



## Teaching and Learning Policy

### St Peter's Catholic Primary School

*Mission Statement: Christ is at the heart of our school community; through loving, living and learning together, we all grow as the person God calls us to be.*

#### **What is our intent?**

The St Peter's Curriculum is designed to provide our children with a wide breadth of study which allows them to explore the range of key concepts within each subject area. At St Peter's we are aware that when children 'think' about, regularly practise and revisit concepts, and apply their learning they are more likely to store it in their long-term memory. This is when learning happens! We base our teaching approaches on metacognition. Children gain an understanding/awareness of key concepts through a broad curriculum experience. These concepts are revisited through different experiences, themes and topics. They are deepened with the development of the child's maturity; internal voice, vocabulary and ability to reason. Our Curriculum is designed to focus on themes of learning that provide webs of knowledge and skills, in turn supporting flexible thinking and the ability to reason and problem solve, resulting in even deeper learning and the building of expertise.

#### **St Peter's Charter Values embedded within our Curriculum**

Children are encouraged to internalise this learning to form a set of values that they can articulate to others. They integrate this value system into their actions and develop them so that they become virtuous in their outlook and life choices. In other words the child develops from 'I am inspired by the compassion of Mary Seacole' - 'how can I be more compassionate?' - 'I am compassionate.'

#### **Progressive Key Concepts**

Embedded within each topic of the whole curriculum is a link to the key concepts we feel children need to explore and develop an understanding of. By exploring these concepts they begin to see how they link to the actions and experiences of individuals. They are encouraged to identify why people behave in the way they do, and acknowledge that the choices made have impact and consequences. It is our ambition that children synthesise this learning and internalise it so that it becomes part of their own personal value system.

The children need a wide a knowledge base to communicate, articulate and develop their awareness in order to fully understand key concepts. They need to develop fluency on key literacy and numeracy skills, and remember key information on which to develop reasoned conclusions and judgements. Conceptual understanding is not limited by topic or subject delineations, and we encourage them to make connections and comparison across the curriculum. For example the mathematical idea of the value of money in comparison to the value of a person. On the Titanic should the person who paid more be safer? Or comparing the beauty of the world to that of celebrity.

## Active Learners

Encouraging our children to become 'active' learners and develop core values of perseverance and creative and critical thinking skills is at the heart of learning. We encourage our children to ask questions, think, adapt, and overcome barriers. We do this by providing rich opportunities that require reasonable amounts of challenge and desirable difficulty, within a broad and balanced curriculum design. It is also important that children at St Peter's know themselves as learners. Developing their metacognition allows them to seek out challenges and find solutions to trickier problems. In a modern world where knowledge is easily and abundantly available, we want our children to develop the ability to sift and challenge this information to find truth.

## Growth Mindset

At St Peter's we actively promote everyone in our school community to have a 'growth mindset.' A growth mindset views intelligence and talent as qualities that can be developed over time. There is the recognition that there are still variables in what we can all achieve, but a *growth mindset* simply means that people believe their intelligence and talents can be improved through effort and actions. A growth mindset also recognises that setbacks are a necessary part of the learning process and allows people to 'bounce back' by increasing motivational effort. This kind of mindset sees 'failings' as temporary and changeable, and as such, a growth mindset is crucial for learning, resilience, motivation, and performance. Those who adopt a growth mindset are more likely to:

- Embrace lifelong learning
- Believe intelligence can be improved
- Put in more effort to learn
- Believe effort leads to mastery
- Believe failures are just temporary setbacks
- View feedback as a source of information
- Willingly embraces challenges
- View others' success as a source of inspiration
- View feedback as an opportunity to learn

## How do our children learn?

The content of the curriculum dictates the teaching strategies that are used to engage children in the 'learning'. Teachers carefully match levels of challenge to provide 'desirable difficulty' for all learners. The pleasure of working something out motivates children and makes the experience memorable. The Curriculum is designed to introduce our children to new ideas and to broaden their scope. There is a key focus on extending vocabulary to enable children to articulate and formulate verbally their understanding and points of view. It also helps them to explore new concepts with more depth.

