

St Thomas' C of E Primary School

Curriculum Policy

Content, Provision and Approach

Rationale

At St Thomas' CE Primary, we believe that all children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum which is interesting, engaging and provides a range of learning opportunities that help develop children's life-long love of learning. Our curriculum is planned to ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop:

Spirituality – we aim to enable our children to **reflect** on their learning and seek to extend themselves mentally, physically and spiritually; by upholding the Christian ethos of the school.

Initiative - we aim to offer experiences which help our children to become **independent** and resourceful learners.

Mindfulness – we aim to provide children with the tools to help them concentrate, focus and fully experience their lives. This priority will also help them to become **resilient learners**; with the tools they have been given, they will be able to **confidently** tackle new and unknown situations

Aims

- Enable all children to reach high standards of attainment.
- Set challenging expectations of educational standards and achievement, acknowledging and challenging disadvantage and discrimination in all forms.
- To open the children's eyes to awe and wonder and cause them to marvel at the incredible and fantastic world in which they live.
- To enable the children to appreciate the Christian ethos and values which are central to our school.
- To enable the children to take a full and active role in British society, upholding core British values
- Increase children's motivation, enthusiasm and engagement in their learning by making learning exciting and meaningful through putting it into a context.
- Value individuals and communities.
- Help children to become more independent and take greater ownership of their learning.
- Develop their confidence and motivation to learn through the use of a range of teaching and learning styles.
- Acknowledge specific individual needs and meet them as far as possible with available resources.
- Provide wide and varied education experiences, which are based on the Foundation Stage Curriculum, the Key Stage 1 and 2 National Curriculum.
- Enable pupils to receive an education that will serve them well beyond their primary school experience.
- Provide opportunities to apply knowledge and learning in practical ways and to solve problems in a variety of situations.

Implementation of Policy

The Creative Curriculum

In order to engage, inspire and motivate we actively seek out opportunities to make the learning more meaningful for the pupils.

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This is achieved in a number of ways, including:

- Making links across subjects through the use of topic work.
- Established links to British Values and Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education (PHSCE) will be planned for within the curriculum.
- Identifying areas of interest to capture pupils' curiosity.
- Using a range of teaching styles to encompass the different learners within the classroom.
- Planning themed weeks to encourage creativity and innovation.
- Incorporating local and national initiatives.
- Working with other schools and the local community.

Teaching and Learning

At St Thomas' CE Primary we use a variety of teaching styles to ensure that every child makes the optimum amount of progress and to ensure that all learning styles are catered for in lessons.

All lessons start with whole class teaching which involves teachers using open ended probing questions, visual stimuli and talk partners to stimulate learning. This is followed by a period of learning during which children may work independently, in pairs or as groups. A plenary may be delivered at any point during the session to extend or review learning.

We recognise that children have preferred learning styles, and so make allowances for this in our planning and delivery. We provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability and learning style of the children.

We achieve this in a variety of ways by:

- Setting common, open ended tasks to elicit a variety and depth of response.
- Grouping children by ability in the room and setting tasks of increasing difficulty, scaffolding where appropriate.
- Providing practical opportunities for kinaesthetic learners.
- Using visual stimuli and artefacts to promote interest.
- Using Teaching Assistants to support the work of individual children or groups of children.
- Using trips and visitors to further understanding.
- Group work to allow collaboration and develop thinking skills.

Enhancing the Teaching and Learning

Teaching staff are encouraged to capture children's interest and broaden their experiences through using trips and visitors in school. Children's achievements are celebrated regularly through displays in classrooms and shared areas around the school and during school assemblies. The school also engages in Whole School 'Theme Weeks' which are planned throughout the academic year.

Foundation Subject Planning and Delivery

Learning takes place through a 'topic' approach to make learning meaningful and put things into context. Throughout Years 1 to 6, National Curriculum objectives are covered – an overview Curriculum Map for each year group clearly states the objectives covered throughout each topic. An in-depth overview for each topic/term is also produced. To ensure engagement and enthusiasm, we tailor our curriculum planning to ensure that children are fully engaged, and immersed in their learning, throughout the topic.

