



Curriculum Overview

2021-2022

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Curriculum Statement

September 2021



We are committed to showing love and care for our children, we are keen that they feel a deep sense of belonging to our school. In addition to the Catholic nature, our curriculum has been developed around three key drivers: developing children's inter-personal skills, developing our children as learners, developing children's aspirations

What do we mean by developing children's inter-personal skills?

- Verbal Communication – what we say and how we say it;
- Developing resourcefulness
- Non-Verbal Communication – what we communicate without words, for example through body language, or tone of voice; and
- Listening Skills – how we interpret both the verbal and non-verbal messages sent by others.
- Emotional intelligence – being able to understand and manage your own and others' emotions.
- Developing team-working – being able to work with others in groups and teams, both formal and informal.
- Negotiation, persuasion and influencing skills – working with others to find a mutually agreeable (Win/Win) outcome.
- Conflict resolution and mediation – working with others to resolve interpersonal conflict and disagreements in a positive way, which again may be considered a subset of communication.
- Problem solving and decision-making – working with others to identify, define and solve problems, which includes making decisions about the best course of action.

What do we mean by developing our children as learners?

- encouraging children to be inquisitive and questioning;
- developing children's ability to be resourceful and resilient
- encouraging children to be resourceful and independent in their learning;
- providing opportunities for independent thinking and application of skills;
- developing collaborative learning;
- encouraging 'risk taking';

- requiring perseverance and improvement through evaluation;
- nurturing problem solvers.

What do we mean by developing children's aspirations?

- inspiring children to broaden their horizons through exposure to a wide range of life possibilities;
- aiming high
- making a contribution
- looking at different opportunities and career prospects and meeting people who do different jobs;
- being inspired to travel.

At St Mary's Catholic Primary we aim to provide the children with a curriculum which is broad, well balanced and above all stimulates the children to learn. Through a positive and caring environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential. We embrace Catholic values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps.

We deliver programmes of study that meet the National Curriculum requirements issued by the DfE.

This National Curriculum comprises of:

English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Design and Technology, Art, Music, Physical Education (PE), Computing, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) and Religious Education;

The teaching of Religious Education is statutory in all schools and as a Catholic Schools, with RE at their core, exist in order to "help parents, priests and teachers to hand on the Deposit of Faith in its fullness to a new generation of young people so that they may come to understand the richness of the Catholic faith, and thereby be drawn into a deeper communion with Christ in his Church." The aims of a Catholic School and thus the RE syllabus are as such:

1. To present engagingly a comprehensive content which is the basis of knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith;
2. To enable pupils continually to deepen their religious and theological understanding and be able to communicate this effectively;
3. To present an authentic vision of the Church's moral and social teaching so that pupils can make a critique of the underlying trends in contemporary culture and society;
4. To raise pupils' awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities in order to respect and understand them;
5. To develop the critical faculties of pupils so that they can relate their Catholic faith to daily life;
6. To stimulate pupils' imagination and provoke a desire for personal meaning as revealed in the truth of the Catholic faith;
7. To enable pupils to relate the knowledge gained through Religious Education to their understanding of other subjects in the curriculum;
8. To bring clarity to the relationship between faith and life, and between faith and culture.

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we recognize the importance of English and Mathematics teaching in order to open up other areas of the curriculum and therefore a large emphasis is placed

on these areas. In addition to regular mathematics and English sessions teachers try to make as many cross curricular links as possible in order to utilize these skills in a range of contexts.

Planning takes the form of a topic-based approach and where appropriate teachers link subjects to provide an engaging and inspiring curriculum.

Whilst the core subjects are taught daily basis the foundation subjects may sometimes be taught as blocks of work over a matter of weeks.

This programme is regularly reviewed to ensure compatibility with new directives or to make necessary improvements to the existing schemes of work.

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we seek to create opportunities for children to experience and excel in a range of activities that enhance and extend the National Curriculum. Children have opportunities both inside and outside the classroom e.g. Welly Days, Residential trips, a variety of sporting events, NSPCC assemblies, STAR project and much more. We also have excellent after school clubs that include recorders, film club, multi-sports, football and drama. The children also have regular opportunities to participate in whole school performances such as The Wizard of Oz for example.

