Jesus is the centre of our lives

Our learning and friendships

In a safe, happy and caring community

Where all are welcome

Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy
School Prospectus 2026-2027



Welcome to Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy. Choosing the right school for your child is a very important decision and I hope that the information contained within this prospectus will help you. Holy Cross is a school where children are at the heart of our school and where staff and governors all work together to give the best possible start in life for each child.

We live our mission statement which says;

'Jesus is the centre of our lives, our learning and friendships, in a safe, happy and caring community where all are welcome.'

We have high aspirations and ambitions for our children and there is a commitment and determination among all staff to ensure that each child reaches their full potential. We provide children with a rich breadth of engaging quality, learning experiences that prepare them for their secondary education and life beyond education

Our school is for children between the ages of 5 and 11. We are located in the south of the town of Harlow, next to Holy Cross Parish Church on Tracyes Road, close to the M11 motorway. As a two-form entry school we have provision for: 60 children in Reception, Years 1 & Year 2 and 64 children in Years 3 to 6. Individual class sizes do not exceed 30 children in Reception, Year One and Two and do not exceed 32 in Key Stage Two (Years Three to Six).

We are a friendly and welcoming community where children learn in a safe and supportive environment. We see parents and carers as the first educators of their children and our partners in developing their child, spiritually, academically, morally and socially. We believe that good communication between home, school and parish helps to ensure that children make good progress and develop as well-rounded citizens who care about others, care about how they are as a person and who care about our environment and our planet.

As a Catholic school, we value our distinctive nature and work to nurture these values in all our children. We welcome children from all Faiths and those of no belief with all children following our Catholic curriculum and embracing our Catholic ethos. At Holy Cross we are committed to high standards in both academic work and social development and also have high expectations for good behaviour. We offer a rich and varied curriculum with a vast array of extra-curricular activities which are well supported. We are proud of our achievements and our reputation for being a school with a caring and nurturing environment and with excellent relationships. We work closely with the home and parish to foster and deepen our children's Faith and to develop a caring attitude that reflects Gospel values and respect for each other as individuals. Our Parish Priest and Deacon are regular visitors to our school and we enjoy visiting our church on special occasions as our Holy Cross community.

We look forward to working with you in a positive and productive partnership.

Mrs A Kerrell
Headteacher

Who Are We?

There are many adults who contribute to the effective running of our school and who work to ensure the successful education and development of children in our care.

Teachers:
Miss Nicola Kelly (Ladybirds)
Mrs Katy Peters (Butterflies)
Miss Marie Hanifin (Dragonflies)
Miss Stacy Clark (Grasshoppers)
Mrs Ros Hunt and Mrs Nicola Timbrell (Hedgehogs)
Miss Victoria Hollick (Squirrels)
Ms Sarah Dodd and Mrs Mary-Beth Draycott-Guise (Foxes)
Miss Abbie Cargill (Badgers)
Mrs Sue Ennifer (Hares)
Ms Jasmina Murdzoska-Elia (Rabbits)
Mr Paul Clarke (Robins)
Miss Ellie Seers (Kingfishers)
Miss Frances Reeves (Owls)
Mrs Kirsty Noonan (Eagles)

Key Stage 1 Phase Leaders
Mrs Katy Peters (SLT)
Miss Stacy Clark (SLT)

Lower Key Stage 2 Phase Leaders
Miss Marie Hanifin (SLT)

Upper Key Stage 2 Phase Leaders
Mrs Kirsty Noonan (SLT)

Headteacher
Mrs Alison Kerrell (SLT)

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Alison Kerrell

Deputy Headteacher
Ms Sarah Dodd (SLT)

RE Lead Teacher
Mrs Alison Kerrell (SLT)

Lead Practitioners
Miss Stacy Clark (SLT)
Mrs Kirsty Noonan (SLT)

Business Manager
Mrs Kerry Clark (SLT)

PA to Headteacher
Mrs Karen Slater

SEND Manager
Miss Jenni Wheater (SLT)