## Principles

- To develop a community of learners where learning is valued, enjoyed, supportive and lifelong
- To enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners
- To develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others regardless of race and culture
- To encourage children to take pride in their work and the work of others

## Learning Culture

To enable children to learn well, the school will work to develop a culture where children:

- Enjoy learning
- Feel safe – respect, value and support each other as learners
- Take risks
- Recognise mistakes and errors as a learning opportunity and persevere
- Set high expectations – learning behaviour, progress in learning, presentation etc
- Develop a 'Can do' attitude

and where adults:

- establish positive working relationships with all children in the class
- model learning and expected behaviour for the children
- treat all children fairly and with kindness and respect with encouragement, praise and rewards for all

This learning culture needs to be actively taught and quickly established (in September), then further developed and reinforced, throughout the year, involving the children at every stage.

## Effective Learning

People learn in different ways. Learning opportunities should incorporate a range of strategies in order to engage children in learning and meet the needs of all learners. These could include:

- investigation and problem solving
- research
- whole-class work
- group work (in groups selected for different reasons)
- paired work
- individual work
- independent work, which is child directed
- collaborative work
- selecting and using relevant resources to support learning
- asking and answering questions
- use of IT including visual images, film, interactive teaching resources etc
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- guest visitors and performances
- creative activities
- debates, discussions, oral presentations and other speaking and listening strategies
- drama techniques
- designing and making things
- participation in athletic or physical activity
- Setting challenges for themselves

Children should be taught to take responsibility for their own learning; to review the way they learn and how they learn and how to overcome challenges in their learning.

## **Effective Teaching**

Assessment for Learning will be evident in planning and lessons to ensure lessons are well paced and all pupils make progress in learning. Prior assessment of the pupils' understanding should be used to inform the planning lessons with a clear progression in skills.

- **Learning Objectives**
  - clear and focused - based on learning rather than task
  - displayed
  - discussed and explained to the children
  - based on prior attainment, knowledge and understanding
  - written in the format: to...
- **Success Criteria**
  - break down the learning take place
  - include the steps or 'ingredients' the children need to be successful in their learning
  - are identified by the teacher during the planning process
  - are usually generated with the children during the lesson
  - are written up and referred to during the lesson
- **Plenary**
  - planned times during, and at the end of, the lesson
  - reviews progress towards the learning objective and success criteria
  - allows adults, and children, to address misconceptions, make improvements and add further challenge
  - learning may be applied to different contexts
  - time to reflect on the 'how' of learning in addition to 'what' has been learnt
  - should be used during lessons only when the progress of the class, group or individuals will be furthered
- **Outcome**
  - what will be achieved by the children by the end of the lesson
  - the learning activity/evidence of learning
  - sufficient time given to enable children to achieve meaningful learning
  - matched to the children's next steps in their learning
- **Challenge for All**
  - Takes place throughout the lesson
  - Is matched to children's next steps learning
  - May occur through adult support; range and level of resources; time; task; different outcomes
  - When planning work for children with Special Educational Needs information and targets contained in the children's Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.s) are addressed
- **Adult Input**
  - Engages children in the learning
  - Is active and interactive
  - Has appropriate pace to ensure maximum learning takes place
  - Responds to, and is adapted to, ongoing assessment during the lesson
  - Clearly models successful learning/the learning activity
  - Generates success criteria

