



# Holy Rood Catholic Primary School, Swindon



## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy 2025 - 2026



## School Vision:

### Belong

At Holy Rood Catholic Primary School we will provide a nurturing and inclusive environment enthused by the Spirit of Christ to enable everyone to make a positive contribution, both to the school and the wider community. We will show love, compassion and respect for others.

A sense of unity will be created by forming relationships that are based on trust, loyalty, forgiveness and acceptance; we will endeavour to act justly and be peacemakers as Christ's disciples, inspired by the Gospel values.

We will encourage a sense of responsibility and help children learn to appreciate God's world around them through reflection, mission, prayer, healing and peace.

### Learn

We resolve to develop a sense of awe and wonder at God's creation for our children - where creativity flourishes and everyone is inspired to learn, demonstrating a curiosity about the world around them.

We will strive to ensure that all of our learners are able to face new challenges with confidence, in a Christian learning environment where informed risk taking and a resilient attitude are welcomed, encouraged and achieved.

Our positive and enthusiastic approach to teaching and learning will motivate every person. Each will know that they are uniquely loved by God. We will continue to enjoy our learning and reflect on our efforts and achievements, inspiring us to always try our best.

### Achieve

The children will be determined in their daily challenges, gaining confidence in their own ability, imagining what they could achieve with continued effort and commitment and working to fulfil the exclusive plan God has for each of them.

By fully engaging in all aspects of school, children will go on to accomplish as ambitious and competent individuals, always striving to achieve their full potential and positively participating in God's world.

**Holy Rood Catholic Primary School**  
Mission Statement

We try to follow Jesus by praising and giving  
thanks to God,  
enjoying and caring for his world,  
loving and forgiving others and always trying  
our best!

## Aims

At Holy Rood Catholic Primary School, our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision aims to provide every child with a strong, secure and positive start to their education. We strive to create a nurturing, stimulating and inclusive environment where children feel safe, valued and confident to explore and learn. Through high-quality teaching, play-based learning and meaningful experiences, we support children in developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for future success. Our curriculum is carefully designed to provide children with the essential knowledge and skills they need to prepare them for future success, ensuring they receive the best possible start to their education. Our provision is guided by the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, ensuring that all children are supported to make good progress and reach their full potential. We continually monitor and review our curriculum, ensuring that its design and delivery remain effective and responsive to the needs of our children, with their development and wellbeing at the centre of all decision making.

The aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage at Holy Rood Catholic Primary School are to:

- Provide a **safe, nurturing and stimulating environment** where children feel valued, secure and confident to explore and learn.
- Deliver a **broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum** that supports children's development across all areas of learning and prepares them for a successful transition to Key Stage 1.
- Promote the **prime areas of learning**—communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development—as the foundation for all future learning.
- Foster a **love of learning through play, exploration and meaningful experiences**, supporting the development of the Characteristics of Effective Learning.
- Ensure **high-quality teaching and assessment** so that every child makes good progress from their starting points and reaches their full potential.
- Develop strong **partnerships with parents and carers**, recognising them as children's first educators and working collaboratively to support children's learning and wellbeing.
- Create an **inclusive environment** where all children are supported, valued and encouraged to develop independence, resilience and positive relationships.

## **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the statutory framework for the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#), effective from 1 September 2025.

## **Structure of the EYFS**

Holy Rood Catholic Primary School has two Reception classes with 60 places. Each class is supported by a class teacher and teaching assistant, ensuring high-quality adult interaction and support.

The curriculum follows the statutory EYFS framework (effective from September 2025) and is delivered through a combination of:

- whole class teaching

- small group work
- adult-directed activities
- child-initiated play

A structured daily timetable provides stability and routine while allowing flexibility to meet the needs of each cohort.

## Curriculum and Planning

Our curriculum reflects the EYFS Framework which details seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings:

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

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

Although the three prime areas of learning are fundamental to the development of each child, all seven areas are interrelated and are delivered in conjunction with each other.

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning which are considered when planning and guiding children's activities and the learning environment:

The three characteristics 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.

