

St Mary's and St Vincent's Catholic Primary Schools



Curriculum Intent 2021-2022

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At St Mary's and St Vincent's Catholic Primary Schools Federation, our mission statement, *Growing in faith: loving and learning together with Jesus*, underpins our curriculum and is evident in the teaching and loving relationships experienced in all curriculum subjects. It directs us to treat every pupil as an individual child of God, who has been 'created to do some definite service'.

The Key Drivers of Our Curriculum

1. Delivering the Catholic Church's mission in education: Rooted in our Catholic Christian faith, we have designed our curriculum with the whole child at the centre, ensuring that we foster a lifelong love of learning and enable all pupils to fulfil their full potential; spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. We aim to do this by ensuring we are fully compliant with the Catholic Bishop's requirement to allocate 10% of our curriculum time to RE and by offering stimulating and inspiring learning experiences that encourage independence, confidence and successful achievement.

We embrace the wider community, celebrating and benefiting from links with the Catholic church, parishes and families. In addition, we actively seek out other experiences for our children that expand their knowledge of people, places, activities, faiths and cultures that they may not ordinarily encounter, facilitating the acquisition of valuable cultural capital and preparing our children for life in modern Britain.

2. Teaching for Deep Learning / Mastery: We believe that all learners (with very few exceptions) with effort and excellent teaching will meet end of year expectations. Deep learning/ mastery is learning for everyone that sticks and can be recalled over time. Greater Depth is for some pupils where learning is still deep but involves examining more demanding ideas, concepts and notions based on the same content as all other learners. Children receive quality first teaching which is supplemented with focused interventions to address identified gaps and barriers to learning and staff have high expectations of all children irrespective of their social background, ability and attitude.

Teachers ensure that:

- ✓ All pupils are taught at ARE with pre-teaching, corrective teaching, scaffolding and interventions in place where necessary to ensure all (apart from those with the most profound special needs) can achieve this minimum level.
- ✓ They carry out regular assessment, through live marking, in every lesson giving them an accurate understanding of their pupils' current knowledge,

understanding and skill.

- ✓ Lessons that are appropriately sequenced and build on each child's prior attainment. Any misconceptions are quickly picked up and addressed immediately.
- ✓ Pupils have regular opportunities to practice new knowledge, resulting in pupils being able to recall readily and apply their new knowledge in different contexts.
- ✓ Pupils are challenged through greater **depth** of learning rather than breadth or forced acceleration.
- ✓ Lessons guide pupils in how to be highly effective independent learners, developing a set of lifelong skills and a love of learning.

3. Meeting the needs of all pupils, especially those who are most vulnerable: Most children, including SEN/D will be fully catered for in the mainstream classroom. In some cases, children are supported through daily intervention or using the strategies below:-

4.

a) SEN/D: Learning Support Plans ensure that each lesson adopts the strategies to help overcome SEND pupil's social, academic, behavioural and emotional barriers to learning e.g.

- ✓ Work is well sequenced and delivered in 'bite sized chunks' that do not over load the child's working memory and level of comprehension
- ✓ Instructions are tailored to the child's vocabulary and level of understanding; enunciated clearly and repeated frequently.
- ✓ Work is scaffolded appropriately at the correct level to ensure a child can engage with a task but also encourages independence
- ✓ We are working towards a carousel arrangement so that SEND pupils gain at least equal access to the teacher and are not habitually taught by a Teaching Assistant.
- ✓ Children who have highly significant special needs and are working considerably below their age-related curriculum (ARE), are supported by the schools' SEND provision along with outside agencies to offer children access to a bespoke learning programme, delivered at an individual pace and highly resourced

b) Those in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant: we have designed the curriculum to address social disadvantage since our schools are situated in areas of high deprivation. We believe all children need to be fluent in skills of literacy and numeracy, the essential building blocks for successful achievement in all subjects. Gaps in skills, knowledge and experiences, exacerbated by COVID disruption are identified early and addressed effectively. Strategies employed include:

- ✓ an accountable lead person within the senior leadership team
- ✓ lesson planning that addresses pupils' barriers to achievement
- ✓ targeted academic support: one to one / small group interventions
- ✓ close monitoring and effective action over any attendance issues
- ✓ extra-curricular activities to broaden and raise aspirations
- ✓ parental/family support with home learning tasks

4. Building the foundations for good behaviour for learning: It is our belief that all children should be enabled to excel and that strong achievement is the preserve of the many, not the few. Sequencing the building blocks for good behaviour for learning begins in the early years by teaching the '*Characteristics of Effective Learning*' and continues throughout the school, in all areas of the curriculum, to accommodate the differing needs and stage of development of our children. All are coached to:

- hold information in their mind and use it (**working memory**)
- master thoughts and impulses so as to resist temptations, distractions and habits and to pause and think before acting (**controlling inhibitions**) and
- revise plans in the face of obstacles, setbacks, new information or errors (**cognitive flexibility**)

Children who are facing significant social, behavioural and emotional barriers to learning are supported effectively by adults within the school to access a bespoke learning programme, delivered at an individual pace and highly resourced to ensure that small, steady steps of progress are achieved. This supports children to access normal classroom teaching.