We also value the role of modern foreign languages in the curriculum and French is taught throughout the school from Year 3 to Year 6.

When children leave St Mary's Catholic Primary School at the end of Year 6, they should be equipped with the full range of skills that enables them to become lifelong learners. Through our unique approach of teaching and living out Christian Values, children are also equipped with the social skills and understanding to become good citizens in the future. Developing good relationships with each other really underpins everything we do.

We believe that the school/parent relationship is key to promoting learning beyond the school gates and crucial in ensuring children make the best possible progress. We pride ourselves on our open, friendly and approachable nature that encourages parents to be involved in their children's learning. Furthermore, we host regular evenings to inform parents about how their children are performing in school and we share the outcomes of two-weekly pupil progress meetings with home so that they are well-informed. We also held a parents workshop here on a weekly basis.

English

The English Curriculum is delivered using the National Curriculum 2014 and the Early learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

Speaking and Listening

The Four Strands of Speaking and Listening: Speaking; Listening; Group Discussion and Interaction, and Drama permeate the whole curriculum. Interactive teaching strategies are used to engage all pupils in order to raise reading and writing standards. Children are encouraged to develop effective communication skills in readiness for later life.

Reading

The opportunities, organisation and provision for the teaching and learning of reading are as follows:

- Shared reading
- Guided reading
- Independent reading
- Phonics

Teachers also take time to read class novels and model reading for pleasure. It is important that children enjoy reading and also have the opportunity to experience books from classic and modern classic authors such as Michael Morpurgo, Roald Dahl and Enid Blyton among others.

Reading/Phonics are mainly supported by the following published resources: Oxford reading Tree and Read, Write, inc.

- A range of intervention strategies are used to ensure that all children's needs are catered for:
- Resources – A book banded reading scheme operates across the school which comprises of a range of mostly Oxford Reading Tree and books by a range of authors that have been banded accordingly. Children work their way through the Key Stage One and Two schemes and then can choose from a range of books and the pitch of the book of their choice will be checked for appropriateness.
- Links to parents – Each child has a reading record book which logs books they have read and comments about their reading. Parents and teaching staff write in this book and are asked to achieve upon the children's weekly targets.
- Class books: Stories are read to the children on a daily basis throughout the school.
- Reading at home: Children are encouraged to read at home at least three times each week at a minimum.

Writing

Opportunities, organisation and provision for the teaching and learning of writing are as follows:

- Phonics and spelling: Four daily 20 minutes Phonic sessions in Year 1 and Reception.
- Emergent writing: In Reception and Key Stage 1 children are given regular opportunities to write freely within a particular genre and across the curriculum. This gives them the opportunity to become emergent writers.
- Shared Writing: Within each teaching sequences shared writing is a key part.
- Guided Writing/Independent Writing: Each teaching sequence ends with an opportunity for guided and independent writing. There are also frequent opportunities for independent writing throughout the other curriculum areas.

• **Extended writing:** Throughout the term there are opportunities for extended writing. On a termly basis samples of these extended writing outcomes are used for assessment purposes. Children are immersed in a plethora of stimuli in order to ensure they are truly inspired to write.

Talk for Writing: The whole school utilises the talk for writing model termly to aid children with their writing. Children learn texts by heart and through a process of imitation and finally invention produce pieces based on an original script. The children are able to appreciate structure, vocabulary and style and add this to their personal writing toolkit.

• **Handwriting:** The school has adopted a cursive handwriting script and this is taught and reinforced regularly in Key Stage 1 and used in Key Stage 2. As children move through the school opportunities to practice handwriting continue and when the class teacher feels a child is able to join fluently they are encouraged to write in pen.

• **Spelling:** Children from Years 1 to 6 are given lists of spellings each week to learn at home. Children are tested on these words weekly. In both Key Stage the school has subscribed to a spelling website which allows children to practice their spellings at home and interact with a range of fun and exciting games that further reinforce the spelling patterns.