These characteristics weave through all seven areas of learning and develop as children learn new things, acquire new skills, develop socially and emotionally and become better communicators.

At Holy Rood Catholic Primary School, our EYFS curriculum is carefully planned to provide a broad, balanced and engaging learning experience for all children. We follow a yearly overview that outlines topics and themes, each linked to a carefully chosen storybook. These topics provide stimulation, context and inspiration for lessons and are mapped to the seven areas of learning to ensure comprehensive coverage.

We follow schemes of work for Religious Education (RE), Mathematics, and Physical Education (PE) to provide structured, progressive learning in these areas. In addition, children

participate in Book Talk sessions four times a week, supporting the development of communication, language and early literacy skills.

While our curriculum is planned and sequenced to ensure progression, we remain responsive to children's needs through regular observation and assessment. This allows us to adapt activities and provide opportunities for children to explore their own interests, ensuring learning remains relevant, engaging and personalised.

There are set routines that we follow each day. The timetable is carefully structured so that the children have directed teaching time during the day. The timetable is adapted throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. Each year creates its own unique blend of whole class, guided, adult directed play and child-initiated play activities dependant on the nature and needs of the class of individuals.

Adult focused and independent activities are planned on a weekly basis. Children have the opportunity to work in each of the learning areas within the classroom and outdoors. Whole class, group and individual activities are used to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum, as appropriate.

### Religious Education

In the EYFS the children are following the 'To know you more clearly' programme from the new Religious Education Directory. This follows the pattern of the liturgical year and covers one unit per half term. Children in the EYFS have a one direct teaching session per week and also access their RE learning through aspects of continuous provision.

There are six branches in 'To know You More Clearly' – one per half term. The branches are:

Autumn 1- Creation and Covenant  
Autumn 2- Prophecy and Promise  
Spring 1-Gailee to Jerusalem  
Spring 2-Desert to Garden  
Summer 1- The Ends of the Earth  
Summer 2- Dialogue and Encounter

The children also come together once a week for a class 'Celebration of the Word' session. This is an opportunity for children to reflect and respond to a bible reading.

Prayers are said at the beginning of the day, before lunch and before home time each day.

### Phonics

Phonics is taught daily, following the school's Phonics Roadmap, which provides a systematic, consistent and progressive approach to early reading and writing. Lessons develop children's phonological awareness, letter-sound knowledge, blending and segmenting skills, enabling them to apply their phonics knowledge when reading and writing. This structured approach supports children to build confidence and fluency as early readers and writers.

Every child is provided with a Phonics folder to take home. Each week, a set of flashcards are sent home along with a word list and letter formation sheet.

### Reading

Whole class story time sessions take place daily. We want our children to develop of life-long love of reading. Children are exposed to a wide range of both fiction and non-fiction texts to provide them with opportunities to hear and use new vocabulary.

Every child is provided with a reading folder and will receive a fully decodable 'reading' book once a week. In school they will share this book with an adult one-to-one at least once a week. They will also have the opportunity to select a book for enjoyment from the school library on a weekly basis.

### Book Talk

Book Talk sessions are a planned and purposeful element of our EYFS curriculum and form part of our commitment to developing children's communication, language and early literacy skills. Sessions take place four times per week and last approximately 15 minutes. One high-quality core text is selected each week to allow for depth, repetition and secure learning.

During Book Talk sessions, teachers:

- Introduce and model new vocabulary, supporting children to understand and use unfamiliar words in context
- Explore key features of stories, including characters, settings, sequence, and structure
- Develop children's listening, attention and comprehension through discussion and questioning
- Encourage children to talk about stories, express ideas, make predictions and share opinions
- Support children's understanding of meaning through repetition, explanation and visual cues.

### Talk For Writing

We follow the Talk for Writing approach in EYFS to support children's early language, oracy and storytelling development. This structured process enables children to internalise high quality stories, develop confidence in spoken language and apply story structures independently.

Across the year, children learn six carefully chosen core texts which are selected to support progression in language, structure and vocabulary.