SEMH Co-ordinator
Ms Sarah Dodd

Administration Assistant
Mrs Huong Lieu
Mrs Danielle Thomas

Site Manager
Mr Matt Kelly

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Ms Sarah Dodd
Mrs Stacy Clark
Mrs Kirsty Noonan
Mrs Katy Peters
Miss Jenni Wheater
Miss Marie Hanifin

Teaching Assistants:
Mrs Steph Tarling
Mrs Tracy Newell
Miss Tinisha Smtih
Miss Lyanne Murray
Mrs Alison Cunning
Mrs Sarah Ferjani
Miss Joanna Gorbaczewska
Mrs Poppy Feast
Mrs Julie Collins
Mrs Lian Reeve
Mrs Maria Adrian
Mrs Jade Sontag
Mrs Tracey Mills
Mrs Kathryn Watkins

LSA
Mrs Andrea Odu
Mrs Emma Andrews
Mrs Barbara Haley
Mrs Daniela Vetori
Miss Claire Faulkner
Mrs Julie Nunn
Mrs Angela Knowles
Mrs Klaudia Ostrowska
Miss Megan Williams
Miss Melanie O'Donoghue
Miss Lauren Huggett
Miss Kelli Lundy
Miss Nicola Neighbour
Mrs Katy Hollingworth
Mr Torren Wade
Mrs Chloe Foxe
Mrs Paula Hollis
Mrs Sophie Lynch
Mrs Emma Champkins

After School Club
Mrs Diana Chalk
Mrs Mai Nguyen
Mrs Sarah Ferjani

Site Manager Mr Matt Kelly **Kitchen Staff** Mrs Denise Alger Mrs Claire Forrest Mrs Kate Cater	**Senior Mid-Day Assistant** Mrs Diana Chalk **Mid-DayAssistants** Mrs Sinead Lavender Mrs Mai Nguyen Mrs Denise Smith Miss Rebecca Gumble Miss Shannon Oliver-Fitch Miss Carly Flint Miss Kelly Meighan Miss Kay Stevens Miss Lauren Oliver-Fitch Mrs Louise Reynolds Miss Ade Adeyemi Miss Rosheene Connolly-Canaii Mrs Jenny Austin Mrs Mary Ann Andersen Mrs Karis Bethell

Governors

Holy Cross Governors comprise of:

- Foundation Governors (who are regular Catholic members of the parish)
- Parent Governors (who have children attending our school)
- Staff Governors (who work within our school)
- Community Governors (who hold a respected position within the community)

Our Governors work to help ensure our school reaches its full potential and that it is regularly challenged to aim higher. This is done alongside the Headteacher and her team working cooperatively. Governors have a strong working relationship with the school, parish and wider community, with a focus on God and our school's mission statement.

GOVERNOR	CATEGORY
Deacon Tony Rowley	Foundation Chair of Governors
Ms Brenda Scott	Foundation Vice Chair of Governors
Father Bernard Soley	Foundation Governor
Mr Eamonn Hyde	Foundation Governor
Mrs. Sheila Underwood	Foundation Governor
Mr John Osijo	Foundation Governor
Mr Vincent Gomes	Foundation Governor
Mrs Francisca Apau	Parent Governor
Mrs. Kerry Clark	Governance Professional

The School Day

School Starts	**8.30** The playground is open for children **8:40-8:50** Children enter school **8.50** Registration
Lunchtime	**11:30 – 12:30** Reception children **12:00 – 1:00** Children from Years 1 and 2 **12.30 – 1.30** Children from Years 3 to 6
Home Time	**3.15pm**

Parents must inform the school if there are to be changes in home-time arrangements.

Year Groups

Classes are organised in registration groups according to chronological age.

