

# Holy Souls Catholic Primary School



## Teaching and Learning Policy

### Christ At The Centre.

The Church provides Catholic schools to:

- Assist in its mission of making Christ known to all people.
- Assist parents, who are the primary educators of their children, in the education and religious formation of their children.
- Be at the service of the local Church – the diocese, the parish and the Christian home.
- Be a service to society.

Our Catholic Schools are distinctive when we:

- Manifest a Catholic ethos which is evident and open to experience by all who enter the school.
- Promote Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church as an integral part of their mission.
- Follow policies that reflect and embody the teaching of Christ and the Catholic Church.

The core Gospel values based on the Beatitudes may be summarised as follows:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven”

Values: **Faithfulness & Integrity**

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”

Values: **Dignity & Compassion**

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth”

Values: **Humility & Gentleness**

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied”

Values: **Truth & Justice**

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy”

Values: **Forgiveness & Mercy**

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God”

Values: **Purity & Holiness**

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God”

Values: **Tolerance & Peace**

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. Be glad and rejoice for your reward is great in heaven; they persecuted the prophets before you in the very same way”

Values: **Service & Sacrifice**

Gospel values “...are a guarantee of peace and of collaboration among all citizens in the shared commitment to serving the common good”.

## **Curriculum Intent**

Our Curriculum has been designed to ensure all children can live a life in all its fullness by offering stimulating and awe-inspiring learning experiences with Catholic Gospel values at its heart.

Our curriculum is bespoke to the needs of all pupils at Holy Souls Catholic Primary School, not only by focusing on appropriate subject specific knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the EYFS framework and National Curriculum, but by modelling the virtues given to us by Christ and by developing individual and collaborative learning experiences, a positive growth mindset, a sense of responsibility and challenges that take them beyond the classroom.

Our curriculum is constantly evolving, responding to the needs of learners and their interests by enhancing their learning experiences and raising awareness from the local area to national and global arenas. Thus, we will develop outward looking pupils who are able to engage in learning about themselves and have an understanding of the wider world and its diverse cultures.

Ultimately, our curriculum is intended to live out our school mission:

Our curriculum intent – where we live:

- Our pupils recognise their own identity and role within their school, homes, community and wider global society.
- Our pupils show a curiosity in the world around them. They are active in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.
- Our pupils experience a range of cultural events and enrichment opportunities to develop their cultural capital.

Our curriculum intent – how we love:

- Our pupils are empathetic to the needs of others and offer support. They have high self-esteem and recognise that they can contribute to the world.
- Our pupils build respectful relationships regardless of faith, gender and race – recognising that everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Our pupils uphold and understand the importance of our British Values.
- Our pupils have strong values, know what is right and wrong and their behaviour reflects this.

Our curriculum intent – how we learn:

- Our pupils are able to explain what they are doing and why they are doing it, knowing how this will impact on their progress.

- Our pupils know that finding things difficult results in growth and will not be put off by failure; instead they show a resilience and yearning to continue.
- Our pupils are aspirational and are able to demonstrate how they can reach their goals; they can also be an example to others.
- Our pupils are grateful and celebrate that everybody has talents. They develop confidence in their own abilities and a desire to strive to be the best they can be.
- Our pupils are inquisitive and prepared to take calculated risks to try something new.
- Our pupils make links in their learning leading to sustained mastery.
- Our pupils use high-quality vocabulary to express and develop their learning.

## **Curriculum Implementation**

Our curriculum design is based upon three principles from cognitive science:

1. Spaced repetition to facilitate effective learning.
2. Interleaving to help pupils helps people retain new information, acquire new skills, and improve existing abilities in a wide range of subjects.
3. Retrieval of previously learned content is regularly reviewed in order to increase memory storage and retrieval strength. Pupils know more and remember more.

