



"I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6)

St Mary's is a Catholic Primary School.

We place our children at the heart of all we do, inspired by the love, life and teachings of Jesus and the Catholic Christian Church.

Teaching & Learning Policy

Philosophy

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we believe that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all. We seek to establish our school as an excellent centre of learning for both pupils and staff; where we can all learn new and exciting things in a Christian atmosphere of love and care; where self-esteem, self-confidence, self-respect and positive relationships are fostered.

We firmly believe in the concept of lifelong learning and that we share the responsibility for nurturing all our children's spiritual, moral, academic, social and physical development as well as their mental well-being, enabling them in the future to make informed decisions in their lives and become responsible citizens of the future.

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we provide a rich and varied learning environment using stimulating and creative teaching strategies which takes account of different learning styles, challenging and encouraging all our children to reach their true potential and become motivated and independent learners.

Aims and Objectives:

- To enable children to become confident, resourceful, motivated, enquiring and independent learners for life, in order for them to become valued members of society.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of their own faith journey and an understanding and tolerance of other faiths and cultures.
- To establish an ethos of excellence and enjoyment by fostering challenge, confidence, and self-esteem in all children and staff.
- To develop a mutually dependent and interactive partnership for learning, based on trust and understanding between children, parents, governors and staff, in order to raise academic standards and promote the well-being of learners.

- To provide access for all pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Role of the Teacher

Personal skills and professional values.

Learning is effective when teachers....

- Actively contribute to and share responsibility for the corporate life of the school.
- Build good relationships with the children: valuing, encouraging and challenging them to do their best, whilst being fair and firm.
- Are positive, enthusiastic, confident, inspirational and calm, showing empathy and humour. Are well prepared, adaptable, willing to embrace new ideas and open-minded to change.
- Take account of equal opportunities.
- Build effective relationships with other professionals (including outside agencies and visiting specialists), parents and Governors.
- Take responsibility for the influential role they play in children's lives.
- Are mindful of being role models to the children in and out of the school environment.

Knowledge and Understanding

Learning is effective when teachers....

- Have a good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, National Curriculum and the Primary Revised Frameworks as appropriate.
- Have good subject knowledge with focused learning objectives that facilitate progression.
- Have an understanding of how children learn, including different learning styles, abilities and preferences by providing differentiated activities to meet these needs.
- As subject leaders, employ whole school agreed policies/systems to enable them to have an over-view of the strengths and weaknesses within their subject, and an appropriate plan of action to raise standards.

Teaching Strategies

Learning is effective when teachers....

- Focus beyond **what** children learn to **how** they will learn and how the teacher needs to intervene in the process.
- Structure lessons well – have focused learning objectives (WALT) that are written in a language that children understand, include meaningful tasks and have a plenary that allows time to reflect and review on what has been learned. Demonstrate a wide range of teaching strategies to accelerate learning. Use visual, auditory and kinaesthetic teaching styles to ensure that all children are reached in a way that suits their particular learning style. Communicate in an articulate way using a variety of effective questioning to ascertain understanding and challenge learning.

- Model and demonstrate, use stimulating foci and teach memory and study skills.
- Encourage a variety of learning techniques and talk to children about how they learn and respond positively to their efforts.
- Mark children's work regularly (within one week of the piece of work being completed) and in accordance to the school's marking policy, indicating what children need to do next in order to raise their own attainment.
- Make the most of opportunities to learn together, reflecting on their own experiences and sharing good practice with colleagues especially those who are new to the profession.
- Try new ways of working, embrace new ideas and take pedagogical risks.
- See Appendix A- St Mary's Staff Agreed Criteria – 'What makes a good lesson?'

Planning, assessing, recording and monitoring

Learning is effective when teachers....

- Follow the agreed long, medium and short term planning systems in school.
- Use assessment for learning techniques on a daily basis to ensure that children have acquired the necessary learning in order to proceed. Evaluate lessons and annotate short term planning to identify modifications to the learning and teaching process.
- Have high expectations of children's work in both content and presentation. Set challenging but realistic targets and communicate them to the children. Take account of children's special educational needs.
- Set Small Measurable Achievable Realistic Targets for children with identified SEN on their IEP and communicate them to both the child and key staff. Assess children's progress against targets identified on their IEPs.
- Differentiate the learning to match the needs of all groups of learners. (See Appendix B- How do you differentiate?)
- Formally and informally assess children's work on a regular basis and keep effective records in line with our Assessment policy and cycle of self evaluation & monitoring timetable.

Creating a learning environment

Learning is effective when teachers....

- Create an environment which is rich and stimulating, well-resourced well organised and tidy, where children are encouraged to have respect for and take pride in their school.
- Create a positive atmosphere where children are encouraged to try their best and are praised for their efforts.
- Facilitate creative, personalised learning experiences. Our themed weeks such as Business & Enterprise Week, Book Weeks, Science Week and Arts Week help us to achieve this.
- Develop an ethos of high expectation of good manners and positive behaviour, where no- one is intimidated and no-one is humiliated.
- Promote a listening culture within the class.
- Maintain interesting Literacy, Numeracy & Successful Learners' & working wall

displays that are interactive, highlight targets (including behaviour targets) and accelerate learning.

- Change displays regularly, to reflect, celebrate, value and support children's learning (Subject word banks, interactive, 3D, sensory)
- Group children in a variety of ways – individually, small groups, whole class, by ability and mixed ability groups as appropriate.
- Deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible, sharing with them the learning objectives of the lesson and your expectations.
- Provide a secure environment making sure all tasks and activities are safe by completing relevant risk assessments where appropriate.