Early Years Foundation Stage	**Key Stage One**	**Key Stage Two**
Miss Nicola Kelly (Ladybirds)	Miss Marie Hanifin (Dragonflies)	Ms Sarah Dodd and Mrs Mary-Beth Draycott-Guise (Foxes)
Mrs Katy Peters (Butterflies)	Miss Stacy Clark (Grasshoppers)	Miss Abbie Cargill (Badgers)
	Mrs Ros Hunt and Mrs Nicola Timbrell (Hedgehogs)	Mrs Sue Ennifer (Hares)
	Miss Victoria Hollick (Squirrels)	Ms Jasmina Murdzoska-Elia (Rabbits)
		Mr Paul Clarke (Robins)
		Miss Ellie Seers (Kingfishers)
		Miss Frances Reeves (Owls)
		Mrs Kirsty Noonan (Eagles)

Child Protection

Our school fully recognises its role in responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in its care. It has written policies and procedures in place that follow national and local authority child protection guidelines.

The Lead Designated Child Protection Officer is the Head Teacher and the Deputy Head Teacher in their absence.

House Groups

Each child is assigned a house group on entry to Holy Cross. The four houses are named after St. George (red), St. David (yellow), St. Andrew (blue) and St. Patrick (green). At the beginning of each academic year, Year 6 children canvass for the position of House Captain and are elected to this position by their peers. Children are awarded house points for good work, helpful behaviour and positive attitudes with the winners being announced weekly. House groups are also involved in fund-raising for charitable causes.

School Council
Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy has a thriving and active School Council that is involved with many aspects of school life. Children from Years Three to Six are elected by their class peers and our Learning Mentor oversees their work.

Charity Collections
Supporting others is an integral part of our Christian Catholic Social teaching values and helps to develop citizenship in children. At Holy Cross, we support people through our involvement in fund-raising for local, national and international charities. We welcome the continued support of parents in this aspect of school life.

Meals and Snacks
We operate a healthy eating policy and well-priced meals are prepared by our catering staff inhouse and served daily. Children have a choice of a meat-based meal (red) or a vegetarian option (green). Menus are published on our website and are changed weekly. Children can order school lunches on a one-off or a daily basis. Meals are paid for using our online Arbor pay system.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception), children are offered milk and a selection of fruit or vegetables for their mid-morning snack. There is also an afternoon snack which is organised and administered separately by Foundation Stage staff. We ask parents to pay termly in advance for this using our online Arbor pay system.

Children in Years 1 to 6 may bring in fruit or vegetables for their mid-morning snack.

Packed Lunch
We are proud to have been awarded the Healthy Schools Mark and have worked hard to ensure that children are aware of healthy food options.

Finances
We are grateful to our families who support our school financially. This can be enhanced through the Gift Aid scheme. This allows tax to be reclaimed on any qualifying donation, whether it is a regular or a one-off payment. Please be aware that this will not be at a cost to you but it will enable us to claim back tax that would otherwise have gone to the Inland Revenue. If you are a tax payer and haven't already signed a declaration, please do so. Forms can be obtained from the office. Parents are also invited to make a standing order declaration on a regular basis. However, this is of course, dependant on the financial situation of each family.

Charging
Schools are not permitted to make compulsory charges for activities or tuition other than for music tuition and specialist arts/crafts/club materials. However, without voluntary contributions for activities such as educational visits, they may not be able to go ahead. We are always grateful when parents support our school through funding for such events to ensure that we are able to provide such a rich variety of educational experiences for your child.

Governors Financial Involvement
The Governing Body's Finance Committee has specific responsibility for monitoring the school budget and reporting to the main Governing Body with regard to recommendations for future expenditure.

Parental Communication and Involvement

Newsletter
Each week we email a newsletter home; in this we reflect on the week we have just had, give advance notification for school events and other items of interest to parents. We also celebrate children's achievements and birthdays.

Arbor
The school uses Arbor to communicate with parents via email and text message. This is used for parents to make payments for school lunches, breakfast and after school club and school trips.

School Facebook Page
We have an active Facebook community page, this is a closed group, where we post lots of information.

Our Virtual Learning Environment
All children have access to our virtual learning environments, Seesaw. This provides valuable information about work that is being done in class, homework, upcoming school events and celebrates achievements. All children are given a personal security protected password to access this site.

Parent Consultation Evenings and Curriculum Events
We have parent/teacher meetings each year, in the autumn and spring term, when parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. At the end of the spring and summer term, teachers write an individual progress report for each child, and an annual report is produced at the end of the academic year which parents are invited to comment upon. We organise a number of curriculum information events for parents during the school year and also welcome the contribution which parents can make as voluntary classroom helpers.

