**St Robert’s Catholic First School and Nursery**

**Curriculum**

St Robert’s Catholic First School and Nursery offers a broad and balanced curriculum, firmly rooted in the Christian ethos, across all year groups from age 3 to 9 years. At St Robert’s we put Christ and the values of the Catholic Church at the centre of our curriculum which includes the National Curriculum, 10% Religious Education, and a rich wider curriculum aimed at developing the potential of the ‘whole child’. Our school offers a very nurturing environment where all children and adults are highly valued. We promote British values and protect our children from extremism throughout our broad and balanced curriculum. We place a strong emphasis on social, moral, cultural and spiritual aspects of learning through delivery of the RE curriculum ‘Come and See’, the PSHE and the wider curriculum (see Long Term Plans and SMSC map on website).

St Robert’s is an inclusive educational community of faith that aims to provide an excellent Catholic education for all children. We strive to develop each person’s full potential in a climate of joy, freedom, respect, challenge, co-operation and celebration. We aim to prepare our children for leading fulfilling and purposeful lives which contribute to the common good.

Our values-based curriculum is constantly evolving in response to dynamic educational change and challenge, yet remains firmly rooted in the Gospel values of respect, love, tolerance, forgiveness, truth and justice. We will reach out to others, developing mutually supportive partnerships and collaborations that strengthen and support our universal educational offer.

**New National Curriculum**

The Government has introduced a new National Curriculum and this will be implemented from September 2014 in St Robert’s Catholic First School.

The school is using the new  programmes of study set out in the National Curriculum (2014) for Mathematics, English, Science and Foundation subjects: (Art & Design, Design Technology, Computing (formerly known as Information Technology), Music, History, Geography and Physical Education. Years 3 and 4 will use the new programme for Modern Foreign Languages, studying French (see prospectus).

Our ‘Long Term Plans’ show each year group’s overview of our units of work and curriculum learning.

**Wider Curriculum**

The wider curriculum takes place throughout the children’s day to day experiences at school. This includes a diverse range of enrichment opportunities for the children to enjoy and ‘grow’ to their full potential. We teach this part of the curriculum through our school ethos, celebrations, assemblies, festivals, competitions, performance/music showcases, creative/cross curricular themes, extra-curricular clubs, sports events, partnership events/projects with other schools, trips, citizenship opportunities, responsibilities, service to others [any many other opportunities as they arise].

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children in the Foundation Stage (Reception and Nursery) follow the "Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum", which builds on early learning that begins at home and prepares them for more formal learning in Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. The children are given opportunities to learn in many different ways with a strong emphasis on structured play and first-hand experience provided in a safe and stimulating environment. Children's learning is supported through direct teaching in small groups. The Foundation Curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning –

***Three "prime areas of learning":***

•Personal, social and emotional development.

•Communication and language.

•Physical development.

***Four "specific areas of learning":***

•Literacy.

•Mathematics.

•Understanding of the world.

•Expressive Arts & Design.

Children in the Foundation Stage are very much part of the whole school, taking part in assemblies during the week and performances for Harvest, Christmas, Easter and other festivals throughout the year. Nursery and Reception children also have the opportunity to use the school's ICT suite every week and have PE sessions in the school hall once or twice a week.

Children benefit from going outdoors every day (come rain or shine!) where activities are set up to promote all seven areas of the curriculum. Above all, our Foundation State aims to provide a secure start to your child's education:

Foundation Stage staff members work closely with Local Authority Early Years Advisers and liaise frequently with other local Early Years settings.

**Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 [lower]**

From Year 1 children follow the National Key Stage 1 Curriculum which builds on the basic grounding of Foundation Stage. Children follow the statutory programmes of study for the National Curriculum subjects –

•English

•Maths

•Science

•Design & Technology

•Computing

•History

•Geography

•Art

•Music.

•PE.

Modern Foreign Languages [lower Key Stage 2]

•PSHE

•Hexham and Newcastle Diocese syllabus for Religious Education

From Year 3 children follow the National Key Stage 2 Curriculum [which continues through to Years 5 & 6 in the Middle School]. We work closely with the Northumberland Catholic Partnership and Morpeth middle schools to ensure continuity and progression throughout Key Stage 2.

**Reading and Phonics**

At St Robert’s Catholic First School we see reading as an integral part of the school curriculum that impacts on all learning. We value the importance of being a confident reader and work hard to develop children’s reading skills. We want children to enjoy reading a wide range of different books and be able to talk about books and authors.

All children are able to take books home at read with an adult, this shared learning will help children to practice their skills and develop a lifelong love of reading.

As well as teaching the skills necessary to become confident readers, we have our own library full of exciting books.

**Phonics**

The school follows the Read Write Inc. programme for phonics and reading, developed by Ruth Miskin, this is a systematic approach to teaching literacy. This has been specially developed to teach your child how to read and write as well as develop their speaking and listening, comprehension, grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. Below you will find handy tips on how you can support your child’s reading at home.

https://global.oup.com/education/content/primary/series/rwi/parents/?region=uk

This system is used in Early Years and Key Stage 1 to ensure all children have access to good quality Phonics teaching. Children work in groups for part of the day, they carry out a range of activities including ‘your turn, my turn’ reading,  ‘hold a sentence’, sounding out words etc. Children who need extra support will access RWI in very small groups. We assess children’s progress on a regular basis so all children can be supported.

At the end of Year 1 children have a statutory Phonics test; the results are reported to parents.

**Reading Schemes: Phonics Bug / Bug Club**

The school has 2 reading schemes, produced by Pearsons, across the all year groups. These schemes are published to a high quality and are up-to-date with great appeal for the children; we have excellent feedback from children and parents/carers for these books. Pupils read through progressive sets of banded books. The pupils know which book band they are working at and recognise the book band that they are working towards. Children are encouraged to change their books on a regular basis. We ask parents to read with their children regularly at home as part of their homework.

**Opportunities for reading**  
Pupils also read regularly in other areas of the curriculum and in other parts of the school day through:

Guided Reading - Teachers work with small groups of pupils to teach specific and targeted reading skills in a book that is sufficiently challenging.  
Reading Across the Curriculum - Pupils read a range of books linked to other areas of their learning.  
Story Time - books are read to pupils for them to hear good examples of reading aloud and to develop an enthusiasm for reading books themselves.  Class books are shared with pupils, where they read along with the teacher.  
D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything And Read).