

# CURRICULUM POLICY

*St. Joseph's  
Catholic  
Primary School,  
a Voluntary  
Academy*

## St. Joseph's Catholic primary School

### Curriculum Policy.

*"Trusting in God, Creating tomorrow, helping today."*

#### **Intent**

As a Catholic Academy, religious education and faith development are at the heart of our school curriculum developing the Catholicism and spirituality of our pupils.

The curriculum is all the planned activities which we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the curriculum offer which we as a school provide, to develop the independence and responsibility of all of our pupils, ensuring they are well placed to become educated citizens.

We ensure that all children have a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. We aim to teach our pupils how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their full potential.

Our curriculum is the means by which we achieve our objectives of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling lives. Our school curriculum is underpinned by our principle value of providing high quality educational experiences which are focused on continued improvement in whole school standards and the development of independent and responsible learners.

These are the core values upon which we have based our curriculum:

- The Gospel values of compassion, faithfulness, integrity, dignity, compassion, humility, gentleness, truth, justice, forgiveness, mercy, purity, holiness, tolerance, peace and service.
- Our school virtues of love and compassion, courage, respect, faith and pride.
- We have an understanding of and respect for other religious beliefs, cultures and traditions;

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- Ambition for all our pupils;
- Meeting the needs of all our pupils from their individual starting points, building sequentially on prior learning and giving regular opportunities for children to see these links;
- We recognise that every child has a range of different strengths, interests and learning styles;
- All children should have self-belief and experience success;
- An understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and how this links to their learning so that it can inform their daily actions and decisions;
- Democratic law; the right for fairness and a right to vote; personal liberty and the rule of law.

Through this we aim to:

- Promote high standards of attainment and achievement;
- Encourage children to articulate their opinions based on their learning;
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning so that our children to develop a life-long love of learning;
- Enable all children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others;
- Ensure children understand the purpose of their learning and how it can be applied in different contexts;
- Encourage children to develop a curiosity for the world around them, asking questions and seeking answers;
- Create and maintain an exciting and stimulating learning environment where
- all pupils are encouraged to be risk takers;
- Support children in becoming independent, reflective and analytical thinkers
- and learners;
- Encourage children to value and produce high quality work, taking pride in all
- that they do;
- Encourage and support children in taking ownership of their learning

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### **Implementation**

The curriculum at St. Joseph's is rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church; the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Curriculum.

### **Foundation Stage**

The curriculum in our Early Years follows the curriculum as outlined in the latest version of the EYFS Statutory Framework that applies from September 2021.

This framework consists of 7 areas of learning and development that are all considered equally as important and are inter-connected. However, the first 3 areas of the curriculum, the Prime Areas, are considered particularly important for giving the children at St Josephs the key skills and knowledge to become curious and enthusiastic learners who have a capacity to learn, form positive relationships, communicate well with others and thrive in their future education and life.

The Prime Areas are:

Communication and Language

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

These prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas of learning:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

### Planning

Activities and experiences at St Josephs are planned using the St Joseph's curriculum intent document. This is a series of statements of progress of knowledge and skills designed to help the children to acquire the necessary experiences and learning to progress into independent, confident and articulate learners. Our curriculum intent is designed with the Statutory framework Early Learning goals in mind and shows progressive learning that has high expectations for all children regardless of their background, level of development or SEND.

In EYFS we follow a medium-term plan based around the progressive learning of skills and knowledge from the curriculum intent. This plan is based around a topic, which follows a two-year cycle, covered across both Nursery and Reception.

#### Cycle 1

Me and My Community

Winter Wonderland

Dangerous Dinosaurs

#### Cycle 2

Changes

Once Upon a Time

Oh the Places You Will Go

Each area of the curriculum is planned for to ensure that children are focussing on a focussed lesson covering all 7 areas of the Early Year Foundation Stage curriculum across a period of two weeks.

Activities, both indoors and outdoors, are planned for and include a mixture of creative and messy play, storytelling, music and movement, maths and investigation, early mark making and writing, sand and water play and role play

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exploration. Children have access to both the indoor and outdoor classroom throughout the day and the learning indoors will mirror that found outdoors.

### Teaching

Both the Nursery and Reception classes are teacher-led with a supporting qualified teaching assistant.

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play, and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

As children grow older, and as their development allows, the balance gradually shifts towards more adult-led activities to help children prepare for more formal learning, ready for Year 1.

Children experience a wide range of activities through our weekly list of extended experiences available in both Nursery and Reception. Children have weekly PE lessons, access to Forest School sessions for a term each school year, RSE learning (through the TenTen programme), access to the local library and a series of trips and visits throughout the two year teaching cycle.