5. Providing a broad and balanced curriculum: Our curriculum has been developed to ensure a broad, balanced and ambitious journey, which builds sequentially on pupils prior learning. It is based on subject specific knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the National Curriculum and underpinned by Age Related Expectations (ARE) of what children need to know by the end of each key stage. Our children will have the opportunity to link learned skills such as, exploring and comparing, pattern finding, observing and identifying, across the curriculum, whilst understanding the importance and relevance of these skills in the wider world.

a) Core Subjects: To ensure effective and progressive learning takes place, we use Herts for Learning in English and White Rose in Maths. These schemes prioritise the development of essential skills and knowledge sequentially,

ensuring that gaps in learning are infrequent but if identified are addressed rapidly.

- ✓ **Religious Education** follows the Come and See Scheme of Work, which is based on the 'theological foundations of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Catechism and the revised RE Curriculum Directory' and includes the Catholic Attainment Standards.
- ✓ **English**, we teach pupils to speak, read and write fluently enabling them to communicate their ideas and emotions. Opportunities are provided across the whole curriculum to allow pupils to develop and apply these skills, using a range of genres.
- ✓ **Writing**, the curriculum allows daily opportunities for writing linked to high quality texts with explicit **grammar** teaching woven throughout. Units are sequential across the year as well as across the school.
- ✓ **Handwriting** is delivered using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme which is a whole-school programme designed to help all children develop a confident, legible and personal handwriting style and meet higher curriculum expectations.
- ✓ **Spellings** are taught and practised weekly using Rising Stars Spelling Programme enabling a consistent approach to supporting children as they progress from phonics with a rigorous learning pathway that builds knowledge year on year.
- ✓ **Phonics** is delivered daily in EYFS and KS1 using Essential Letters and Sounds, based on a synthetic approach. Sessions enable children to learn new skills, practise together and apply their new learning. Our spelling programme complements the phonics learning from year 1 to year 6.
- ✓ **Reading**, we encourage pupils to read both fiction and non-fiction texts developing their knowledge of the world and developing a love of reading. Accelerated Reader is used throughout the schools to develop vocabulary, speed and comprehension skills, and is individually targeted. We aim for children to read fluently and confidently so they are able to access our broad curriculum and are next phase ready.
- ✓ **Mathematics** the curriculum is built on the principles of mastery and is accessible to all children. We develop fluency, reasoning and problem solving which is taught through a progression of skills using concrete, pictorial and abstract methods. Opportunities are planned, so children can use their knowledge and skills in frequent and varied situations across the curriculum enabling them to become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics.
- ✓ **Science** follows a Scheme of Work, which has been developed by Subject Leaders within the trust. It uses objectives from the National Curriculum and focuses on developing the key scientific skills of: observation over time, identifying and classifying, pattern and relationship searching, comparative

and fair testing and research. This enables children to develop enquiry skills, which are transferrable across the curriculum and into a wider world context.

b) **Foundation Subjects:** Our approach to **History and Geography** has been developed trust wide, it enables children to construct meaning from what they learn and recognise the importance of linking new material to concepts and experiences in their memory, as well as to possible future contexts. This is achieved by the planning and sequencing of both knowledge and skills. These subjects are taught discretely to enable a smooth transition to KS3. **Art and Design, Design Technology and Music** are planned using the National Curriculum. Learning is sequenced, building upon prior knowledge and skills whilst ensuring that the learning relates to children's experiences. At St Mary's and St Vincent's, we follow the Key Chain **Computing** to ensure that the National Curriculum objectives for Computing are covered and children become digitally literate.

PE is delivered using Complete PE, skills are developed sequentially and built upon through the key stages. Children develop an active and healthy attitude to physical education.

We understand that it is imperative for our pupils to develop a positive attitude towards relationships and as such we deliver Relationship and Sex Education (**RSE**) and **PSHE** to meet the needs of the pupils as they develop and grow. **PSHE** is also delivered during regular assemblies and through RE and Science lessons.

At St Mary's, **Spanish** is taught weekly in KS2, using La Jolie Ronde. This is a new language to St Mary's school and therefore all KS2 children are starting at the Year 3 curriculum, to build a solid platform. At St Vincent's, **French** is taught weekly in KS2, by a specialist language teacher.

Early Years Foundation Stage - EYFS (Ages 2-5 years)

The EYFS makes a crucial contribution to children's early development and learning. We provide children with a rich variety of teaching and learning experiences that are appropriate to their needs. The EYFS develops key learning skills such as listening, speaking, concentrating, persistence and learning to work and co-operate with others. The seven areas of learning that make up the EYFS curriculum are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- English

- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Alongside structured learning, children are actively encouraged to explore learning through their play. Staff observe and engage in play with the children to help them develop key skills and knowledge.

***For nothing is impossible with God (Luke 1:37) and with God
all things are possible (Matthew 19:26)***