Curriculum Information
At the beginning of each term, class teachers send home a curriculum letter, detailing work that will be covered during the coming term.

Concerns and Complaints
If parents are concerned about their child's progress or other issues during the year we welcome the chance to discuss these and would ask that parents do not hesitate to contact their child's class teacher to discuss such matters. If the problem cannot be resolved, then it should be referred to the Phase Leader, Deputy Headteacher and then Headteacher, in this order**.** In the unlikely event of not being satisfied, parents are advised to direct their concerns to the Chair of Governors to investigate further, if appropriate. Our complaints procedure is on the school website.

Homework

Homework will be sent to children through the learning platforms, Tapestry or Seesaw.
Children will be expected to read the task and undertake it either in the relevant dedicated homework book (C.G.P.) or in a homework exercise book. Parents are asked to purchase CGP books at the start of each academic year.

Homework will be set on Friday and is due back the following Wednesday

Homework by Year Group

E.Y.F.S.

Learning together is the emphasis for children in Foundation Stage. The activities are Literacy based with a strong emphasis on reading together. It is an ideal time to lay the foundations for continuing work at home.

What type of work will my child receive in E.Y.F.S.?

Reading
Parents will be informed of the phonemes and high frequency words that the children are learning in school. Starting in the autumn term and continuing all year, the main emphasis is on reading at home. This should be done in two ways;

Adults reading to children.

Parents are encouraged to read to their children at home. Your child will bring a book home from school to be read by an adult to them. This allows them to get used to print and stories. Discussion about the books is important with a focus on comprehension of the text being read.

Children reading to an adult.

Your child will bring a book home, based on their level of phonics, to read to an adult. Encourage your child to point to the words as they are being read. Discussing the story, the characters and asking questions about the book also aids comprehension.

Letter formation
The Foundation teacher will provide parents with a sheet to support children with letter formation. This will show how children are taught to form letters at Holy Cross. Giving children the opportunity to practise forming letters with a variety of pens, chalks, felt tips and on a variety of surfaces will give them valuable practice. The important thing is to watch them and correct any mistakes sensitively so they don't fall into bad habits.

High Frequency words
Your child's teacher will send home key words to learn. Once they are known these will be followed by the spelling of these words. Regularly practising reading and spelling them, looking out for the words in reading books and playing games with them will benefit your child.

Homework in Years 1 to 6

Year 1	Reading daily Word pots Literacy: Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar Maths Times tables

Year 2	Reading daily Literacy: Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar Maths Times tables
Year 3	Reading daily Literacy: Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar Maths Times tables
Year 4	Reading daily Literacy: Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar Maths Times tables
Year 5	Reading daily Literacy: Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar Maths Times tables
Year 6	Reading daily Literacy: Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar & Reading comprehension Maths Times tables

Project or Topic Work

The teacher may set an ongoing extended project through the learning platform. This may involve the child building up a folder of work (either electronically or on paper) over the course of a term or half term. The project may involve the use of a variety of computer skills as well as more traditional pen and paper ones and cover a range of subject areas.

Reading

Children may read to an adult, with an adult or read to themselves in the presence of an adult. The story and characters should be talked about and new words discussed. Older children need a clear understanding of the story that sometimes will go beyond the literal meaning of the text. Children will read texts that are more detailed and will take longer to read. They should be encouraged to read all types of texts including non-fiction. A log stating what was read and the frequency must be recorded in the home-school diary.

Assessment

Pupils are assessed in two main ways within the school: day-to-day formative assessments and summary assessment. Both assessments are used to set future targets and help teachers to judge progress made. Homework is assessed alongside other curricular work and is used as evidence of attainment.

Additional Needs

Our aim is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of all children. For some children these needs can only be met through work that is in addition to and different from that completed by others. In such cases, they may need extra adult help and/or careful monitoring.