Communication with parents

Learning is effective when teachers....

- Inform parents of the targets that their child is working on within the term and about aspects of the curriculum to be studied so they can support their children's learning e.g. Termly Curriculum Letters also posted on the school website.
- Communicate regularly with parents through meetings, homework diaries, reading records, letters and newsletters.
- Share concerns with parents if their child appears to be experiencing academic, behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.
- Meet with parents bi-annually and verbally discuss pastoral issues in the Autumn Term and their child's progress in the Spring Term.
- Write an annual report (Summer Term) commenting on progress made throughout the year and specific targets they will need to address to accelerate their child's learning in the next term.

The Role of the Pupil

Pupils learn best when they....

- Feel respected and valued
- Feel the environment is non-threatening but challenging Are encouraged to take an active part in lessons
- Are prepared to listen to others
- Understand clear learning objectives for the lesson and success criteria e.g. WALT, WILF Are encouraged to reflect on prior learning
- Are given differentiated tasks appropriate to their ability and learning styles (see Appendix B)
- Are clear about the task and are supported when problems are encountered Are equipped with the correct apparatus for the task
- Develop independent learning strategies and are encouraged to take risks Are given opportunities to demonstrate their understanding
- Are encouraged to work at a pace to meet the challenges set Feel their efforts are rewarded appropriately
- Receive evaluative comments on their marked work indicating how to improve or what the next steps are in their learning
- Are given homework in line with the school's Homework Policy to reinforce learning

The Role of Parents

Pupils learn best when parents....

- Promote a positive attitude to school and learning in general
- Offer support with homework (reading, spellings, tables, topic work) Attend parent consultations
- Attend wherever possible termly curriculum evenings
- Are aware of the targets that their child is working towards
- Inform school if there are any matters outside school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour
- Uphold the Home School Agreement Encourage good attendance
- Provide the correct uniform including the correct PE kit.
- Support the school in its Positive Behaviour Policy and Bullying Policy
- Support the school through voluntary support in the classroom, on trips and assisting in sporting events.

The Role of the Senior Leadership Team

Pupils learn best when the Senior Leadership Team....

- Promote the aims and ethos of the school Lead by example
- Have a focused School Improvement Plan that has involved all stakeholders and which develops a strategic plan to raise standards and promote learning
- Provide purposeful training for staff including the sharing of good practice to raise standards Stay informed and abreast of new initiatives
- Be up-to -date with changes to the National Curriculum and statutory testing arrangements
- Ensure that the quality of learning and teaching is good through lesson observation and staff discussion (see Appendix C)
- Assess, analyse and evaluate appropriate data to inform the next stages of strategic planning
- Communicate effectively with fellow colleagues, pupils, parents, and governors Develop good relationships with relevant professional agencies/organisations Allocate appropriate resources effectively and efficiently
- Represent the school to outside agencies in a professional, positive and informed way.

The Role of the Governors

Pupils learn best when Governors....

- 'Talk up' the school as a centre of excellence in learning.
- Support the work of the teaching and support staff
- Attend Governing Body meetings and regular sub-committee meetings to be informed of everything that is happening in school
- Play an active part in the leadership process of the school and the development of the School Improvement Plan
- Allocate resources through the school budget to support learning and teaching

- Act as a 'critical friend' to the Headteacher supporting her through policy making in raising standards, whilst setting challenging targets by means of Performance Management
- Ensure school buildings and premises are best used to support successful learning and teaching, keeping abreast of Health and Safety regulations

Other Relevant Policies and Documents

Mission Statement and Schools Aims

Positive Behaviour Policy

Assessment Policy

Feedback Policy

Self Evaluation Policy

Subject Leaders SEF proforma

This policy was written in conjunction with all staff.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix A

St Mary's School

Agreed Criteria- What makes a good lesson?

- Be ready in the classroom before the children arrive or the lesson begins. This sets the tone and your expectations with regards to behaviour during the lesson.
- Lesson planned using the agreed format e.g how TAs are supporting the learning, assessment opportunities and ideally how the learning links to ECM outcomes.
- Set appropriately differentiated tasks.
- WALT (We are learning to) & WILF (What I'm looking for) shared with pupils during the lesson. Assessment for Learning strategies used during the lesson e.g. response partners, no hands zone, effective questioning using open, closed questioning techniques, focusing on individual targets where appropriate, using whiteboards so eliminating passengers! Use the successful learner board as a dialogue for positive attitudes towards learning.
- Make teaching and learning exciting and stimulating.
- Have good subject knowledge of curriculum area being taught.
- Teaching assistants are directed well and reinforce and support the learning. To follow the agreed behaviour management policies
- Wherever possible to use ICT and VAK.
- To ensure that all lessons are well-paced and structured.
- In the EYFS to ensure a balance of child initiated (continuous provision) and teacher initiated activities.

Appendix B

How do we differentiate?

- By task indicated in planning (e.g. TASC Wheel) Amount of support provided, also indicated in planning
- Selecting appropriate resources, indicated in planning which will usually include human resources e.g TA support or ICT
- Identifying pupils learning style and developing this in the lesson By outcome e.g amount or type e.g pictorial, writing frame Questioning techniques, ideally indicated in planning
- Tasks linked to IEP, pupil progress group targets or individual targets Grouping in the lesson