This is implemented through a range of strategies, tailored to suit the needs of all pupils, including:

### Teaching and Learning

- Starting all lessons with a review of learning
- Presenting new material in small steps
- Providing clear and detailed instructions and explanations
- Using a wide range of questioning to check for understanding
- Ensuring active practice for all pupils
- Providing effective and timely modelling
- Providing systematic feedback and corrections
- Use of high quality resources/examples, texts and use of vocabulary

### Use of Assessment

- Use of timely feedback to pupils and 'next steps' in their learning
- Use of formative and summative assessments to adapt teaching so all pupils make progress
- Use of dedicated interventions to support pupils to reach their full potential

### Continued Professional Development

- Regular programme of monitoring, evaluation and review and the celebration of good practice contributes to the ongoing commitment to evolve and improve teaching and learning.

- Dedicated continued professional development for all staff
- Performance Management targets
- Peer to peer reviews

## **Curriculum Impact**

The impact of our curriculum is that by the end of each planned milestone pupils will have sustained mastery of the content; they remember it and are fluent based upon the targets set for individuals to ensure ambitious progress. As a result, when Holy Souls pupils move on they will have:

- A strong spiritual knowledge and faith based upon our school Mission statement and Catholic ethos.
- A strong web of knowledge from across the curriculum subjects which can be transferred from one context to another.
- The ability to retrieve knowledge and make connections between subjects and apply their skills.
- The ability to apply their knowledge to solve problems and create workable solutions.
- A sense of identity and how they can make a positive contribution locally, nationally and globally.
- The knowledge and resilience needed to keep themselves and others safe.
- The ability to make well-informed decisions using a moral compass.
- Mutual respect and tolerance for all.
- The ability to be rounded citizens upholding British Values.

## **Key skills of Holy Souls Curriculum**

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### **Maths**

Holy Souls pupils will become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics, they will know and apply key skills and reason mathematically. Pupils will also solve problems across a range of contexts methodically and with resilience. Our pupils will have a secure and confident grasp in the fundamentals of maths. This conceptual understanding and the ability to recall and apply knowledge forms the foundations of all maths learning. This alongside the application of age appropriate key skills, and use of mathematical vocabulary, allows access to deeper understanding; therefore, making purposeful connections between areas of maths and other subjects.

### **English**

Our innovative English curriculum enables and encourages children's reading, writing and oral communication and overall creativity. Pupils are taught to read fluently with understanding whilst developing the desire to read widely and deeply for pleasure and information. Pupils will acquire a wide vocabulary and will apply the key skills of spelling,

grammar and punctuation for reading, writing and spoken language. They will write clearly, accurately, coherently and neatly for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

### **Religious Education**

Religious Education has an important role for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social, vocational and cultural development. Our pupils will be respectful and open-minded towards others with different faiths and beliefs and develop their sense of identity and belonging through self-awareness and reflection.

### **Science**

Our pupils will develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding of nature, processes and methods of science to help answer questions about the world around us. Pupils will build on their understanding year on year through practical investigation and application of their growing scientific knowledge, to prepare them for the implications of science, today and for the future. They will also recognise and appreciate the achievements of some of the most influential scientists.

### **Geography**

Our Geography curriculum sparks pupils' interest and fascination in God's world and its people, places and the environment. We believe it is vital that children investigate and can analyse locations, places, people and learn about interactions between the Earth's physical and human processes.

### **History**

Holy Souls Catholic Primary School History curriculum will provide children with the opportunity to investigate and interpret the past, build an overview of local and world history, understand chronology and communicate historically. It is important that children understand and value their own identity and heritage and understand the process of change. This includes their cultural roots, as citizens of Acocks Green, Birmingham and the UK as members of a global society.

### **Personal, Social, Health Education**

Children at Holy Souls Catholic Primary School will become healthier, more independent and more responsible members of modern society. Pupils will be encouraged to play a positive role in contributing to the life of the school and the wider community. We teach them in simple ways how society is organised and governed and the process of democracy. Children will recognise their rights and responsibilities. They learn to appreciate what it means to be a positive member of a diverse and multicultural society.

## **Relationships and Health Education**

We are created in the unique image of and likeness of God, helping the children understand the importance of valuing themselves as the basis for their personal relationships.

We explore our relationships with others. Pupils will build upon their understanding that we have been created out of love and for love, and how we take this calling into our family, friendships and relationships and how we develop healthy and safe relationships.

We explore our relationships with the wider world. Pupils will explore how we are called to love others in the wider community through service, dialogue and the Common Good.

## **Art**

Holy Souls children will embody and experience the highest forms of creativity. It is a universal language enabling all pupils to engage, inspire and be challenged. Art will equip pupils with knowledge and skills in drawing, painting, sculpting and other art and craft activities to experiment, invent and create their own pieces of Art. Our children will know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art form.

## **Design Technology**

Pupils at Holy Souls will build and apply a repertoire of knowledge, understanding and skills in order to design and make high-quality prototypes and products for a wide range of users that solve real and relevant problems. This will enable pupils to develop the creative, technical and practical experience needed to engage in enterprise activities.

## **Music**

Music is a universal language that will enable all pupils to engage and be inspired to develop a love of music and use their talent as musicians using both their voices and musical instruments. Children will develop a critical engagement with music composing, listening, performing and evaluating across a wide repertoire including the works of the great composers and musicians.

## **Computing**

Pupils understanding will be based upon skills surrounding: Computer Science, Information Technology and Digital Literacy. Our pupils will understand and apply the fundamental principles of computing by using abstraction, logic, algorithms and data representation. They will also analyse problems in computational terms and evaluate and apply information technology to solve problems. They will also be responsible, competent, confident, safe and creative users of information and communication technology.

## **Physical Education**

Our children will become physically active and enjoy participating. Our aim is to provide opportunities for all children to participate in competitive sport and our activities build character, communication, teamwork and a sense of belonging, as well as help to embed values such as fairness and respect. Our pupils will appreciate and learn the skills needed to maintain and engage in a healthy lifestyle now and in the future, both mentally and physically.

## **Modern Foreign Languages**

Our MFL curriculum fosters a curiosity in pupils paired with a deeper understanding of God's world. We believe that this will allow our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards cultural diversity and enables them to compare cultures and values of Britain and France. Speaking, reading and writing more than one language is increasingly important in a world of borderless communications and global travel

## **Holy Souls Catholic Primary School**

The St Teresa of Calcutta MAC is courageous in its ambition to provide excellent experiences and the delivering of outstanding outcomes for all young people aged 4-19 that we are privileged to serve.

High expectations are found in all of our schools, which are characterised by the commitment to an innovative approach to high quality curriculum provision and teaching and learning. It is through this principle that children develop a love of learning and discover their vocation and calling from God. Each young person has unique talents that are nurtured and encouraged as they discover their path in life.

Our MAC is compassionate and understanding to the variety of needs that of our young people bring. In this inclusive academy, everyone is valued as a child of God and nobody gets left behind or forgotten.

The context of our policy for teaching and learning has been clearly articulated by the Bishops of England and Wales.

*...The aims of our schools are to help everyone within the school community to grow in faith, to make the most of every ability they have been given, to achieve academic excellence and to prepare well for adult life in a modern and diverse society. (Sept. 2007)*

These aims are mirrored in both our own school mission statement and our statement of the preferred future for our MAC. The Professional Teachers Standards also provide further a clear set of practices which define the role of the teacher in fulfilling the teaching dimension to our purpose. Our own school's teaching and learning policy takes these standards and, based on our staff's professional consensus of our best practice, defines the principles of teaching which make a difference in ensuring the excellent quality of education which we wish to provide for the children in our care.

Applying these principles, each teacher has their teaching quality assured through the monitoring of the impact of their teaching on the children's learning outcomes. In order to

have our teaching quality assured in our school, each of these principles are to be followed consistently. The key processes in achieving this consistency are firstly through the effective assessing and reviewing of the impact of our most recent teaching on our children's learning, followed by thorough shared preparations in planning the next teaching and learning lessons. This requires an ongoing professional commitment from our staff to work with year group colleagues daily, weekly and termly which is provided immeasurably by all staff.

