



Teaching, Learning and Engagement Policy

**“We are of the Gospel,
educating all children
in order for them to grow
and reach their full potential
as fulfilled people in Christ”**

1. Introduction

At Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary School our approach to teaching, learning and engagement is distinctive because – as our mission states – we take the life of Christ as our example and therefore strive to achieve the highest standards through relationships based on Gospel Values. All that is taught, practised and learnt in our school leads us as a community to a knowledge and love of God. We seek to develop the full potential of each learner in our school. We also recognise and acknowledge the hugely important role that all adults in our school play in the learning process and we value the contribution of parents in this process because they are the primary educators of their children.

At Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary School we have an unrelenting focus on standards of achievement and attainment for all children. We believe that in order to maintain high standards of education, all staff must be focused on the quality of classroom practice and children’s progress. Continued and sustained school improvement is dependent upon improving the quality of teaching and learning that is taking place on a daily basis. Across our school the expectation is that all children are provided with high quality learning experiences that lead to consistently high levels of pupil achievement. Our expectation is that *every teacher should be at least a good teacher; reflecting on learning outcomes and always willing to improve for the benefit of the children.*

2. Purpose of this policy

This policy outlines some of the key elements which are fundamental to raising standards in teaching and learning. It also sets out a broad organisational structure for lessons, based on best practice and research linked to how we best learn. However, this is a broad outline only; we also consider it important to ensure children have the opportunity to experience creative teaching approaches and are able to use their own creative and spontaneous flair to express themselves as individuals.

3. Principles for teaching, learning and engagement

In the light of our stated Mission, we believe that all children learn best when:

- They are happy, safe and secure.
- They are stimulated, motivated, challenged and engaged in their learning.
- The learning is matched to the needs of the learner.
- They achieve success which is recognised and celebrated.
- They are encouraged to love learning and develop a life long relationship with it.
- They are helped to develop an open mind-set and a 'can do' attitude.
- They are encouraged to ask questions and are given time to think.
- They have opportunities to be creative and take responsibility for their own learning.
- They understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.
- They understand that mistakes can be made and that these are an opportunity for growth.
- They receive support and encouragement from home.

4. Our aims as educators

- To value and respect each individual pupil acknowledging the importance of the experiences they bring with them.
- To help children to know and understand who they are, all created in God's image and likeness.
- To take into account the cultural, spiritual and emotional background of the children in order to engage children on their own level.
- To provide a broad, balanced, rich and vivid curriculum delivered using a range of mediums.
- To enable children to take responsibility for their own learning and provide them with the guidance and opportunities to do so.

- To meet individual needs through different learning styles.
- To differentiate work in order to meet the needs of individuals and groups.
- To encourage children to have high expectations and aspirations.
- To help everyone in the school community to reach their full potential.
- To reach out to all stakeholders in the wider community, build up relationships and create links in order to prepare children for the future.
- To encourage children to develop a wide range of skills and to foster their spiritual and moral development which will, in the future, enable them to make informed choices.

5. Awe and Wonder

We encourage and celebrate any child or adult's ability to think creatively, their talent or their gift. We aim to inspire wonder in others, to grow in enthusiasm, develop an enquiring mind, share ideas and, led by the Holy Spirit, to nurture in our community, a sense of our own stewardship of God's wonderful world. Faith is very important to us and, from Nursery through to Year 6, we want to encourage mutual respect and appreciation for each other's God-given gifts and talents. (See also R.E. Policy)

6. Learning beyond the classroom

We value learning beyond the classroom to embrace the spiritual/intellectual/emotional/social and cultural aspects of our pupils. We are not solely confined by the National Curriculum. We aim to provide new experiences and broaden horizons. We build on opportunities to develop children's understanding of their local area and community. We want to nurture a thirst for knowledge, independent thinking and lifelong learning.

A wide range of curriculum trips and visits enrich our curriculum. We welcome many visitors throughout the year, who enrich our curriculum. Activities to support various charity groups and the participation in the Sacramental Programme also offer valuable experiences.

7. Learning is enhanced through ...*The use of technology (ICT)*

- ICT is used to enhance learning where ever possible. *The use of ICT is effective in all teaching and learning contexts across our school and teachers often search for ways it can be used as a collaborative learning tool.*

8. Learning Objectives

All lessons have a clearly displayed and shared lesson objective, which is referred to throughout the lesson. The success criteria is shared with children to enable them to meet the learning objective. Assessment of the learning objective takes place throughout the lesson and through regular marking and feedback.