Special Educational Needs (SEN): Children identified as progressing less rapidly than their peers may be provided with 'booster' activities to help to move towards age-related expectations. For many children this kind of intervention is enough, but some children may need further support. Parents will be informed if their child requires such intervention and updated about progress made against targets set.

English as an Additional Language (E.A.L.): As well as English there are 49 languages spoken by our children. Although many children arrive at the school in the enviable position of speaking two languages well, some children come with little or no spoken English. As well as teachers monitoring the progress of such children, we also have a dedicated E.A.L. Lead, a member of staff, who monitors and supports the progress of all children with E.A.L.

Behaviour Management
It is important that every child is aware of and follows the school rules. We encourage children to show respect towards all members of the school community, and have self-respect. All staff have behaviour management training and high expectations for excellent behaviour from all children, but recognise that some children may need additional support to manage their emotions and behaviour.

At Holy Cross we have a Social and Emotional Health Lead who supports children with emotional and mental health needs. Incidents of bullying, racism and harassment in any form are not tolerated at Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy. Parents will always be contacted in such cases. Please keep us informed if you have concerns about behaviour, whether it is your child's or the behaviour of others. Our behaviour policy is on our school website.

Arrangements for the admission and education of pupils with disabilities We are an inclusive school and admit pupils with a varied range of disabilities.

We work with parents and appropriate support agencies to ensure that any essential support provision for pupils with disabilities is in place, that staff are aware of such provision and that we are all working for the best possible outcome. Disability can take a variety of forms, covers a range of severity and can include educational, health or specific physical issues. We are committed to ensuring that the needs of pupils with disabilities are addressed positively and practically and that appropriate measures to support pupils are put in place.

Home School Agreement
We work closely in partnership with parents to promote and develop the individual child. The Home School Agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of teachers, parents and children and should be signed by all three, as a child enters school, to mark the start of what we hope will be a positive partnership.

The Curriculum

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy we provide a curriculum that is rich and varied, challenging and inspiring, enabling each child to fulfil his or her potential.

- In the Reception Class, children are taught within the framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) programme. Pupils develop skills in the following areas: Personal, Social & Emotional Development (P.S.E.D.), Communication & Language, Literacy, Maths, Understanding the World, Physical Development, Expressive Arts & Design.

- From Year One to Year Six we plan and deliver lessons from expectations set out in the National Curriculum.

We have developed a thematic framework for the curriculum which ensures continuity and progression of skills and encourages independence and enjoyment of learning with an emphasis on first hand practical experience.

Religious Education plays a central and vital part in the life of faith in our school. We follow the Religious Education Directory as laid out by the Bishop's Conference and is focused on the spiritual and moral growth of young children today, whether they are Catholic, other Christian, of other faiths, or none.

We proudly proclaim our faith and invite all to join us on our journey. We also welcome children and families of other faiths to our community and we regularly learn about other faiths and cultures in our religion lessons. We have a termly multi faith focus day and invite experts on subjects such as Islam, Judaism and Hinduism.

Relationships & Sex Education

'A Journey in Love' is the Relationships & Sex Education scheme that we use at Holy Cross and it is a recommended programme of study for Catholic schools for Relationship and Sex Education, and has been written as a progressive scheme of work that supports the Religious Education, PSHE and Science curricula taught within the school.

The children follow a curriculum which will help them with their spiritual, moral and social development. It aims to help prepare them for adult life. Sex education is only part of this process. It is taught within the context of relationships, family values, warmth, trust and security. The themes of self-respect and respect for others, together with religious, moral, science, health education and life skills provide the foundation.

Personal, Social & Health Education

Our PSHE curriculum promotes the Personal, Social and Health Education development of children at Holy Cross Catholic Primary Academy.

Relationships and specifically, Sex Education, is taught through our Catholic 'A Journey in Love' programme.

Instrumental Music Tuition

Many of our children learn to play a musical instrument. Weekly tuition is available from our specialist teachers covering flute, clarinet and saxophone.

Choir

We are very proud of our excellent Key Stage Two school choir who perform at local events.

