.
- List of banned dogs
  - Pit Bull terrier
  - Japanese Tosa
  - Dogo Argentino
  - Fila Brasileiro
  - XL Bully
- See attached photo sheet for clarification.

Screen use (EYFS Framework 3.94)

- Screen use to be monitored and regularly assessed to ensure it meets the requirements of Help for early years providers : Screen use and limiting to up to one hour per day in Reception.

Positive Relationships

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we believe children grow strong and independent through secure, caring relationships. We work to build respectful and professional connections with both children and their families.

Parents as Partners

We know parents are their child's first teachers and value the important role they play. To support this, we:

- Talk to parents before their child starts school
- Visit children at home before they begin
- Offer visits and meet-and-greet opportunities with teachers before starting school

- Connect with nurseries and pre-schools to discuss each child's progress
- Provide regular chances for parents to discuss their child's development
- Encourage open communication and hold formal meetings each term to review progress
- Share reports on children's progress at the end of the year
- Host events like Stay and Learn, Class Assemblies, and Sports Day to involve families
- Ask parents to support learning at home through reading and homework, with guidance provided

All our staff work hard to build positive, trusting relationships with every child, listening and engaging with them thoughtfully.

Enabling Environments

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary school, we recognise that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending the children's development. This begins by observing the children and assessing their interests, development and learning, before planning challenging but achievable activities and experiences to extend the children's learning.

Observation, Assessment and Planning

Our EYFS planning follows the school's Long-Term Plan and focuses on termly themes based on the 2026 EYFS framework. Teachers use these plans as a guide but adapt them each week to meet the children's interests and needs.

We regularly assess children's learning through play and activities, noting special moments on X and keeping examples of written work in their Drawing Club and RE books. While teachers may keep other examples of children's work, this is not required.

Within the first 6 weeks, children complete a baseline assessment to help us plan their learning. At the end of the year, parents receive a written summary of their child's progress and can meet with the teacher to discuss it.

The Learning Environment

The EYFS classroom is designed to be safe and welcoming, with areas for active play, quiet time, and rest. Learning spaces are set up so children can easily find and use resources on their own.

We also have a private outdoor area where children can explore, use their senses, and be physically active in new ways. Outdoor activities support learning across all areas.

We teach children about their rights and British Values, such as taking responsibility, speaking up, and respecting others. In addition, we also promote Catholic Social Teaching throughout the classroom.

Learning and Development

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary school, we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

Teaching and Learning Style

In the classroom our teaching and learning approach supports children from EYFS through to Key Stage 2. For EYFS, this means:

- Working closely with parents to help children feel secure and confident at school.
- Understanding how children grow and learn to guide our teaching.
- Offering lots of opportunities to enjoy reading and develop a love for books.
- Using different ways to teach, including hands-on activities, clear explanations, and encouraging play and talking.
- Planning a curriculum that helps children reach important Early Learning Goals.
- Providing activities that build on children's interests and develop their skills in all areas—intellectual, physical, social, and emotional.
- Encouraging children to talk about their learning and become more independent.
- Using both indoor and outdoor spaces with the right equipment to support learning.
- Observing children's progress and sharing this with parents.
- Working well with early years settings before children join our school.
- Using Wellcomm to support children's language and speech development.
- Following a mastery approach to maths with resources like White Rose Maths for a deep understanding.
- Using the Read Write Inc program to help children improve reading skills and enjoy books at home.

We also focus on **how** children learn by putting the Characteristics of Effective Learning at the center of our planning.

Playing and Exploring:

Children's play shows their wide range of interests and helps them learn at their best. Playing with other children is especially important for their development.

Through play, children explore and make sense of the world. They practice ideas, learn to manage themselves, and understand rules. Play also lets them think creatively, communicate, solve problems, and express feelings in a safe way.

Active Learning:

Children learn best when they're actively involved, both physically and mentally. Active learning happens when they're interested and engaged with people, objects, and ideas.

It's important for children to have some independence and control over their learning. As they grow in confidence, they learn to make choices, which helps them feel proud and motivated.

Creativity and Critical Thinking

"When children explore ideas in different ways and with different materials, they make new connections and understand things better. Adults help by encouraging their thinking and asking questions.

Children should be creative in all areas of learning, not just art. Adults support this by showing interest, offering encouragement, and asking open-ended questions. Children can freely use and move resources around the classroom to help their learning grow.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS is made up of 7 areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- 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 (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Executive Principal and EYFS Leader will carry out monitoring of the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

Written: September 2026
Reviewed by Full Academy Committee: