



Great Marsden St. John's Primary - a Church of England Academy. Our Curriculum Statement

Our Vision

Our children will experience love, respect, faith and success as unique individuals within our school community and the wider world, now and in the future.

Our Mission

We ask that Christ will live in our hearts through faith making us rooted and grounded in LOVE.

Ephesians 3

Our Values

LOVING God

LOVING Others

LOVING Ourselves

LOVING Learning

LOVING Life

At GMSJ we believe that the basic principle of an effective curriculum is that learning makes a change to long term memory. The intent is that our school curriculum facilitates the delivery of this basic principle. In order to do so a strategic approach, based on pedagogical research, must be in place.

CURRICULUM INTENT

Our Curriculum is broad and ambitious. It is built upon the National Curriculum coupled with defined development of cultural capital “the knowledge that children need to be effective citizens”. Bourdieu’s work identified 3 avenues to developing cultural capital;

- a) exposing students to a large variety of subject areas and arts;
- b) promoting character-building qualities that lead to creating well-rounded, global citizens,
- c) to provide children with recognised and meaningful qualifications that will open up doors to paths in later life.

Where possible we expose the children to experiences they are unlikely to encounter in other parts of their lives. To achieve this we have a comprehensive and deep knowledge of our families and community that enables us to strategically plan life enrichment.

Our Curriculum is well planned and sequenced, it contains the right knowledge in the right order, providing pupils with the building blocks of what they need to know and be able to do to succeed in each subject. We have built a spiral curriculum (Jerome Bruner) where subject **big concepts, substantive and disciplinary knowledge** are encountered throughout the child's life at GMSJ. This is not simple repetition but rather a deepening with each successive interaction. - one building on the last.



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Bruner's research and our curriculum structure are based upon three key principles:

- Cyclical
- Increasing Depth
- Prior Knowledge

Disciplinary Knowledge refers to the knowledge of **how** to perform a specific skill or task. It is a skill that becomes automatic.

- How to use a protractor.
- How to use an atlas.
- Using tools such as scissors.
- Children write their name.

Substantive Knowledge involves knowing **the who, what, where, when and why of learning**. Recalling information from substantive memory involves some degree of conscious effort – information is consciously brought to mind.

It is

Examples in our curriculum:

- What is a right angle?
- When was the Stone Age?
- Where is Germany on a map?

The two work together. For example, to know the substantive knowledge of 'where is Germany on a map?', disciplinary knowledge of how to use an atlas/index/content page would be necessary.

In each discrete subject area **big concepts** are defined. Often, these concepts are complex and abstract, such as '*place*', '*chronology*' or '*grammar*'. These big concepts hold substantive and disciplinary knowledge. They tie together subject topics into a cohesive framework. For example, *chronology* is a big concept in the study of History. This same concept will be explored in a wide range of History topics as the children progress through school. By encountering the same big concept over and over children gradually build understanding of them.

Our Curriculum has a coherently planned assessment sequence to measure the curricular impact in the outcomes achieved by children. Children build a body of knowledge that they are able to commit to long-term memory, draw from and build on. We implement an assessment structure that enables us to monitor this at defined points throughout the school year. The structure and frequency of this summative assessment varies across the subject areas.



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Our Curriculum is inclusive. We ensure that adjustments are made to the learning environment that allows all pupils to access the learning taking place in the first instance. For example: enlarged copies of texts, pre teaching of vocabulary in a child's first language or access to sensory equipment.

We have high expectations of all our pupils, and although we understand not all children will be working at their age related standard, we do not assume that this applies across all subject areas. We recognise that all pupils have strengths and preferences for learning. We aim to identify and cater to these strengths. All our pupils will experience a curriculum with breadth, however children may not all access an identical curriculum. Learning in all subject areas builds on the knowledge and skills the pupils have already secured.

When planning our inclusive curriculum, we have intentionally included topics that reflect the diversity of the community we service. For example, local history/geography studies and exploring the faith of our pupils in RE.

Our Curriculum has a Golden Thread -Literacy.

Within 'Curriculum for Excellence,' literacy is defined as: *the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful.*

At GMSJ we recognise that without the basic Literacy skills, our children will be unable to access the curriculum and benefit fully from it in terms of reaching their potential. Therefore we place a high priority on the teaching of speaking and listening, reading and writing.

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION.

How we implement our broad and ambitious curriculum.

From entry into school in EYFS, all children experience mathematics, English, Science, History, Music, Computing, Geography, PSHE, RE, Art, Design Technology and PE. In KS2 French is taught. This breadth of study allows all children to find an area of passion and excellence.

We weave high quality activities, which increase cultural capital, throughout the curriculum. Subject leaders have ensured that each subject contributes to this. Bourdieu's work identified 3 avenues to developing cultural capital. At GMSJ these are implemented in the following ways;

★ **Subsidised trips, visitors and experiences.** These visits may be to a theatre, farm, beach or library. Where possible they are curriculum driven. However, the out of school experiences of our children also drives these decisions.



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- ★ **Wider opportunities.** We offer music lessons (violin, cello and guitar), choir (with the chance to sing with lots of other schools to a large audience) and after school clubs (from cricket to archery!).
- ★ **Our reading spine.** Our Literacy curriculum exposes children to a wide range of text types but we also want children to enjoy literature for its own sake - not just for dissecting and repurposing. Based on the work of Pie Corbett we have a **reading spine** that flows from EYFS to Year 6.
- ★ **Pupil Voice.** Through our commitment to Smart School Council, all children have the opportunity to engage in debate, decision making and positive social action.
- ★ **British Values.** We engage the children with the core principles of British Values at the beginning of every academic year and this is then pulsed on throughout the year. (See British Values Statement)
- ★ **Our Christian foundation** informs all aspects of school life, especially our relationships. Our worship, RE teaching and ethos provides our children with spiritual and moral guidance.

How we implement our well planned and sequenced curriculum. Implementing curriculum delivery effectively is down to organisation and secure subject leadership - subject leaders and training support sound subject knowledge.

Big concepts are charted on Subject **Curriculum Maps**. This careful process ensures that learning is sequenced to build upon prior knowledge. These maps also identify which medium term planning resource must be used to inform short term planning. By identifying **high quality planning tools** teacher workload is reduced and the focus placed on children rather than laborious planning. Each subject topic states the number of hours that should be spent delivering that learning. Such rigour ensures that learning is focused and diverse.

We **timetable** learning to maximise the time we have with the children on a daily basis. Across school, mornings are used to deliver the English and Mathematic curriculums. After lunch is given over to the foundation curriculum and worship.

For the majority of **lessons defined structures are in place**. These are not dictatorial, however it is expected to see some aspects of the outlined frameworks in each lesson. Our framework for teaching is based upon the Quality First Teaching - 3 Wave model. (See our Teaching and Learning Policy plus English and Maths Non Negotiables.)

Where appropriate subjects make use of **stem sentences** to hook learning into memory. They are a learning scaffold that can help students respond (orally and through writing) using complete sentences. For example in Maths "When the whole is the same, the greater the number of equal parts, the smaller each equal part is" or There are.....tens and.....ones. The number is.....



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Assessment sits at the heart of teaching and learning at GMSJ. Minute by minute assessment of understanding, or indeed misunderstanding, is fundamental to our teaching model. It allows misconceptions to be immediately addressed, informs future teaching, identifies starting points and exposes gaps in disciplinary and substantive knowledge. Adults use a variety of strategies to obtain information. These strategies are not specified but a minimum use of 'hands up' is encouraged.

We assess children's substantive and disciplinary knowledge in all areas of learning. In all areas formative assessment is ongoing and dynamic. Summative assessment timings and resources are detailed in our Assessment Policy. Children are taught to 'self assess' their learning against given criteria. We believe that this level of reflection encourages children to be independent, motivated learners. Assessment, in all its forms, allows us to see if children have knowledge that is embedded and can be used fluently.

Marking and Feedback is a crucial aspect of assessment but this must be manageable. The most impactful feedback is in the moment, where it can facilitate progress immediately.

Assessment has a key place in our curriculum implementation but it is understood that it must be purposeful, timely and manageable. Constant weighing of knowledge without quality sustained teaching is counterproductive.

How we implement our inclusive curriculum. When planning lessons, activities should be included that allow pupils to meet the learning objective. This may mean pupils demonstrate their understanding in very different ways depending on their strengths and abilities. For example, one pupil may produce a written outcome, another may produce a typed outcome whilst another may produce a drawn outcome annotated by an adult with the child's voice. Differentiation, in its many forms, is a key feature in all our lessons. In some cases it is necessary to provide a more bespoke, individualised curriculum. This is planned based on current assessment information about the child and the recommendations of parents, the SENCO and other professionals involved with the pupil. When a pupil is identified as having a special educational need an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is put in place to outline the targets and provision for that child, as set out in the SEND Policy.

How we implement our curriculum Golden Thread.

In recognising that Literacy skills form an essential basis on which the rest of our curriculum is built, it is given a priority focus on our daily timetables. Reading in particular is given a high priority. Our aim is for the children to develop a love of reading as well as recognition of the vital role that reading takes in all their learning and in the wider world. When teaching reading, we address two areas, the decoding of words and the comprehension of the text. Throughout school, reading is taught in a variety of ways – through listening to individual readers, guided reading (groups) and shared (whole class) reading.



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In KS1, the teaching of reading is closely matched to each child's growing phonic knowledge. As new phonemes and graphemes are taught, children read books that contain these very sounds and spelling patterns, allowing them to use them and develop their skills. These books are read in school with an adult and then taken home so that the child has opportunities to reinforce their learning.

In KS2, the focus of reading shifts towards comprehension skills. The children are taught to focus on inference, features of texts and the skills of summarising and evaluating what has been read.

Carefully chosen texts form the basis of whole class Literacy units where all of the aforementioned skills are taught and reinforced. These texts form the basis of our taught writing skills whilst providing children with many opportunities to write in response to the text. This is supported by the use of drama and discussion activities as well as some of the principles of Talk for Writing as we recognise the importance of children vocalising and repeating or rephrasing what they have read. Children then produce a scaffolded and then independently written text similar to that used as the main stimulus of the unit.

Throughout all of this, we have prioritised an emphasis on the teaching of vocabulary. We know that this is often a barrier for our children and therefore requires more input. In reading, children are encouraged to use the context of a sentence or paragraph to work out the meaning of new vocabulary as well as to use dictionaries and thesauri. These words are chosen by the teachers with care, so as to have impact, the vocabulary needs to be relevant to the children and likely to be used again and again in their own work thus embedding it in their personal vocabulary.

Similarly, technical vocabulary that is essential for the understanding of Foundation subjects is taught and displayed in each classroom.

We know that access to books is sometimes an issue for our families. We provide well stocked classroom libraries so that the children can always read in school and Key Stage libraries which allow children to select books to take home.

CURRICULUM IMPACT

To measure the impact of the curriculum at GMSJ we use qualitative and qualitative information.

What we measure:

- Pupils disciplinary and substantive knowledge across the curriculum.
- Results of national tests.
- Results of internal tests.



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- Pupil's progress from starting points.

How we measure:

- Reviewing and evaluating the work pupils produce.
- Pupil voice via pupil conferencing.
- Comparison with national statistics and benchmarking against similar schools.
- Observation of teaching and learning.

Why we measure:

- To identify strengths in our curriculum delivery and set goals for improvement.