Sporting Aims and Activities.
Sporting activities contribute significantly to the promotion of positive attitudes and towards establishing a healthy lifestyle. Holy Cross Academy provides a breadth of sporting opportunity within the framework of P.E. lessons and a variety of extra-curricular activities. Pupils take part in local inter school competitions.

Modern Foreign Languages
Spanish is taught as part of the curriculum throughout Key Stage 2.

Cooking and Gardening in School.
We have a well-equipped, purpose built kitchen within the school, which is used extensively by the children for a range of cooking activities. Each class also has a planting bed, where we grow a selection of vegetables, which is then used in cooking. We have a very active Gardening Club, open for all Key Stage 2 pupils. We welcome parental support for both of these activities.

Community Links
We have strong links with our parish, Holy Cross, other Catholic schools and people of other faiths. We have close links with St. Marks Catholic Secondary School, which enables us to offer a good induction for children transferring there in Year Seven, which includes 'taster sessions' throughout the year. We take part in sporting fixtures throughout the town and support local charities, such as Streets2Homes, the Brentwood Children's Society, Harvest Festival and carol singing at various locations such as nursing & residential homes.

Helping in School
We need and value help in school. Staff are delighted to hear from volunteers who can spare a little time. The many people who help are involved in working with individual children or small groups, preparing materials or engaged in a wide range of other tasks. They are an invaluable asset. All who work with children of course routinely undergo DBS checks. These are arranged through school.

Attendance and Absence
On the first day of any absence, parents are requested to inform school preferably via the Arbor app or by telephoning the school by 9.30a.m. If an illness lasts more than a few days, or it is diagnosed as infectious, the school should be informed, as there are defined procedures to follow in some cases.

Holiday requests in school term
Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children attend school. If, an exceptional circumstance (agreed by the Headteacher), you do need to take holidays in term time, holiday request forms are available from the school website or the office. The form, with any necessary supporting documentation, should be forwarded to the Headteacher at least four weeks prior to the absence from school.

Schools are allowed the discretion, by Parliament, to sanction leave of absence due to "exceptional circumstances", though this is not a right and should not be considered to be an expectation. Permission may be refused in which case any absence would be unauthorised and would be recorded as such.

School Uniform

Boys' Winter Uniform	Girls' Winter Uniform
Green jumper with the school logo White shirt Green tie (elasticated for EYFS and KS1) Grey trousers Suitable outdoor shoes in black (no trainers) Grey socks Hair to be tied back with simple accessories which are Holy Cross colours	Green jumper or cardigan with the school logo White blouse Green tie (elasticated for EYFS and KS1) Grey skirt or grey trousers or grey pinafore Suitable outdoor shoes or boots in black (no trainers or high heels) White or grey socks or grey tights Hair to be tied back with simple accessories which are Holy Cross colours

Boys Summer Uniform	Girls Summer Uniform
Grey shorts White polo shirt with or without school logo Green jumper with the school logo Suitable outdoor shoes in black (no trainers) Grey socks Green Summer hat with school logo or own summer hat Hair to be tied back with simple accessories which are Holy Cross colours	Checked green dress Green cardigan with the school logo White polo shirt with or without logo, worn with grey skirt Black or white sandals with white socks (must have closed in toes and heals) Green Summer hat with school logo or own summer hat Hair to be tied back with simple accessories which are Holy Cross colours

P.E. Clothes
Plimsolls for indoor P.E. Trainers for outdoor P.E. Green t-shirt with school logo Black shorts with to without school logo (no cycling shorts) Green full zip tracksuit top with school logo and black tracksuit bottoms with logo (no leggings or cycling shorts)

No extremes of haircut (for example, Nike swoosh) or coloured hair, nail varnish or jewellery including earrings.

All items of clothing, including P.E. kit, must be named and labelled.

All uniform and P.E. kit are available from:

- Create Identitee 17-18 St James Centre, East Road, Harlow CM20 2SX Tel: 01279 881333 (createidentitee.co.uk)

- Top Form, 90-91 The Stow, Harlow, CM20 3AP
  Tel: 01279 434813 (top-form.co.uk)

Ties and hats are available from the school office.