

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM VISION



Curriculum Vision

St. Mary's Primary School is a community where all are provided with the opportunity to achieve their full potential in a way that is rooted firmly in the values of the Gospel. We are committed to providing a purposeful, progressive and inclusive curriculum with Christ at the centre and children at the heart. We value our pupils and celebrate diversity of experience, need, interest and achievement.

Our curriculum celebrates our local heritage and nurtures pupil's understanding of the communities in which they live. It fully prepares pupils for the next steps in their learning journey and opens the doors to the wider world as life-long learners.

Everything begins with our curriculum drivers. They are woven through all that we do and underpin our shared belief that our role is to support children in understanding their place as a global citizen, having the aspirations to achieve, broadening horizons and living the Gospel of life through Catholic Social Teaching.

Our curriculum is carefully planned and designed to provide academic, spiritual, social, and cultural, opportunities for all to develop their character through a focus on virtues and Catholic Social Teaching.

The virtues of respect and responsibility, justice and compassion, confidence and resilience, honesty and self-belief, run through our curriculum and are designed to help pupils develop their sense of self and be ready to move with confidence onto their next chapter. To promote fundamental British Values and Citizenship we have embedded democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs within our sequences of learning.

Individual subject disciplines are taught explicitly with coherent links created. Our curriculum is sequenced to ensure that knowledge is cumulative. Substantive and disciplinary knowledge is at the heart of each subject and linked areas of study are exploited in order to consolidate and embed learning across the curriculum, meaning that mental models are developed over time. We pride ourselves on evidence-informed practice and the highest quality professional development for staff. We understand that memory lies at the heart of learning and therefore our curriculum has strategically planned opportunities for pupils to recall and remember. This allows memories to be strengthened, meaning that children can draw on previous learning with confidence enabling them to build and connect.

Our curriculum is purposeful and responsive - it aims to:

- Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils without exception
- Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of our pupils and their needs
- Ensure all have access to high quality teaching and access all areas of the curriculum and school day
- Ensure that the fundamental skills of reading, writing, oracy, listening and numeracy are well established in all subjects from EYFS with academic rigour that challenges all
- Give exposure to the richness of English language so that pupils can access the pleasure of reading, the excitement of writing and to explore new learning concepts
- Take a metacognitive approach to learning to reduce cognitive load and provide opportunities across the curriculum to engage in debate and critical thinking

For mixed age classes, cycles of learning (rolling programmes) ensure that pupils meet threshold concepts for their year group without repeating the same theme of learning.

Curriculum Implementation

Carefully sequenced progression documents clearly outline the knowledge and skills developed in each subject area of study. Dedicated time for revisiting key knowledge is carved into each lesson and class teachers' planning builds in time to recap previous learning to then build on knowledge and understanding in new, related areas of study. Careful consideration has been given to the amount of time each subject is taught.

We value the power of authentic experience; learning is brought to life and given relevance and meaning. We have built into our sequence of learning, curriculum continuity and peer networks with our secondary schools. These opportunities enable our pupils to achieve successful transition. Trips, excursions and in-school events, are carefully mapped to ensure a balance of coastal, urban and rural experiences.

We have outlined fundamental guiding principles, which are implemented to ensure consistency of approach. At the heart of our collective teaching pedagogy lies evidence-informed practice. We value Rosenshein's Principles of Instruction and these can be seen in practice throughout our continuity curriculum.

Pedagogy: Our Method And Practice Of Teaching

Consistency of approach is a priority. What we teach will differ depending on the age of the pupils, but the methods and approaches to teaching are consistent. When planning for learning, we consider how learning has been defined in cognitive psychology as an alteration in long-term memory: if nothing has altered in long-term memory, nothing has been learned. Progress, therefore, means knowing more (including knowing how to do more) and remembering more. When new knowledge and existing knowledge connect in pupils' minds, this gives rise to understanding. It is appropriate to understand the way knowledge is stored as a complex, interconnected web or 'schema'. If they are able to draw on their long-term memory and attend to a small number of new features in what they are learning, they are much more likely to learn and make progress.

Our approach is simple and consistent:

- we know what we want to teach in the long term – curriculum narrative and long-term plan
- we have clear short-term goals for pupils – sequential components of learning
- we build upon pupil's prior learning and experiences – assessment for (and of) learning
- we scaffold learning to support thinking - adaptive teaching
- we give appropriate support to overcome barriers to learning – intervention

Exceptional teaching, leads to outstanding learning outcomes. All staff have a responsibility to strive to deliver lessons where the teaching and learning is of the highest quality and where all learning needs are met. The single most important factor in how a child learns in the classroom is how well a teacher teaches.

Pupils in St. Mary's know that in knowledge lies opportunity and so, they value education and love learning. Learning is revisited and built upon to ensure a breadth and depth of understanding within and across curriculum subjects. Skills are improved over time and used as a means to access new knowledge.

Our bespoke curriculum has been designed to ensure all excel and achieve the outcomes they need. Pupils will be resilient, hardworking and driven. They have been taught how to converse respectfully; how to value the responses offered by peers, and how to politely disagree. They stretch their own thinking by asking challenging questions. The faith journey of each child is unique. Our curriculum enables each child to determine their own personal understanding of spirituality; to value themselves and others; to develop social skills and understand society. They are able to build a firm set of personal morals allowing them to engage in the culture they live in and understand the diversity that life in Britain and the wider world around them, brings.

Curriculum and assessment are intrinsically linked. Accurate assessment strategies enable an informed and systematic judgement to be made about a pupil's knowledge, understanding, skills and attitude and ensure that next steps are specifically planned to develop deep understanding. All assessment is underpinned by the pillars of assessment - it will be purposeful, valid, reliable and valuable. The purpose of assessment is to always improve pupils' learning and inform teaching. Quality assurance processes are robust and developmental, ensuring professional development enhances teaching and learning and impacts positively on progress and learning.

Children leave St. Mary's knowing that they belong to, and can make a significant difference to, society and the wider world. The progress they make from their starting points to the end of each phase and key stage, equips them with the academic ability to do exceptionally well as they move on through the next steps in their life.

Teaching and Learning

Deliberate teacher habits can enable pupils to develop independent learning behaviours. At every stage of learning pupils can be supported to achieve if they are able to choose strategies. They develop self-sufficiency by being taught a process through explicit modelling and teaching. Eventually pupils develop strategies for themselves by recognising similarities and differences between things they have seen and done before. When this move from dependence to independence occurs, pupils are successful and better equipped to face challenges.

A lesson framework is designed, based on cognitive science principles, using the EEF's Gradual Release model to support metacognition and self-regulated learning - this supports teachers in developing pupil independence. The framework helps teachers explicitly plan, deliberately shifting the responsibility from themselves to the pupil during a lesson or over a series of lessons and can be applied to different subject content at all phases and ages.

The following icons are used when planning and teaching, as reminders to staff and children about the type of learning:



Lessons are broken into six steps to reduce cognitive load and help pupils to know more and remember more:

Interleaving - Lesson begins with recall/retrieval questions from previous learning to activate prior knowledge.

Learning Objective/Explicit Instruction - Introduces and explains the new learning for the lesson, including vocabulary.

Modelling - Using worked examples.

Guided Practice - Learning in groups, pairs or individually, guided by the teacher.

Independent Practice - To allow for a deep understanding.

Reflection - Ongoing reviewing of learning.