- Is flexible according to the learning taking place eg.
  - Different inputs for different groups
  - Different start times for different groups
  - Input – activity – input – activity
  - Guided groups etc
- **Questioning**
  - questions will be asked to assess learning, challenge and deepen thinking and understanding
  - The range will include open/closed; higher and lower order (eg. Bloom's Taxonomy)
  - Will be matched to the children's understanding and ability
  - Opportunities will be planned for children to develop their own questions and questioning
- **Feedback & Marking**
  - Regular feedback will be given to the children
  - Identifies success and areas for improvement/next steps in learning
  - Refers to learning objectives, success criteria, children's individual targets and age related expectations in spelling, punctuation and grammar
  - Opportunities are planned for children to regularly respond to feedback and marking
- **Self & Peer Assessment**
  - Children are trained to self and peer assess
  - Guidelines are discussed, agreed and developed with the children
  - Is used regularly to enable children to address misconceptions and make improvements to their work
- **Targets**
  - children are involved in setting and reviewing their targets
  - easily accessible and referred to regularly
  - are related to children's next steps in their learning
  - are set for writing, reading and maths
- **Active Learning**
  - Children are given opportunities to be involved in the learning throughout the lesson
  - A range of strategies are used
  - There is an appropriate balance of adult/pupil talk

Opportunities are planned to enable children to develop and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

### **Learning Environment**

- A stimulating environment sets the climate for learning.
- An exciting, well-organised classroom promotes independent use of resources and supports high quality learning.
- Teachers and children work together to establish an attractive welcoming and well organised environment engendering respect, care and value for all resources.
- Classrooms should be bright and tidy, and should be word and number rich.
- Displays might be used to:
  - Celebrate success - achievement, Star/Learner of the Day/Week
  - Support class organisation – visual timetables, clearly labelled resources
  - Promote Independence by providing prompts – questions, support for when children are stuck

- Support learning – working walls, presentation examples, interactive & challenging
- Displays are changed regularly and reflect the current topic/themes/ learning

### **Teaching Assistants**

Teaching Assistants and other adult helpers are deployed throughout school to support learning as effectively as possible. They are involved in:

- supporting learning and children's progress
- supporting assessments of children's understanding
- developing children's independence

Volunteer helpers, mainly parents, are directed by teachers to assist in some classrooms with general tasks: listening to readers, assisting on outings and in providing other help, such as ICT expertise.

### **The Role of Curriculum Co-ordinators**

- Monitor progress and attainment in subject areas and action plan to address areas of need
- Support colleagues to develop practice and subject knowledge to maximise progress
- Take the lead in policy development
- Have responsibility for the purchase and organisation of resources
- Keep up to date with developments in their particular subject area are responsible for sharing this with colleagues

### **Role of Parents**

Parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. They are informed about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding regular consultation evenings in which the progress made by each pupil and his/her next steps in learning are explained and discussed
- sending an annual report to parents explaining the progress made by their child and indicating areas for improvement;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework;
- holding parent workshops to explain the work covered and the strategies and methods taught to the pupils.
- sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the learning areas and topics that the pupils will be covering that term;
- keeping parents informed of a pupil's progress on a more regular basis if appropriate.

### **Role of Governors**

Governors support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school's self-evaluation processes. These may include reports from subject leaders and the termly Headteacher's report to governors, as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

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Staff will be observed regularly for monitoring and professional development purposes. Judgements will be made on the quality of teaching in the lesson, whilst also taking into account pupils' work, assessment information and behaviour over time. A teaching observation form (Sept 2015) will be used to assist observers in judging the quality of the lesson.

Staff will complete a self-evaluation of their lesson observation to be used as a basis for discussion in the feedback session with senior leaders and/or observers. Staff are encouraged to identify their own areas of strengths and areas for development following an observation as this will develop ownership of their own professional development. These strengths and areas for development will be discussed with senior leaders and opportunities to address these put in place. Following a professional discussion the lesson observation will be written up on a 'Quality of teaching Feedback Form'.

Each staff member has a professional development file – records of lesson observations and the outcome of subsequent professional development opportunities will be recorded in this file.

Other monitoring to include within the triangulation of teaching and learning may include;

- Learning walks
- Senior leaders or subject leaders conducting brief observations for shorter sessions – for example, a guided reading session
- Data analysis
- Book/planning scrutiny
- Assessing the quality of the classroom environment
- Professional conduct
- Marking and feedback
- Pupil conversations

## **Review**

April 2023