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At the beginning of every topic (In both Key Stages), a pre-learning Mind Map is carried out. This gives the children the opportunity to write down anything they **know** about the area of learning, however limited this may be. This is a useful tool for both the children and teachers: the children have a taster of what is to come within the topic so can independently explore areas of learning that has grasped their interest; teaching staff are able to tailor plans in accordance to the children's prior, and current, knowledge of the topic.

A post-learning Mind Map is carried out at the end of a topic; this aids in the assessment process.

Detailed topic overviews are shared with parents, each term, so that they are able to become more involved in their children's learning and to support their children at home. The topic overview is available on the school website for teachers and pupils to refer to; it is then used to help evaluate the topic.

To ensure continuity across the Key Stages, the children's topic books follow a specific format:

Key Stage 1

A topic book is **ongoing throughout the year**; this displays work from **all curriculum areas**, apart from Maths and English. However, where work has been cross-curricular in Maths or English, this may also be added to the topic book. Each topic book contains the following:

- A skills grid per term
- Pre-Learning Mind Map
- Work produced throughout the topic; cross-curricular and subject specific
- Post-Learning Mind Map

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, a new topic book is produced for **every topic**. Work added to Key Stage 2 topic books is mostly from non-core subject areas, however, where cross-curricular links have been made with Maths, English or Science; these pieces will also be added to the topic books. Each topic book contains the following:

- Skills grid for each new topic
- Contents Page
- Pre-Learning Mind Map – children add on, in green pen, what they **would like to know**, with regard to specific areas of learning within the topic
- Work produced throughout the topic; cross-curricular and subject specific
- Post-Learning Mind Map

Special Educational Needs and Disability

We recognise that there will be children who have special needs and we have a firm commitment to inclusive education wherever possible. These children may have a physical disability, cognitive or sensory impairment or be able, gifted and talented children for whom extra provision is required. All children in school have an entitlement to a full education and we will modify and differentiate the curriculum to ensure access to the curriculum for all children.

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More Able and Talented

At St Thomas' CE Primary, we have a commitment to meeting the needs of all children, including those with a high level of ability in one or more areas. It is our responsibility to maximise the skills, strengths and talents in all children, enabling them to reach their full potential. Gifted and talented children are recognised as having particular special needs and the curriculum will be extended to make it challenging and engaging for children who have been identified as being Gifted and Talented.

Monitoring and Review

We have named governors for all curriculum subject areas. The governors liaise with subject leaders of these areas, during the course of governor visits and monitor closely the way the school teaches these subjects.

We maintain systems for monitoring pupils' progress and use this monitoring of progress to set targets to challenge and improve pupils' attainment. Teaching staff regularly carry out monitoring of the curriculum to evaluate the quality of our teaching and its impact on pupils' attainment and ensure consistency within our school.

Outcomes

The curriculum that is offered at St Thomas' will be taught to enable and motivate children to make the best possible progress from their individual starting points, and to attain as high a standard as possible against age related expectations as set out in the National Curriculum 2014.

Children's work and achievement within the curriculum will be celebrated and displayed to contribute positively to the Christian ethos at St Thomas' and to enable it to make a significant impact on the visual appearance of the school. The exciting and distinctive curriculum that we provide will help pupils foster a love for God, each other and all those around them in the school community and beyond. It will help them to develop a deep understanding of what it means to be a Christian in our world. Children will learn about issues facing the world, the importance of caring for their environment and their roles and responsibilities to the environment and to others globally as Christians.

The curriculum will also help them learn who they are and where they live, about their community, the nation and the world in which they live. It will deepen their spiritual and cultural awareness and increase their understanding of history, time and place. They will develop a love and loyalty towards the Queen and this country and develop a respect for and an understanding of different cultures and beliefs.

Equal Opportunities

All the staff of St. Thomas' CE Primary School are fully committed to providing the highest standard of curriculum opportunities for all pupils.

Conclusion

Access to a rich, stimulating high quality curriculum will enable our pupils to develop holistically and ensure that the whole child is valued and promoted – that talents and achievements at every level are recognised and celebrated.

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Without the ability to use their learning accurately and effectively our children will not make the best possible progress in order to meet their potential. Therefore, our aim is to provide effective opportunities to support all our pupils in becoming effective members of our society. This policy is intended to help us to fulfil these aims.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.