9. Assessing Pupil Progress

At Holy Cross and All Saints through assessment, we aim to engage with and support children's learning to improve progress and raise confidence and self-esteem. We do this through both formative and summative assessment. Assessment occurs on a daily basis and children are assessed at the end of each half term in RE, Reading, Writing, EGPS, Mathematics and Science. Foundation Subjects are assessed throughout the year against age related expectations. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) assessment is based on observations against the developmental stages, ELGs (Early Learning Goals) and the use of 'Learning Journeys'.

Children on the S.E.N list are assessed each term against the individual targets on their personalised plans and class provision maps (See S.E.N. Policy)

All data is entered onto the class assessment tracker which is saved on the network and accessible to all staff, it is discussed and monitored at pupil progress meetings. These meetings are used to identify individuals and groups of pupils who are making good or accelerated progress, are 'on track' or causing concern. Pupil progress meetings occur each term.

Termly 'Aiming Higher' meetings enable Key Stage 1 and 2 staff to celebrate achievement with pupils and discuss targets for the term ahead. (See monitoring Plan/ Assessment Policy)

Marking and Feedback

At Holy Cross and All Saints we aim to ensure all children have their work marked in such a way that it will improve their learning, develop their self-confidence, raise self-esteem and provide opportunities for self-assessment and personal target-setting. Marking and Feedback can be oral and/or written. (See Marking/ Feedback Policy)

10.Questioning

This is a key aspect of the teaching and learning process. Questions should draw learners into the learning process as well as checking on acquisition of knowledge. Teachers need to be aware that:

- Questioning can build vocabulary.
- Questions can develop thinking and understanding (Blooms Taxonomy)
- Learners need to interpret the question-they need to 'think outside the box'.

- ‘Learning Walls’ and ‘Thinking Walls’ encourage pupils to post questions e.g. what do we want to know about this topic?
- Questions can challenge.
- Open questions invite a more extensive response without ‘rightness’ or ‘wrongness’ being an issue.
- Open questions encourage a culture of no right or wrong answers.
- Open questions enable learners to share viewpoints.
- Learners need time to think about their own questions as this enables them to process their thinking before recording.
- Quality questioning impacts on A.F.L. (Assessment for Learning). Low ability learners can often show what they know without having to record it.

Teachers need to consider:

- How much ‘thinking time’ is given?
- How do we respond to learners’ responses?
- To what extent do we encourage learners to formulate their own questions?
- Do we wait for full attention before we ask questions?
- How many different learners answer questions?
- How do we invite responses, apart from direct responses? e.g. lollypop pick.

11.Talk for Learning

When we talk we do more than articulate our current level of understanding.

The very act of talking forces us to organise our thoughts and so deepens understanding. It is partly the reason why we remember so much of what we teach to others.

At Holy Cross and All Saints RC Primary we believe that talk is central to learning. Lessons regularly include planned and unplanned opportunities to discuss questions and extend thinking ***Think/Pair/Share and Talk to your partner*** are regular features in all lessons. Children are trained to use appropriate body

We learn

10% of what we read

20% of what we hear

30% of what we see

50% of what we see and hear

70% of what we discuss with others

80% of what we experience

95% of what we teach to others

William Glaser (1960s)

language when talking to a partner and children understand that their talk is valued as much as their written work.

12. Planning

Planning is an essential part of our Teaching and Learning process. Teachers produce plans that include

- **Learning Objectives (LO)**
- **Success Criteria**
- **Opportunities for active learning (co-operative learning structures)**
- **Open ended questions**
- **Provision for different groups of learners**

Prompts for planning a lesson

Am I clear about what I want the children to know, understand and do by the end of the lesson?	Is the learning outcome clearly written on the whiteboard?	Is success criteria listed?
Have I thought about the questions I will need to ask to deepen understanding/ assess learning?	How am I going to engage & motivate the children at the session start & during the lesson?	Are activities challenging for the more able?
Have I set clear expectation of what children are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson?	Have I included the differentiation for different groups?	
What vocabulary am I going to introduce to the children?	Have I planned to ensure children are not sitting passively for long periods?	Have I given thinking time & talking time before answering questions?
What am I going to plan into my plenary?	Have I shared planning with my TA? (When will this be done?)	Have I included time for children to respond to marking from previous lesson?
Have I planned opportunities for children to talk about their learning in pairs/group?	Is the TA clear about what and how to support?	Have I got a balance of teacher instruction, intervention and independent tasks?
		How are children going to assess own learning or that of others?