Teachers provide personalized targets for reading and writing and the children work to achieve these over the course of a term. These targets are shared with parents on a two-weekly basis and are displayed in children's work books.

Work is marked and assessed in line with the marking and Assessment policies and work is regularly moderated both in and out of school.

Work is assessed, at present, using the criteria set-out in the national Curriculum, by looking at books and carrying-out formal testing using The Rising Stars assessment materials. The findings of the assessment are used to inform planning to help the teaching and learning process. In line with the New National curriculum requirements and the raised expectations that this document requires teachers also assess termly whether a child is working at/below or above the level expected for their age.

Mathematics

The Mathematics Curriculum is delivered using the National Curriculum 2014 and the Early learning Goals are followed to ensure continuity and progression from the Foundation Stage through to the National Curriculum.

At St Mary's Catholic we provide a daily extended sessions four times per week that seeks to reinforce previous learning and allow children to take on new skills and apply these in a range of contexts, developing fluency. Children are sometimes grouped according to ability which allows teachers to target individual needs but assessment techniques are used in lessons to keep groups fluid and work pitched appropriately.

At St Mary's Catholic we feel that mental maths skills are key to allowing children to access the more complex calculation and number objectives set out in the National Curriculum and this is incorporated into lessons on a daily basis. Children have got to learn how to work both with their hands and in their heads. Furthermore, we feel it is important to develop children's logic and reasoning skills and as a school we work to ensure reasoning is at the heart of our mathematics curriculum.

Half termly assessment activities are planned which involve a range of ideas and skills linked to one or more of the key objectives covered previously. As a result of these assessments and knowing how children are performing in lessons and by evaluating work in books, individual targets are discussed with pupils.

Teachers provide personalized targets for mathematics and the children work to achieve these over the course of a term in two-weekly sets. These targets are shared with parents on a regular basis and are displayed in the children's books.

Science

Science stimulates and excites pupils' curiosity about phenomena and events in the world around them. It also satisfies their curiosity with knowledge. Because science links direct practical experience with ideas, it can engage learners at many levels. Scientific method is about developing and evaluating explanations through experimental evidence and modelling. Pupils learn to question and discuss science-based issues that may affect their own lives, the direction of society and the future of the world.

At Key Stage 1 pupils observe, explore and ask questions about living things, materials and physical phenomena. They begin to work together to collect evidence to help them answer questions and to link this to simple scientific ideas. They begin to evaluate evidence and consider whether tests or comparisons are fair. They use reference materials to find out more about scientific ideas. They share ideas and communicate them using scientific language, drawings, charts and tables with the help of ICT if it is appropriate.

At Key Stage 2 pupils learn about a wider range of living things, materials and physical phenomena. They make links between ideas and explain things using simple models and theories. They apply their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas to familiar phenomena, everyday things and their personal health. They think about the effects of scientific and technological developments on the environment and in other contexts. They carry out more systematic investigations, working on their own and with others. They use a range of reference sources in their work. They talk about their work and its significance, using a wide range of scientific language, conventional diagrams, charts, graphs and ICT to communicate their ideas.

All lessons have clear learning objectives, which are shared and reviewed with the pupils effectively.

A variety of strategies, including questioning, discussion and marking, are used to assess progress. The information is used to identify what is taught next.

Activities inspire the pupils to experiment and investigate the world around them and to help them raise their own questions such as "Why...?", "How...?" and "What happens if...?"

Activities develop the skills of enquiry, observation, locating sources of information, selecting appropriate equipment and using it safely, measuring and checking results, and making comparisons and communicating results and findings.

Lessons make effective links with other curriculum areas and subjects, especially literacy, numeracy and ICT.

Activities are challenging, motivating and extend pupils' learning.

Pupils have frequent opportunities to develop their skills in, and take responsibility for, planning investigative work, selecting relevant resources, making decisions about sources of information, carry out activities safely and decide on the best form of communicating their findings.

Humanities

In the most part History and Geography are the key drivers behind termly topics and other areas such as literacy will be utilized as a vehicle to explore these areas. At St Mary's Catholic we are keen to provide children with opportunities to experience geography and history first hand and as such teachers organise regular school excursions to help inspire the children.

