Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy

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Part of OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Nottingham Diocese Multi Academy Trusts CATHOLIC SCHOOLS Moving Forward Together

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Our Mission Statement

At Holy Cross, we are very proud of our school motto and our Catholic ethos; **Loved, Valued, Challenged**.

Loved: We love one another as Jesus taught us – our friends, our families and those who we may never meet.

Valued: We value everyone – everyone is important; pupils, staff, parents, governors, and members of the community– no matter their race, religion ability or need. We try to live like Jesus taught us.

Challenged: We challenge each other – not only with our learning but challenge each other to be more merciful to others, have a little more understanding of others' needs and challenge each other to be better people.

Our Vision

At Holy Cross, we aim to develop a caring Catholic community based upon the life and example of Jesus Christ, which envelopes the life and lives of everyone and everything in our school. It is through Christ's message of love and forgiveness that the children, staff, both teachers and ancillary, parents and governors, preserve the essential Catholic ethos of the school.

The school aims to provide a challenging curriculum that reflects our philosophy, broadly balanced and relevant, and to support the development of the whole child to his/her full potential. At Holy Cross, everybody matters, therefore we encourage all to show respect to each other and the environment.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

"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."

(Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Setting the standards for learning, development, and care for children from birth to five) Effective from 1st September 2021

Intent

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the wide range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- Close partnership working between practitioners and with parents and carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

At Holy cross Primary our Catholic ethos is at the centre of everything we do. Our curriculum is inspired by Christ and is underpinned by Luke's Gospel values, British values, and Catholic Social Teaching principles.

We provide our children with an exciting and engaging environment which fosters independent learners and encourages children to have enquiring minds.

Children are provided with a knowledge rich and ambitious curriculum. We aim to challenge children so that they can build on their existing knowledge and achieve their full potential.

We strive to create happy learners who develop their social skills, cooperating, sharing, and developing lasting friendships.

Children are supported in their learning journey, to take risks in an age-appropriate environment. Our high expectation for learners means that children are driven forward to achieve their personal learning goals.

Our indoor and outdoor learning opportunities support a range of learners. The language rich areas provide children with interesting and stimulating learning opportunities where they can build on existing knowledge and ultimately reaching their full potential.

We are dedicated to ensuring children are happy, healthy, and safe. Our EYFS provides children with a solid foundation on which to build the rest of their educational career and creates lifelong learners.

Curriculum

Our Early Years setting follows the Curriculum as outlined in the 2021 Statutory Framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The EYFS framework outlines the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and the 7 areas of Development (CoETL). The CoETL are organised into three primary strands and are essential components towards children becoming self-regulated learners. These are:

- Playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- Creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

There are 17 aspect areas (early learning goals) within 7 curriculum areas of development. These are divided into Prime and Specific areas of learning.

The 3 Prime areas of learning

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development
3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and language underpins all areas of learning within our early years curriculum and continues to be developed within our provision, teaching, learning and planning methods. The prime areas are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Planned learning supports the progress and development of listening and speaking, enabling children to process information into thinking and understanding. Children practise their physical skills alongside developing social skills, which supports greater independence and higher levels of confidence.

The 4 Specific Areas of learning

4. Literacy
5. Maths
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

The 4 specific areas of learning provide a context for development and reflect cultural knowledge and accumulated understanding. They are dependent on learning in the Prime areas.

Our continuous provision demonstrates a strong emphasis upon supporting children's understanding of the world along with enabling them to express themselves imaginatively and creatively, using art and design. New learning and topics are adapted to reflect the needs of the children and their interests.

Curriculum Implementation

Teaching & Learning

Early Years practice demonstrates a balance between adult lead and child-initiated activities. Children experience some direct teaching time and opportunities to thrive and develop independence in a language rich environment. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play.

Staff interactions with children during planned and child-initiated play, provides rich opportunities for communicating and modelling language, showing, explaining, demonstrating, exploring ideas, encouraging, questioning, recalling, providing a narrative for what they are doing, facilitating, and setting challenges.

Staff understand that play is about much more than content but helps to build flexible minds and an enquiring spirit. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. They take into account the equipment provided and the attention to the physical environment as well as the structure and routines of the day that establish expectations.

