'Growing, loving and learning in the arms of Mary.'

Curriculum Access Policy

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St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a vibrant, hardworking and friendly community, which welcomes all and strives to develop the unique, God-given gifts and talents of our pupils. We provide a high quality and inclusive education for each and every one of our amazing children. At St. Mary's we believe it is our responsibility to help all children to reach their full potential.

What is the curriculum intent at St. Mary's?

At St. Mary's, leaders take on or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or high needs, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. Our curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. We pride ourselves on having the same academic, technical or vocational ambitions for almost all learners. Where this is not practical – for example, for some learners with high levels of SEND – their curriculum is designed to be ambitious and bespoke to meet their needs (Linked to the EIF July 2021).

Subject leaders at St. Mary's use four unique drivers, which permeate through our curriculum and everyday school life. This forms St. Mary's Family Tree:



- Beliefs- Prayer and liturgy are at the heart of life at St. Mary's. Governors, leaders and staff have high expectations and a shared vision with regard to the Catholic mission and ethos of the school, while also respecting the beliefs of other people.

- Rights- As a rights respecting school, we are a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted. We hold the Unicef Rights Respecting Gold Award.

- Environment- At St Mary's we aim to inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world around them. We are committed to raising awareness of issues such as global citizenship, diversity, human rights and sustainable development. We promote environmental awareness, supporting our children to understand the fragility of our environment and the importance of its protection. We hold the Environmental Green Flag award.

- Wellbeing- At St. Mary's, we place a high emphasis on the welfare and wellbeing of teachers and pupils. We are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all members of our school family. We understand that everyone experiences life challenges which can make us vulnerable, and at times everyone may need additional emotional support. We actively promote positive mental health, resilience and aspirations for all members of our community. We hold the Gold Mental Health Charter Mark, which involves supporting other schools and childcare settings.

Supporting our children with SEND to access the curriculum:

At St. Mary's, Quality First Teaching is an absolute priority for every child. In this respect:

- Teaching provided by the main classroom teacher is absolutely critical in supporting children with SEND
- Intervention does not replace this teaching
- Interventions are monitored closely

The intention for all children is that teachers and support staff meet the needs of all learners in the classroom. An understanding of the individual is needed for the teacher to be able to deploy effective teaching strategies and scaffold work appropriately. Through liaison with the Senco, the class teacher will make reasonable adjustments to make the curriculum accessible to children with SEND. In some activities, pupils with SEND will be able to take part in the same way as their peers. In others, some modifications or adjustments will need to be made to include everyone. Occasionally, pupils with SEND will work on different activities, or towards different objectives, from their peers. The reasonable adjustments available to children with SEND at St. Mary's are detailed below:

Sound and light issues
For example: • background noise and reverberation are reduced • sound field system is used if appropriate • glare is reduced • there is enough light for written work • teacher's face can be seen − avoid standing in front of light sources, eg windows • pupils use hearing and low vision aids, where necessary, and video presentations have subtitles for deaf or hearing- impaired pupils and those with communication difficulties, where required.
Seating
• Pupils' seating and the main board position are planned for the shape of the room. • Pupils can see and hear clearly, as necessary: the teacher each other, and the board/TV/screens. • Seating allows for peer or adult support. • There is room for pupils with mobility difficulties to obtain their own resources, equipment and materials. • Furniture is suitable. • Consider the choice of chairs and desks, eg adjustable height tables, raised boards. • Seating should allow all pupils in the class to communicate, respond and interact with each other and the teacher in discussions. • Avoid the need for copying lots of information. For example, notes on interactive whiteboards can be printed off for all pupils.
Resources
• Storage systems are predictable. • Resources are accessible, eg within reach and labelled clearly to encourage independent use, eg using images, colour coding, large print, symbols, Braille, as appropriate.
Displays
• Displays are accessible, within reach, visual, tactile, informative and engaging. • Be aware of potentially distracting elements of wall displays.
Multi-sensory approaches
• using subtitled or audio-described film/video • for recording – alternatives to written recording are offered, eg drawing, scribing, word processing, Widget symbols, digital images, video, voice recording

- visual timetables are used to show plans for the day or lesson; visual prompts for routines, such as how to ask for help; shared signals are developed so that pupils can convey their understanding, uncertainty or need for help.

Fine and gross motor difficulties

- Pencil grips
- Theraputty
- Adapted scissors
- Larger tools, e.g. chunky paintbrushes
- Adapted pens with grips
- P.E equipment, e.g. larger balls, easy to grip balls with holes

Working with additional adults

Pupil Voice

- Wherever possible, pupils are consulted about the kind and level of support they require.

Effective deployment of additional adults

- Support from additional adults is planned to scaffold pupils' learning, allowing them, increasingly, to work independently.
- Planning should identify:
  which individuals/groups will receive support
  where in the lesson pupils will need support
  the type of support pupils should receive, and
  when pupils should be allowed to work independently.
- Additional adults:
  are clear about the lesson objectives
  know the sequence of the lesson
  understand the lesson content
  know how to break tasks into more manageable chunks
  are provided with key questions to encourage formative assessment, and
  where appropriate, are familiar with any ICT used to support pupils.