Talk for Writing is implemented through a clear, progressive sequence:

- Imitation: Children learn each core text through oral retelling, actions, repetition and shared language. This allows children to internalise story language, vocabulary and structure.
- Innovation: As a class, children adapt and change elements of the story such as characters, settings or events, while maintaining the original structure. Adults model how ideas can be developed and expressed clearly.
- Invention: Children use the familiar story structure to create and tell their own stories, drawing on language patterns and vocabulary they have learned.

### Mathematics

In Reception, we follow the 'Number Sense' Scheme of work to teach number and supplement this with the White Rose Maths Scheme to teach Shape, Space and Measure. High quality learning environments and meaningful interactions with adults, support children in developing mathematical thinking and discussion. Pupils learn through games and activities using concrete manipulatives and pictorial structures and representations which are then rehearsed applied and recorded within their own child-led exploration. The children have 4 whole class maths inputs a week.

Mathematics is also highlighted through daily routines, during play, and in other curriculum areas. Everyday routines such as registration time, snack time, and tidying up provide opportunities for counting and comparison as well as addition, subtraction, sharing, and time problems. There are routines in place throughout the day that support children with their early number and calculation. Routines that we have throughout the year are:

- Counting children that are present and absent
- Counting children when we are lined up to check we have everyone
- When we go outside we move our photos onto a tens frame so we can see how many children are outside
- Counting and comparing house point totals each week

### Physical Education (PE)

Children have weekly PE lessons delivered through the PE Passport scheme, which provides a structured, progressive approach to developing fundamental movement skills. In addition, our provision offers daily opportunities for children to develop both fine and gross motor skills through play, practical activities, and exploration in both the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

### **Approaches to Teaching and Learning**

At Holy Rood, we believe children learn best through active experiences and play. Learning opportunities include:

- adult-directed teaching
- guided learning
- child-initiated exploration

Adults play a crucial role in supporting learning through:

- modelling language and thinking
- questioning and extending play
- encouraging problem solving
- supporting social interactions
- providing feedback and next steps

Adults also ensure the learning environment is safe, engaging and stimulating.

### The Learning Environment

We believe that both the physical and emotional environment in which the children enter each day is of utmost importance to their ability to learn. We aim to provide rich and varied environments, both indoor and outdoor, which allow children to feel safe and secure yet confident to try new things and take risks. All adults aim to ensure a welcoming and accepting environment where children know their feelings are accepted and their effort is valued. Both the indoor and outdoor areas provide suitable and well-maintained resources which are accessible to children as and when appropriate. We feel it is paramount that resources are organised and labelled in a way that develops and encourages children's flexible and independent use of materials and resources. The classrooms include defined areas for learning for example: role play area; writing area; creative area; reading corner; construction area. Our outdoor area offers children the opportunity to use different materials on different

scales than when indoors as well as experience the natural world, changing weather and develop physical exuberance.

## **Assessment**

At Holy Rood Catholic Primary School, ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development processes. Staff observe pupils to identify their level of achievement, interests and learning styles. These observations are used to shape future planning. Staff also take into account observations shared by parents and/or carers.

Within the first 6 weeks that a child starts reception, staff will administer the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA).

As well as administering the statutory baseline, EYFS teachers use their knowledge of each child to decide which age band of 'Development Matters' they are working on in each area of learning and record this on the schools tracking spreadsheet. This provides a baseline assessment of each child's attainment and allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately. The assessment information is updated again at the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good progress.

Throughout each child's time within the Early Years, a learning journey is compiled to celebrate achievements and independent evidence of attainment throughout the EYFS referencing development matters and the Early Learning Goals.

Each child has a 'Learning Journal' folder in which observations, samples of work, and parental contributions are gathered.

There is a class floor book in each class which evidences learning activities that have taken place throughout the year, across different subjects and contains a variety of children's work, photographs and quotes.

Each class has a RE Floor book that evidences the range of learning opportunities that have taken place throughout the year in RE and contains children's work, photographs and quotes.

At the end of the EYFS, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority.

At the end of the year parents/carers will receive a report which will state their child's progress against the Early Learning Goals.