13. Differentiation

At Holy Cross and all Saints, we value each child and aim to meet their individual educational needs. It is expected that planning will detail how teaching and learning will be differentiated. Children with Special education needs and children identified as being more able should have suitable activities that challenge, support and develop their learning. Termly target-setting reflects their individual progress and needs.

14. Display and Classroom Environment

We value the contributions made by all learners, displays are of a high standard, with vocabulary and scaffolds to stimulate and prompt learning. The process of teaching that has taken place can be displayed with the high quality pieces of work produced by the children. The surroundings in which children learn can greatly influence their academic performance and well-being in school. We aim to provide an inspiring learning environment that reflects children's achievement and effort. We aim to ensure that all classrooms, group learning areas and whole school areas are spaces that everyone can use to learn and be proud of.

All classes across the school should have ***working walls linked to the topic they are studying.***

Each classroom has an altar/prayer corner which is prominent and reflects the Liturgical Calendar or topics from the R.E. curriculum. The Mission Statement is clearly displayed.

The School system for rewards and sanctions are discussed with the class and displayed. Trays and resources are clearly labelled. There is a book / library area and dazzle books are prominently displayed.

There are display boards in the Halls that are changed on a termly basis reflecting the learning during our themed weeks. Year groups are responsible for display in the general areas outside their classrooms or along corridors.

15. Termly Targets

We expect all children to make good progress throughout the year and reach or exceed age related expectations for their year group. We see the setting of targets as essential in this process. Termly Pupil Progress meetings reveal the aspects of learning the children need to develop in order to achieve expected levels. It also identifies additional barriers to learning eg attendance/ disability and strategies that can be implemented to improve these children's outcomes.

The children are made aware of their targets through discussion and recording progress on their target cards. During half termly 'Aim Higher' Meetings, a half day is set aside for these one to

one discussions between the class teacher and individual pupils. However, in the younger year groups, these may be done in small groups, where appropriate.

Targets are also displayed in the children's books in English and Mathematics. They are referred to on a regular basis through teacher feedback and marking and other AFL (Assessment for Learning) strategies.

Achievements relating to targets are communicated to parents during parents meetings, end of year reports and new targets are recorded on individual target cards.

16. Interventions to support progress

Through careful analysis of each child's progress by the class teacher, and through termly pupil progress meetings, we are able to address any additional needs a child may have. We have a number of Intervention programmes in place to enable children to narrow the gap in their learning. Pupils Premium funding is also used to support this for eligible pupils.

16. Monitoring

The monitoring of teaching and learning in school is an important part of ensuring that we give the best quality of provision to our children, in order for them to make the best progress. Various monitoring activities go on throughout the year in order for staff to gain feedback to celebrate their strengths and develop further their practice. We aim that all our teaching is of a high quality in order to fulfil our mission to our children, so that they can 'achieve and grow'.

Monitoring of Planning

In line with Government guidance, Senior and Subject leaders will look at sample plans at certain times in the year, depending on the development focus at the time. (See Monitoring Timetable) Planning is also monitored when lesson observations take place. Newly qualified/recently qualified teachers and when there is a concern about a teachers performance, will have their planning monitored more regularly usually by their phase leader.

Monitoring of Teaching

Observations will be carried out during the year to monitor teaching standards. Newly qualified and recently qualified teachers will be observed more frequently, as part of their initial training.

There will be an identified focus for all observations, linked to School Improvement Priorities or the performance management objectives / teaching standards of individual teachers. Observations are carried out by members of the Senior Leadership Team members, phase leaders or subject co-ordinators, depending on the purpose of the observations. Teachers who are observed will have a feedback and the opportunity to discuss their strengths and areas for

development with the observer. Teaching Assistants are regularly observed as part of the schools monitoring plan.

Monitoring of 'learning' in books

Book scrutinies will be carried out during each academic year. Again, the focus for the scrutiny will be informed by School Improvement Priorities. These monitoring activities will help to ensure sufficient coverage of the curriculum, the consistency of marking and feedback standards and the accuracy of assessment levels across the school.

Sometimes this will be done as a whole staff team activity, by subject Leaders or the Senior Leadership Team. (see Monitoring Plan)

20. Conclusion

The aim of the policy is to capture and reflect what we believe to be our current good practice. We accept that, as research into teaching and learning moves ahead and as new strategies are developed at national, local and school level, we will need to revisit the policy on an annual basis.