Monitoring

- Additional adults report to the teacher on pupils' progress.
- The effectiveness of support is monitored and reviewed.

Concentration

- Tasks are chunked into smaller steps where required.
- Resources are available in the classrooms to aid concentration, including wobble boards, wobble cushions, resistance bands and fidget objects.
- Movement breaks are provided where required, with access to the school based sensory rooms.

Sensory regulation

- Resources to enable sensory regulation are available in the classrooms, this includes fidget objects, wobble boards, wobble cushions, chew toys, weighted cushions and blankets, weighted rucksacks, weighted wrist bands and resistance

bands.
- Children have access to access to sensory regulation equipment in the school based sensory rooms. This includes bubble machines and fibre optics, bean bags, dark dens, tunnels, hand/foot prints on the walls and trampets.

Motivation

Understanding the structure of the lesson
- Pupils are clear about the duration and overall structure of the lesson.
- Visual timetables, digital timers or other devices are used to indicate the structure and progress of lessons.

Relevant and motivating tasks
- Tasks motivate pupils. They:
  stimulate interest and enthusiasm
  are challenging but manageable
  draw on real and familiar contexts
  are relevant to pupils' lives, and
  build on previous learning in the subject and in other areas of the curriculum.

Reward systems
- Pupils understand reward systems and are motivated to achieve the rewards available.
- Rewards are personalised where necessary to provide motivating incentives for children to complete tasks.

Peer relationships

Grouping pupils
- All forms of pupil grouping include pupils with SEN and/or disabilities.
- Manageable mixed-ability grouping or pairing is the norm, except when carefully planned for a particular purpose.
- The transition from whole-class to group or independent work, and back, is clearly signalled. This is particularly helpful for pupils on the autistic spectrum.

Managing group work and discussion
- Pupils move carefully from paired discussion to group discussion − the language necessary for whole-class discussion work may be a barrier for pupils who find it difficult to express themselves in public.
- Paired and small group discussions provide opportunities for all to take part.

Developing responsibility
- Pupils with SEN/disabilities are:
  given opportunities to initiate and direct projects, with support as appropriate, and involved as equal contributors in class/school governance and decision making.

Communication

Teachers' communication
- Language is clear, unambiguous and accessible.
- Key words, meanings and symbols are highlighted, explained and written up, or available in some other way.

- Instructions are given clearly and reinforced visually, where necessary.
- Wording of questions is planned carefully, avoiding complex vocabulary and sentence structures.
- Questions are prepared in different styles/levels for different pupils − careful preparation ensures all pupils have opportunities to answer open-ended questions.
- Alternative communication modes are used, where necessary, to meet pupils' communication needs, eg Makaton signing, Widget symbols, objects of reference and communication boards.
- Text, visual aids, etc are checked for clarity and accessibility. For example, some pupils might require adapted printed materials (font, print size, background, symbols); some may require simplified or raised diagrams or described pictures.

Pupils' communication

- Alternative communication modes, such as Makaton signing, are encouraged, and pupils' contributions are valued.
- Pupils' views are sought regularly
- Advice is sought from the SENCO, a speech and language therapist, local authority advisory staff, and/or the pupil themselves on the best way of using such communication modes in lessons.
- Discussion of experiences and investigations is encouraged to help pupils understand them.
- Where appropriate, pupils are allowed time to discuss the answers to questions in pairs, before the teacher requests verbal responses.
- Pupils with communication impairments are given:
  time to think about questions before being required to respond
  time to explain, and
  respect for their responses to questions and contributions to discussions.
- Additional adults support pupils to contribute their thoughts and ideas, where necessary.
- Communication boards and visuals are used to support children's communication skills where appropriate.

Memory

Recapping

- Recap learning from the previous lesson

Reducing reliance on memory

- The amount of material to be remembered is reduced. Repeat or display important information.
- The meaningfulness and familiarity of the material is increased.
- Mental processing and explanations of complex tasks are simplified.
- The use of memory aids is encouraged.
- Activities are structured so that pupils can use available resources, such as word banks.
- Strategies, including using ICT resources are used to reduce the need for pupils to rely on their short- or long-term memories.
- New learning fits into the framework of what the pupil already knows.

Consolidating learning

- Pupils' understanding is checked, eg by inviting pupils to talk about key learning.
- Using visual or concrete ('real') materials, or activities involving movement, to reinforce or consolidate learning through a range of sensory channels.
- Reteach or revise material, where necessary, eg post-lesson tutoring.
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to repeat and reinforce previously learnt skills and processes on a regular basis, in similar and different contexts.
- Encourage pupils to develop their own strategies, eg an agreed approach to asking for help, note-taking, sketching ideas etc
- Organisational strategies are promoted and children with SEND are supported with this as required.

Independent study/homework

- Teachers check all pupils are clear about homework tasks.
- Homework tasks are accessible after the lesson, eg published on relevant apps or learning platforms, so pupils can return to them, after the lesson.

Assessment

- When assessing pupils with SEND teachers plan carefully to give pupils with SEND every opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do, using alternative means where necessary.