

St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Policy Statement for Teaching & Learning and Curriculum

MISSION STATEMENT

By working together at St Mary's School we aim through Jesus Christ to share God's love, helping our community to learn, grow and make a difference.

Introduction

- At St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy we believe in the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that by our interactions with pupils we can make a difference to their lives both now and in the future.

The school aims to: -

- Cater for the needs of individual children of both sexes from all ethnic and social groups, including the most able and those who are experiencing learning difficulties
- Facilitate children's acquisition of knowledge, skills and qualities which will help them to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, morally and aesthetically, so that that may become independent, responsible, useful, thinking, confident and considerate members of the community
- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment
- Ensure that each child's education has continuity and progression
- Ensure that there is a match between the child and the tasks s/he is asked to perform
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum
- Recognise the crucial role which parents play in their child's education and make every effort to encourage parental involvement in the educational process through regular Curriculum Information Evening, Parents Evenings, Open door policy every morning between 0830 and 0845 for Morning Challenge Time, invites to curriculum based trips and in school activities, for eg Craft or Enterprise sessions
- Share the reading and phonics schemes used to support children's learning in these areas; Oxford Reading Tree, Bug Club, Letters and Sounds
- Treat children in a dignified way (In conjunction with our Positive Behaviour policy/statement which can be found on the website)

We aim that all children should: -

- Learn: to be adaptable; how to solve problems in a variety of situations; how to work independently and as members of a team

- Develop the ability to make reasoned judgements and choices, based on interpretation and evaluation of relevant information from a variety of sources
- Be happy, cheerful and well balanced
- Be enthusiastic and eager to put their best into all activities
- Begin acquiring a set of moral values, such as honesty, sincerity, personal responsibility, on which to base their own behaviour
- Be expected to behave in a dignified and acceptable way and learn to become responsible for their actions
- Care for and take pride in their school
- Develop tolerance, respect and appreciation of the feelings and capabilities of others in an unbiased way
- Develop non-discriminatory attitudes encompassing British Values
- Know how to think and solve problems mathematically in a variety of situations using concepts of number, algebra, measurement, shape and space and handling data
- Be able to listen and read for a variety of purposes and be able to convey their meaning accurately and appropriately through speech and writing for a variety of purposes
- Develop an enquiring mind and scientific approach to problems
- Have an opportunity to solve problems using technological skills
- Be capable of communicating their knowledge and feelings through various art forms including art/craft, music, drama and by acquiring appropriate techniques which will enable them to develop their inventiveness and creativity.
- Know about geographical, historical and social aspects of the local environment and national heritage and be aware of other times and places and recognise links among family, local, national and international events
- Have some knowledge of the beliefs of the major world religions
- Develop agility, physical coordination and confidence, in and through movement
- Know how to apply the basic principles of health, hygiene and safety
- Respond positively to praise, boundaries and expectations
- To treat each other with respect, taking into account the Gospel Values and British Values

Effective Learning

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognize the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. We take into account these different forms of intelligence when planning teaching and learning styles.

Through the curriculum we offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include: -

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- engage and shape their curriculum/learning journey, for eg seeking what they already know and what they would like to find out;
- group work;
- pair work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;

- asking and answering questions;
- use of Computing and current technologies;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- watching media clips and responding to pre-recorded material;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in athletic or physical activity.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn - what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

St Mary's 'SPIRIT'

When reviewing our curriculum, staff thought about the skills, values and attitudes we want all children to develop which will enable them to be successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens wanting to make a difference to themselves and others. The staff shared different ideas and 'St Mary's Spirit' was born. Since the introduction of the St Mary's SPIRIT, we have welcomed another new curriculum, however the SPIRIT remains as integral to the children's learning as it did in its infancy which not only focuses on new knowledge but also the importance of developing social and collaborative skills which are true skills for life.

<p style="text-align: center;">S</p> 	<p>- Successful and striving for success</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">P</p> 	<p>- Prayer and faith</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">I</p> 	<p>- Independent learners</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">R</p> 	<p>- Resourceful and reflective</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">I</p> 	<p>- Inspirational</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">T</p> 	<p>- Team player who thinks of others</p>

The Role of Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on curriculum. 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 self-review processes. These include Governor visits - seeing the schools priorities in action, understanding the strengths and areas for development, whilst appreciating some of the barriers and acting as a 'critical' friend to help break down those barriers, meetings with Phase Leaders and Curriculum Team Leaders as well as termly head teacher's report to governors.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about the curriculum and how their children are learning by:

- holding parents' evenings to explain our school strategies across the curriculum. Parents are given information about their child's curriculum strengths and areas for development over the coming term. We also discuss children's learning behaviours as well as their attendance which is compared to the National figures.
- sending information to parents at the start of each half term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- sending annual summary reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework. We suggest, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work.
- Inviting parents into school every morning between 0830 and 0840 to review and support children in their week's work/learning journey.
- Inviting parents to curricular events, eg phonics, enterprise events, Acts of Worship, meditation sessions and craft sessions to name a few

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform (including a suitable coat and shoes) and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school, its staff and learning in general;