Staff understand that teaching is in every activity provided within all the learning environments. There are no activities that occur in the setting which adults do not consider to be opportunities for teaching. While staff do not always know where these opportunities will present themselves, it is the experience and skill of the adults that enable them to readily recognise the 'teachable moments' when they arise and respond to them appropriately.

Staff respond to the individual needs, interests, and stages of development of each child in their care and use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experience.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The 3 prime areas are at the core of early years planning. Staff carefully plan activities which enable children to link personal experiences with new learning, providing a wide range of contexts to revisit, practise, apply, and develop transferable skills and understanding. Planning and interactions are supported by progressive sequences of questioning to develop thinking, understanding and language for reasoning. Children's personal, social and emotional wellbeing is nurtured so that happy learners make good friendships and enjoy coming to school. Children negotiate their play well and behaviour is very good. Fine and Gross motor activities are carefully planned to ensure children are strong, healthy, and developing a readiness to write.

The 4 specific area are planned in thematic way, where children can progress through the next small steps for learning while following a topic or overarching theme on which to contextualise their learning.

Phonics is taught daily from the very first session in school. In FS1, children learn environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and oral blending and segmenting. In FS2 the children follow the Sounds Write phonics programme where retrieval practice is used daily, helping children to remember more. The children actively engage in multisensory sessions where they can engage in learning using a variety of resources.

Reading is a priority. In FS1 children take home picture books (lilac band) and library books so that parents can read aloud. Children who are ready for phonics books, will be given a text where they can practice their phonic knowledge.

In FS2 children receive phonetically decodable texts which match the teaching of phonics in the classroom. They also have a library book to support their love of stories and non-fiction texts. Where child's reading ability is more advance, highly specialised staff will match more challenging books to the child's level of fluency and comprehension. Writing links to quality texts and children have daily opportunities to write and develop their sentence level skills.

In Mathematics the children follow the White Rose planning and experience a range of whole class teaching, focused tasks and independent learning opportunities in the learning areas that extend the learning focus of the day.

The children learn about the world in which they live, focusing initially on the school and local environment, then developing their knowledge of the wider world. They find out about the past though the exploration of interesting resources and artefacts.

The Expressive Art and Design curriculum allows children to be creative, while having access to a rich variety of art mediums. The children are inspired by famous artists and their work.

Assessment and Reporting to Parents

Our ongoing assessments are an integral part of the learning and developmental process. This helps to ensure the children are making progress towards the Early Learning Goals. We make systematic observations and assessments of each child's achievements and interests. These observations feed directly into assessment and planning to create a cohesive and efficient system where we plan relevant activities and opportunities for each child.

Feedback is given to the child verbally and shared with parents and carers in person, via Class Dojo or during termly learning meetings (parent's evenings). Each child has a Learning Journey called a Star Book which celebrates the child's highlights and breakthrough moments. FS2 children also have a writing book to record their weekly writing progress. Practitioners use floor books to record children's involvement in the wider curriculum. In the Summer Term the children begin there RE book which is continued in Year 1.

Monitoring

The EYFS lead records and tracks data at four milestones during the year. The Baseline, Advent Term, Lent Term and finally Pentecost Term.

In the final term of the year in which the child reaches age five, and no later than 30th June in that term, the EYFS Profile must be completed for each child. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners, and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their attainment against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1.

Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging').

Ideas for Families to Develop their Child's Interest

- Educational visits
- The Tropical Butterfly House
- Conkers
- Hucknall Library
- Holy Cross Church

Useful websites to support your child's development:

Topmarks: teaching resources, interactive resources, worksheets, homework, exam and revision help

Children have access to several online learning providers so that they can pursue further learning at home.
Numbots – helping them to recall number facts.

Spelling Shed – time to revise the sounds covered in phonics.

Priorities

- More able pupils are challenged to deepen their understanding and application of knowledge.

- To ensure planning for FS1 and FS2 has clear intended learning for all areas indoors and outdoors.

- To monitor the GLD for the cohort across the three assessment checkpoints and take appropriate action to ensure that outcomes are line with, or above, the national average.