Due to the consistently good and often outstanding teaching practice in our school, we can guarantee to our children and their parents an assurance of good quality teaching which will impact on good quality learning. If for any reason, identified through the regular monitoring of the learning outcomes of our children, the teaching practice of a colleague becomes variable and is not applying all of the principles of good quality teaching as set out below, then support is required for that colleague's teaching to improve back to the level of the quality assurance guarantee. Such support shall be readily provided by colleagues working together and shall be readily accepted by colleagues working together.

The principles of teaching which make a difference are:

- Progress
- High Expectations
- Pitch
- Prior Attainment
- Clear Learning goals
- Challenge
- Clear Learning Objective
- Modelling success
- Questioning
- Flow
- Feedback
- Metacognition

### **Progress**

At Holy Souls we aim that children make progress by ensuring they know more and remember more. Children should be able to do more with this knowledge and be able to adapt and apply their knowledge in other contexts and to new learning.

Our curriculum is organised and sequenced to ensure that children build on previous knowledge, to use prior skills and then adapt the knowledge taught.

We identify knowledge which is key as a building block to conceptual understanding and knowledge where automaticity is required (e.g. times tables, number bonds, prayers, Mass responses)

We know that in order to achieve this implementation, teachers have to have secure subject and pedagogical understanding.

## **High Expectations.**

The National Curriculum provides a framework for the knowledge that should be taught to children. At Holy Souls our school curriculum outlines our curriculum showing our aims, priorities and needs of our children and the community we serve. Having high expectations of our children shows that we care for them. Research shows that children meet the expectations that we have of them. Our policy is to have high expectations and be prepared to be surprised. It is particularly important to have high expectations of our older children who are in lower sets.

In our school we understand that to achieve our high expectations the following practices are required:

- good communication between all involved in our children's learning: teachers (class share colleagues and other colleagues within the year group), teaching assistants, other support staff, parents and the children themselves;
- good knowledge of our children's experiences and circumstances;
- targets and benchmarks;
- confidence that our prior teaching experience having high expectations did result in good and often better progress;
- sharing our high expectations with each other and how we teach to achieve them so that we can improve as teachers;
- effective differentiation.

## **Pitch.**

High pitch along with high expectations by everyone involved does impact on our children's learning. Being a role model for our children is important showing them that we genuinely believe in their ability to succeed in their challenges, tasks and targets

Our understanding of pitch includes the following principles:

- trusting in the transition information received from our colleagues to challenge our children at the beginning of an academic year;
- a common understanding that good progress at the end of a year is defined as being more than a year's outcome for that year's input.

To accurately pitch our teaching and our children's learning we will show understanding of what has been covered in previous years and outline any gaps to ensure that we consistently:

- make best use of our professional teacher experience and expertise in that year group;
- reference to relevant curriculum objectives;
- reference to national expectations of attainment and achievement;
- targets;
- points that are achievable if our children work hard and try their best;
- knowing our children and their prior attainment.

### **Prior Attainment.**

We recognise that all children are unique individuals and are at different points on their learning journey.

We will ensure that all children make good progress relative to their needs.

Knowing the starting point of each lesson is crucial as this informs the size and nature of the challenge for our children in that lesson.

To move our children's learning forward at the beginning of each lesson or new unit of learning we strive to deliver consistency in the following:

- All teachers have clear understanding of previous learning and build on and review working towards milestones;
- use of previous assessment information (baseline e.g. attainment on entry to school, end of KS1, termly assessments e.g. unaided writing);
- use of assessment activities at the beginning of a unit of learning;
- ongoing daily recorded observations;
- marking of our children's work;
- teacher expertise expressed through good subject knowledge of the relevant curriculum subject,
- often (but not exclusively) enhanced by a built up experience teaching within a particular age group;
- communicating all the above through the PPA process.

### **Clear Learning Goals.**

For our children to make good progress they need to clearly understand the starting point of lessons and their pathway through the lesson. This is a key skill of teachers and requires:

- consistency in communicating with our colleagues the following;
- good, confident subject knowledge;
- using language with our children which they understand;
- building with children their awareness of their own learning;
- clear (to the child) success criteria;
- clear feedback.