History

In Key Stage 1 children learn about the lives and lifestyles of familiar people in the recent past and about famous people and events in the more distant past, including those from British history.

In Key Stage 2 children learn about people and important events and developments from recent and more distant times in the locality, in Britain and in other parts of the world. Children will learn about historical enquiry by looking at as many real sources as possible and by recreating events from the past.

Geography

Geography is concerned with the study of places, the human and physical processes that shape them and the people who live in them. In the Early Years, children learn about their immediate environment and how to read and draw simple maps using invented and conventional symbols.

In Key Stage 2, the children develop this knowledge into a wider area and study transport, weather and landscapes, both in their local area and in many other countries.

Art

Children have opportunities to draw, paint, print, make collages, use fabrics and threads and use clay. They are taught the skills and techniques and then given the opportunity to practise them to produce individual and group pieces of work. Children are encouraged to critically evaluate their own work and that of others in order to learn from their experiences.

Design Technology

'DT' incorporates many traditional skills – cooking, model making, drawing and sketching, problem solving, observation and discussion – putting them together in an approach which encourages the children to become designers and inventors.

The children are taught how to use tools and materials safely and economically.

Music

The school is developing a tradition of musical activity, offering considerable opportunities for children to develop their talents in all aspects of music including composition, singing and

appreciation. We have two big concerts for parents each year, one at Christmas and one in the summer term as we are keen that children have an audience

Visiting peripatetic teachers for guitar, cello, flute, violin, keyboards and piano offer the opportunity to work towards music accreditation.

Physical Education

The aim of physical education is to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Children are taught to observe the conventions of fair play, honest competition and good sporting behaviour as individual participants, team members and spectators.

Children take part in games, gymnastic movement, dance and athletic activities using indoor and outdoor environments where appropriate. Children can take part in after school clubs and have the opportunity to compete against other schools.

In Year 5/6, children go on a residential course for outdoor activities.

Children have swimming lessons from Years 3-6 as we are keen that all children can swim by the time they leave school.

Physical education is seen as key to developing healthy lifestyles in young people and at St Mary's Catholic we provide a wide array of opportunities to develop this and sporting skills outside of the normal curriculum time.

Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural (SMSC)

At St Mary's Catholic we have a firmly embedded set of Christian Values that are taught and lived out by the entire school community. Through regular worships, references in RE and other lessons as well as seizing upon opportunities in other areas of the school children are explicitly taught the values of: generosity, friendship, trust, service, truthfulness, forgiveness, respect, perseverance, compassion, thankfulness, justice and courage.

As a school we welcome children from all backgrounds and are proud of how children and their families from other cultures are welcomed by our children and the rest of the school community.

In all teaching the teachers look to inspire and enthuse children. Teachers look to develop a love of learning and a working atmosphere where children enjoy learning.

Children are given opportunities to take on responsibility around the school: School Council, Head boy and girl, Tray monitors, Light Monitors and Special helpers in Reception

The school has a clear behaviour policy that sets high expectations and promotes a good moral understanding, mutual respect, tolerance and understanding. Friendship, respect and broad-mindedness and acceptance are taught as part of our Personal, Social, Health Education program.

Through a combination of approaches the school is able to ensure that children develop an understanding of the key British Values: Democracy, Rule of Law, Mutual Respect, Personal Liberty and the appreciation of other faiths and cultures.

At St Mary's Catholic we feel that involving parents in their child's learning is crucial in ensuring that children make the best possible progress. We try to get parents involved in a number of ways:

- Parent's Evenings/Open Evenings – Opportunities for parents to come into school and share their children's work.
- Weekly Newsletters – Keeping parents informed about what is going on in school and also providing useful help at home tips to support learning.
- Opportunities to volunteer – We welcome the help of parents to support with reading, and also when embarking on educational visits.
- The school also has an open door policy and parents are always welcome to come in and meet with class teachers to discuss issues related to their child. The teachers also provide email contact for those parents who find it more difficult to chat during school hours.