## **Impact**

Our EYFS provision ensures that all children make strong progress from their individual starting points. Children develop confidence, independence, resilience, and a love of learning, as well as effective communication, social skills, and early problem-solving abilities.

Through high-quality teaching, play-based learning, and inclusive practices, children are supported to reach their full potential and are well prepared for the transition into Key Stage 1. Our impact is continually monitored through observations, assessments, learning journals,

and pupil progress reviews, ensuring that the curriculum remains effective, responsive, and centred on the development and wellbeing of every child.

## **Transition Arrangements**

### Our Induction Process

During the summer term, the EYFS Leader visits feeder nurseries to meet as many prospective pupils as possible and discuss any concerns with pre-school staff.

All prospective children are invited to visit the school for two after school 'stay and play' sessions with their parents to allow them to become familiar with the environment and the staff.

A parents meeting is held in the Summer Term to introduce parents/carers to the school, key adults and inform them of the induction process and school procedures. Parents/carers are given a pack which outlines the reception curriculum and school routines, along with other necessary documentation.

Home visits are carried out in the first three days in September (see Home Visit policy). These meetings allow the child to meet their new teachers in an environment where they feel most secure and they also allow parent-teacher relationships to be formed. This is an opportunity for teachers to gain valuable information from parents about their child and to share information with parents about the school.

During the induction period in September, children begin part-time sessions for three weeks before starting fulltime on the fourth week. This allows the children to adjust and feel secure in their new environment

A parents meeting is carried out in September by EYFS teachers to provide parents with information about school routines, homework and school expectations.

### Transition to Year 1

We hold a 'Move-up' day where all children spend a morning in their new classroom with their new teachers. This allows the children to familiarise themselves with their new classroom, teachers and routines.

We also have an opportunity for Reception teachers and Year 1 teachers to meet and inform the child's new teacher about each child's level of development, ELG achievement and any other information about each child (e.g. medical, SEN, EAL, etc.).

## **Parents as Partners**

We recognise that parents are children's first and enduring educators and we value the contribution they make. We appreciate the role that parents have played and their future role in educating the children. We do this through

- Home visits in September
- 'Stay and Play' sessions
- Inviting all parents to an induction meeting during the term before they start school
- Home-School reading records
- Parent workshops throughout the year
- Operating "open door" policy that will allow parents and carers to discuss concerns and developments in an informal manner. Conversely, if staff have concerns about the

progress of a child, they will immediately approach parents and carers to discuss with them.

- Providing curriculum information on the school website
- Regularly updating the class pages on the school website with photographs of what the children have been doing in school.

## Safeguarding and Welfare

At Holy Rood Catholic Primary School, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children in our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are of the highest priority. We provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment in which children can learn, explore and develop with confidence. Our EYFS staff are fully trained in safeguarding and child protection procedures, and we adhere strictly to the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and the EYFS Statutory Framework. All staff are vigilant in protecting children from harm, and robust policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety at all times, both indoors and outdoors.

We promote children's welfare by:

- Maintaining a safe and secure environment that is regularly risk-assessed.
- Implementing clear safeguarding, child protection and health and safety procedures.
- Promoting good health, hygiene and oral care, including discussions about healthy eating and daily routines.
- Ensuring staff-to-child ratios are maintained according to EYFS requirements.
- Encouraging children to develop personal safety, independence and confidence.
- Working closely with parents, carers and external agencies to support children's wellbeing and respond promptly to any concerns.

Through these measures, we ensure that all children in Reception feel safe, valued and supported, allowing them to thrive and fully engage with their learning

## Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We value all our children as individuals at Holy Rood, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, background, ability or gender. We plan a curriculum that meets the needs of each individual child, supporting them to learn and progress at their own pace, so that all children are encouraged and guided to achieve their full potential.

We use a range of **inclusive strategies** to support children's learning and development, including:

- **Differentiated activities** to match children's abilities and interests.
- **Targeted support** for children with SEND or EAL, including small-group or one-to-one interventions.
- **Visual aids, gestures and modelling** to support understanding and communication.
- **Flexible learning opportunities** that allow children to follow their interests and learn at their own pace.
- **Accessible indoor and outdoor environments** with resources organised to encourage independence.
- **Close partnership with parents, carers and external agencies** to ensure that all children receive the support they need.