### **Challenge.**

Achieving success where the challenge first felt difficult is the real 'elixir' of learning. It is what gives us the greatest buzz as teachers and learners. Learning may be defined as an enabling task which moves someone from a place of current understanding to a new step in their learning. Providing the correct challenge is an expert teacher skill. It is a fine balancing act between securing/mastering a skill and being exposed to the next more difficult learning step. It involves having a minimum expectation with learning that initially must seem out of reach to our children but, with help and practise, will realistically be achieved. It requires the following practices:

- good teacher subject knowledge to know all the steps to the learning thus confidently providing open ended learning opportunities;
- knowledge of the individual child in knowing when the right time to move the child forward or when to support new learning needs that are identified;

- a trusting relationship with the child where the child (who knows the teacher is there to help and support) is unafraid and confident to make mistakes in new learning, get things wrong, take risks, think, investigate in order to succeed in the challenge;
- the teacher to be unafraid of getting the pitch of the challenge wrong at times;
- planned and unplanned questioning at different levels;
- teacher and children ensuring that next steps are being aimed for by using the success criteria together;
- ongoing dialogue and feedback with the child where the higher the challenge, the more accurate and specific the feedback needs to be.

Challenge is not always about new learning. The brain often can only take on more difficult steps once current learning skills have been mastered to a sufficient degree. This requires much opportunity for focussed concentration and deliberate practice on aspects of the challenge which may need to be refined with feedback and repetition until success has been achieved.

### **Modelling Success / Showing how to...**

Our children need to touch and /or see what the successful learning looks like and a key teaching skill is to model and demonstrate the steps to success accurately using correct concepts, skills and words.

This requires physical concrete apparatus to begin until the child is ready for visual models through IWBs, power points, visualisers, books or other secondary resources.

### **Questioning**

Questioning is a key expert skill because it models the thinking required for our children to attempt and then master new learning. Our children need to learn and connect that key words in a question prompt a certain type of response and may require different levels of thinking.

Using questioning requires the following practices:

- choosing the language in questions carefully to optimise the learning in a lesson;
- good subject knowledge particularly of common mistakes and misconceptions which our children have;
- clear modelling along with clear modelling of correct answers;
- providing children with time for meaningful discussion and productive talking where the teacher can join in but will as often listen and therefore learn from the children also;
- talk, listen and do;
- use of an effective taxonomy to support levels of improving and deepening thinking such as Bloom's taxonomy.

### **Flow.**

When flow happens it is a consequence of teachers using key expert skills. Flow does not happen accidentally and needs to be consistently assessed, planned and prepared for and

communicated with all colleagues within the year group to achieve parity of opportunity for all children. The following practises are required:

- the learning objective is worthwhile to our children thus intrinsically motivating;
- the success criteria are clear to our children;
- an appropriately high level of challenge;
- a good attitude to the learning;
- our children have the skills at the right level for the next stage of learning;
- minimal input is used with the whole class;
- feedback is timed as immediate as practically possible during the lesson;
- opportunities for talk partners, mixed thinking ability pairs and groups to support independent, 'have a go', perseverance based learning.

To support our children's motivation we often use a 'hook'. This is usually an experience, resource, story or idea which has relevance to their experiences, desires audiences or meaningful purposes in their lives. Teachers will often use role play to stimulate interest. The aim is for all our children to become (if not already) intrinsically motivated to love learning in itself.

### **Feedback.**

Our children want to know how well they are doing, where they are going next and how they are going to get there. Our children want help from their teacher with understanding their learning and with how to improve their learning.

Our children place a high value on receiving feedback against their learning achievement and have a high value of teachers who provide it. Helping our children to learn something new is why we teach and what gives us most pleasure and satisfaction. Ideally this feedback is best given at the point at which our children need it as it maximises learning. Certainly best practice with our youngest children is to follow this approach.

