



## **Parent Involvement in the Early Years Policy**

At Holy Cross we aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum to inspire children through an imaginative and immersive approach, ensuring that the children are happy and enthusiastic to learn. We foster and nurture the children's interests and curiosities by giving them a strong foundation for their future learning. We believe Parents play a vital role in education. When parents are engaged and involved, everyone benefits – students, parents, families, teachers, schools and communities – and our school is enriched as a positive place to teach learn and grow. Our school Mission Statement plays an important part in our hope and expectations for the children in the Foundation Stage.

*“Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly with your God.” (Micah 6)*

### **Aims**

1. To enhance and widen our children's education through the involvement of parents and the community when possible.
2. Foster and promote a two way partnership based on mutual respect between parents, children and all those working within our school.
3. Ensure that Holy Cross Catholic Primary School is a culturally appropriate environment that values parents and carers and is sensitive to family needs.
4. Recognise that parents and carers are the most important influence in a child's life and that school is most effective when there is partnership between parents, children and school.
5. Holy Cross Catholic Primary School seeks to provide helpful communication with parents about how their child is doing.

### **Introduction**

Both home and school want the best for the children in our care. Parents want the children in our care to have the best opportunities so that they can become successful and happy members of the school and wider community. At Holy Cross we want to provide pupils with the environment and support they need to achieve all their potential. Effective partnership between home and school is key to these aspirations. Parents and carers are the most important influence in a child's life, and the school needs to listen to and communicate with parents effectively to build the trust and understanding needed for pupils to achieve their best. The school needs to be a resource for the community it serves.

### **Involvement in the life of the school and the children's learning**

- Establish and sustain a positive learning culture and welcoming climate where parental input is welcomed, respected and valued.
- We are committed to on-going dialogue to improve our knowledge of the needs of children and to support families. Our Parent Support Officer, Rachel Confue is around in the morning and after school to see parents. Parents can make an appointment to see her at any time or the Headteacher, Paul Cotter or EYFS Lead and Teacher.
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the governance and management of the school. We have parent governors who represent the views



of the parents. Parent's are also invited to attend the PTFA meetings, where decisions about the school are made and discussed.

- We have a good transition for children starting our school. This begins with a New Parent Meeting, Home Visits and 3 transition afternoons in the summer term. We also sent home 'All About Me' Booklets for Parents to fill out all about their child with them.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage parents and families are encouraged to share their child's development and record keeping through sending in weekend news, holiday news and WOW moments. WOW moments are recorded on a sheet and put into the child's learning journey after we have celebrated them as a whole class every Friday afternoon. Mrs Goddard is available every Wednesday at the end of the day to support parents in writing these out which we have started this year.
- We welcome parents into school to help with trips, learning support evenings, reading, or sharing their skills in the classroom. All Parents who help have a DBS provided by the school free of charge.
- Through weekly and termly newsletters we keep parents informed of topics, events and overviews of learning. This can be by pupil, post, email or through accessing the school website which is updated weekly with letters.
- Curriculum letters are sent to each family at the start of each term, detailing the aspects of learning each child will undertake, and how families might support that learning, for example becoming in and helping us explore different cultures. 'Home Learning', linked to our topic, is also shared with parents.
- Celebrating diversity through exploring different cultures and inviting parents to send in pictures and come in to talk about their home countries. We aim, to offer workshops where parents and carers can share their love of learning.
- We inform parents on a regular basis about their child's progress. We have termly parents' evenings and have half termly drop in sessions where Parents and Carers are invited into school throughout the year to take part/observe lessons and look at their child's work.
- We aim to include and communicate with parents, particularly fathers, who do not live with their children. We send duplicate letters in book bags or by post if requested on a regular basis in a separate reading folder.
- The governors' minutes and policies are available for parents and parents can phone school or communicate through their child's reading record book or on Class Dojo. All staffs emails are also available on the school website.
- Class Dojo is a communication app for the classroom. It connects teachers, parents, and students to share photos, videos, and messages through the school day. At Holy Cross we use ClassDojo to work together as a team, as an instance communication with parents which is very useful in the mornings to share information about children's sleep patterns or anything we would find useful to know. Throughout the day with the children we add photos of what we are doing and then it gives the children as opportunity to share the photos with their parents and help explain exactly what they are doing. This particularly helps with EAL children and their parents.



- We seek the parents' views and strive to make things better for the children. We recognise the power of planning with parents, we take into account the values of the parents and try to teach the children about a range of beliefs and values
- We ensure all parents have access to their child's written records when requested.
- Annual reports on each child's academic and personal development is made available in the summer term.
- All helpers are asked to sign in and sign out of the school when visiting, for security reasons. All parent helpers are given a booklet, which includes a policy for them to sign about confidentiality and no use of mobile phones when in the classroom, only to be used in the staff room.
- Every Friday during celebration assembly we choose 2 children as our Wonders of the Week and invite in their parents with enough notice to come and join in the celebration, we aim to ensure parents are told at the latest by Wednesday at collection time.
- At the end of every half term children go through their learning journey and reflect on what they have enjoyed and what they would like to learn about the following half term. Parents are also asked for their comments on the half term. We send these home and support the parents who may need it with writing down what they would like. Parents can respond on Class Dojo which we can translate if they wish. Class Teachers are also available to support parents after school which is said when giving out the forms.
- Parents voice is also included in Learning Journeys on a hand post-it note every time Parents drop in and share the journey with their children. We try to get as much parent voice as we can in a variety of opportunities, if we cannot get Parent voice by drop-ins or sending WOW moments home, we speak to parents before and after school, message them on Class Dojo, ring them and have conversations and also ask them to come in when they pick up their child trying to accommodate them as much as we can.
- Our Year 6 buddies system is also a brilliant parent involvement as each Year 6 buddy write to the parents introducing themselves and we share moments with them on Class Dojo.
- We aim to remember the whole family - dads, mums, grandparents, siblings. If there is a language barrier, siblings support the translation and can also complete WOW moments for their younger sibling.

### **Ways in which effective partnerships can support pupils**

- Provide good induction for all parents – New Parent Meeting, Home Visits, Transition afternoon, coffee mornings. All information available on Class Dojo to change into any language to support EAL parents, ensuring all relevant school information is effective and easy to read by parents.
- Provide high quality information to parents/carers – newsletters, website, advance notice of all school events, celebrations assembly, parents notice board, communication between home and school through Class Dojo.



- Parents training – Curriculum, Read Write Inc., how to support learning at home.

### **Consultation**

Our home-school agreement, signed by pupils, parents and the school, details the responsibilities and expectations of all parties. The school will make every effort to consult parents and carers, both formally and informally, about their views on school life, children's learning and new initiatives. Parents or carers of a child with a disability are asked to keep the school fully informed about any relevant issues, so that the school can make all reasonable efforts to meet the requirements of that child. The school values regular feedback, and will make every effort to act on parents' and carers' views, wherever possible. Teachers (including the Headteacher) can be approached informally before and after school, and will always take careful account of any information forwarded to them. Periodically the school will seek parental views more formally, through an annual survey, or a questionnaire on a particular theme. By working in close partnership with Parents we nurture the development of trust, respect, confidence, independence, self-esteem and the desire to learn. We provide quality learning experiences with the expectation that all will have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Knowing our parents is key and we love working within this partnership with them as we work together helping their children grow throughout the year with us and as they continue into Year 1 and beyond. We keep in contact throughout the children's time at school and still invite parents to share learning with us and talk about their child's journey up the school.

**January 2019.**

Review January 2020