Through these strategies, all children are supported to develop confidence, independence and a love of learning, while being encouraged to achieve their full potential. We actively promote equality, respect and understanding, ensuring that every child feels valued and able to participate fully in school life.

We strongly believe that early identification of children with additional needs is crucial in enabling us to give the child the support that they need and in doing so, work closely with parents and outside agencies. See our separate SEND policy.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of all EYFS teachers to follow the principles stated in this policy. The Head Teacher, Assistant Head Teacher, EYFS Leader and Curriculum leaders will carry out monitoring and evaluation on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring schedule.

### Resources

### Planning Templates

#### Feeding Forward

Individual teachers complete a feeding forward sheet before weekly planning meetings. During the weekly planning meeting, the whole team sit down together and discuss each section of the feeding forward sheet in turn and then create the skeleton of the next weeks plan. Staff can then amend and enhance on a daily basis as necessary.

#### FEEDING FORWARD INTO SHORT TERM PLANNING for week beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Enabling Environments:</b> Feeding forward from last week's observations in the Continuous Provision including outside. <i>What did our observations tell us about children's interests, learning and development in the continuous provision inside and outside?</i></p>	
<p><b>Learning and Development:</b> Feeding forward from last week's Phonics &amp; Maths. <i>Progress towards learning intentions/ Significant children/Next steps.</i></p>	
<p><b>Possible enhancements</b> to Continuous Provision Areas including outside.</p>	
<p>What <b>new experiences</b> do we want the children to have? (Focus activities)</p>	
<p><b>Unique Child:</b> Target children; specific children's interests/learning we need to follow/monitor this week</p>	
<p><b>Positive Relationships:</b> How will we involve parents? <i>E.g. Newsletter, Parent volunteers/ Join in children in learning activity, Home/ School diary, ideas sheets etc...</i></p>	

### Weekly Planning Templates

T4	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.30	Moming Task on whiteboards	Moming Task on whiteboards	Moming Task on whiteboards	Moming Task on whiteboards	Moming Task on whiteboards
9.00	Literacy	Literacy	Literacy	Maths	Literacy
10:00	Number Sense	Number Sense	Number Sense	Maths – count House Pointes	Celebration of the Word
10.15	S	N	A	C	K
11:00	Quiet Reading	Quiet Reading	Quiet Reading	Quiet Reading	Quiet Reading
11:15	Phonics	Phonics	Phonics	Phonics	Phonics
12:00	L	U	N	C	H
1:00	Maths	UW/EAD	RE	P.E.	PPA Music/Jigsaw Dough Disco & Fine Motor activities (Target children) Handwriting Blending Group
2:15	Book Talk:	Book Talk:	Book Talk:	Book Talk:	Milk
2.30	Milk & Story	Milk & Story	Milk & Story	Milk & Story	Celebration Assembly
2:50	. Prayer Home time routine	. Prayer Home time routine	. Prayer Home time routine	. Prayer Home time routine	Prayer Home time routine

## Objective Led Planning Template

Objective led planning ensures that children are appropriately supported and challenged during adult led and child led activities.

Each week, teachers identify key objectives to focus on. These objectives are broken down and differentiated and the children are ability grouped. We specify what their next steps are. All staff are clear about how to take the children’s learning forward.

The provision is carefully planned and enhanced to ensure that there are opportunities for children to access the learning objectives across the different areas of the environment.

Week Beginning:		Area of Learning: Maths
Objective	Name	Evidence/Notes
<p><b>Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 monkeys and bed</li> <li>• Tens frames</li> <li>• Double sided counters</li> </ul> <p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>Give each child a ten frame and ask them to get 4 counters on their frame ensuring they put them in a line leaving one space. Sing song and ask children to say what they notice and represent on a tens frame.</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can subitise</li> <li>• I can explain what I can see</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I know the total is still 4</li><li>• I can use a tens frame to represent how many monkeys are on the bed/floor</li><li>• I know how many are hidden and can explain how I know</li></ul>		
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