Whilst all our teachers agree with this principle, feedback is organised in a manner which balances the immediate and emerging needs of the children in any given point within any lesson with the finite adult resources present in the lesson. Getting this balance correct, but not at the expense of wearing a teacher out, is arguably a definition of an expert teacher. It is an expert teaching skill to optimise the learning time and to know when to intervene as necessary to support learning or move learning forward.

We have an established marking and feedback policy which shares these principles and the specific practise of them in more detail. Effective marking provides the opportunity to optimise learning at the beginning of the next lesson and provide feedback predominantly through groups

Towards the end of lessons allowing our children to self and peer assess allows us a crucial opportunity to evaluate the quality of their understanding and thinking thus giving us immediate feedback on the quality of our teaching. Guiding our children to accurate high quality metacognition as they get older feeds intrinsic motivation and therefore is a goal of our school.

### **Metacognition. (Learning how to learn)**

Metacognition is present in a lesson when children know what they know and are involved in their own learning It requires the following practices:

- children can explain what they have been learning;
- children can understand what they are trying to learn;
- children know how successful their learning is and what good progress is for them;
- children know what their next step is;
- children are intrinsically self motivated and love learning.

### **Values, Skills, Attitudes, Knowledge, Excellence and Enjoyment.**

Our school believes that the principles of excellence in learning and enjoyment of learning are vital to children's personal wellbeing and academic achievement.

Learning experiences are planned and delivered following our agreed criteria.

#### ***The curriculum must be:***

- driven by good quality outcomes and high standards;
- centred around good quality standalone core subjects of RE, Maths and English;
- clear in its overview;
- 'basics' skills driven;
- relevant to children's needs, their experiences and their locality;
- a reinforcement of basic skills taught in core subjects;
- owned by children and teachers in each year group to guarantee excellent engagement.
- Broad, balanced and in depth so that our children are to be nurtured as learners who learn more and remember more.
- flexible to respond to current affairs.

#### **Our list for *EXCELLENT* learning; our ingredients for *ENJOYMENT* memorable lessons.**

- successful learning took place, a eureka moment, a penny dropping, a buzz, I get it
- achievement and accomplishment of outcomes building on previous best
- the teaching was enthusiastic
- the children taken safely out of their comfort zones to enjoy taking risks
- carefully chosen resources to hook, fascinate, excite, inspire and motivate everyone
- humour, fun and enjoyment
- recognition of learning and celebrating it
- practical finding out, experimenting, trial and error, actively engaging
- a planned experience e.g. trip or visitor
- drama, role play or performance
- ICT led
- relevant, purposeful, real with a bigger picture
- ownership
- audience and clarity of purpose
- challenging questions by adults and children which are listened/responded to

- something of value is created
- when there is an awareness of God's presence and work at hand

The key **SKILLS** that our children need to learn are:

- gross and fine motor
- listening accurately and speaking correctly
- concentration
- independence in reading, writing and maths
- read and write HF words
- fluency in reading for decoding and comprehension
- ask questions and solve problems
- basic maths
- interpersonal, social, emotional
- resilience and resourcefulness
- organisation between home and school
- money
- oracy and vocabulary development
- ICT
- access knowledge
- imagination and creativity
- correct choices in given situations to use and transfer skills

The key **ATTITUDES** that our children need to learn are:

- motivation to love learning as the key to a good and fulfilling life
- aspiration and ambition
- self belief and confidence
- initiative and determination
- enthusiasm and optimism
- take on a challenge and not be afraid to make mistakes
- form an opinion
- persistence to see it through to the successful end
- responsibility and respect
- beatitudes to be as good as we can be
- fruits of the Holy Spirit
- to value opportunities and appreciate aesthetic experiences
- to support our British Values
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The key **KNOWLEDGE** that our children need to learn about are:

- God's love for us, how to live our faith and understand our religion
- our world and the cultures within
- our society and our role as citizens within
- the statutory curriculum, RE, English and Maths, to good SATs standards
- our bodies, good health and physical well being

- our environment
- music
- the past and its conflicts