### **Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2**

In order to ensure pupils receive the highest quality teaching and that teachers have the expert subject knowledge to deliver the expectations of the National Curriculum, the curriculum is delivered through teachers teaching their subject specialism to a range of year groups. As well as ensuring this provides high quality experiences for pupils, it also supports our role in ensuring that pupils are best prepared for the next stage of their education journey at Secondary School and are "secondary ready."

Our curriculum is ambitious for all and this is clearly identified in planning:

- Need to know is based on the National curriculum to ensure a broad and progressive coverage of all subjects.

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- Neat to know is the 'St Joseph's way'. Identified in green on planning, this demonstrates our ambition within teaching and provides opportunities for extension and challenge within age appropriate learning intentions.

### Religious Education

Religious education is an integral part of our lives at St. Joseph's. To ensure continuity and progression, we have adopted the Religious Education Directory for primary schools. This programme is used throughout school from Nursery to Year 6.

### English

English is planned and taught following the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Wherever possible, Literacy genres will link to the topic covered by the class.

We believe that teaching and learning in English should inspire pupils and provide them with the literary skills needed for an enriched life. We want our pupils to develop a love of literature that will last a life-time and impact upon their writing capabilities.

Reading is the foundation for all learning for pupils at St. Joseph's. Phonics is taught immediately as pupils enter school in EYFS, following the Little Wandle Programme, which is supported by the school's synthetic phonics based reading scheme and reading sessions.

Guided reading is taught on a weekly basis in Key Stage Two, while children in EYFS and Key Stage One have reading sessions three times a week. Children participate in a range of differentiated tasks throughout the session including; independent work, talk time, modelling and written discussion and focused reading with questioning from the class teacher or support staff.

Medium term planning outlines in detail which genres and which objectives are being taught each term.

Each English unit will follow a six week teaching cycle:

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- Analysis of the text type;
- Sentence level explicit teaching;
- Shared and guided writing;
- Independent writing.
- Edit, review and publish.

In addition, children will look at poetry each year.

### **Maths**

Maths is planned and taught following the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Maths is taught as a discrete subject. However, skills learnt in maths lessons are applied across the different curriculum subjects wherever possible. The school uses the White Rose scheme of learning to support teachers in delivering the expectations of the National Curriculum. Pupils will have equal opportunities to experience and undertake learning in fluency, reasoning and problem solving.

### **Topic Based Learning**

The school curriculum is designed around Imaginative Learning Projects. In each year group, there are three projects which are covered in termly topics throughout the year. To ensure even coverage of geography and history, each project has a half termly focus of these. Within both geography and history units, links are made to Catholic Social Teaching principles.

Each project is an enquiry based challenging project which ensures that learning is embedded. Wherever possible, links are made between topic learning, enabling pupils to place their learning in context and ensure learning becomes embedded in long term memory.

Within each project, there are four distinct stages of learning which actively promote children's learning and thinking. More information can be found in the geography and history policies.

### **Safeguarding and Diversity**

Pupil safeguarding, diversity and the promotion of fundamental British values are a core function of our work at St. Joseph's. Great importance is placed on

identifying opportunities in the taught curriculum for children to learn about safeguarding. Our broad curriculum gives pupils opportunities to experience life in all its diversity, to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills that significantly impact on personal development, behaviour and welfare and equips every child with the knowledge and skills required for personal safeguarding.

Through our Relationships Education, we have woven the key aspects of physical safety, keeping safe from extremism and radicalisation, keeping safe online, celebrating diversity and recognising the importance of British Values, to ensure that our children have a deep understanding of the importance of relationships with God and with others.

### **Children with Special Educational Needs**

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, based on an accurate understanding of the strengths and gaps in learning, which may exist.

If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet their individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, his/her teacher makes an assessment of this need. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's

need is more severe, we consider the child for an Education and Health Care Plan, and we involve the appropriate external agencies when making this assessment. We provide additional resources and support for children with special needs.

### **Assessment**

Ensuring that teaching is based on an accurate and precise understanding of children's prior knowledge and understanding, is integral to our teaching. At the beginning of each unit of work, teachers will assess children's prior knowledge and understanding through a pre-learning challenge. This challenge will then

inform precise next steps in learning and also how children are grouped for lessons.

- Assessment at St. Joseph's ensures a balance between robust, ongoing formative assessment and a summative assessment of what pupils have learnt at a given point in time;
- Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle;
- Assessment builds effectively on an accurate understanding of each pupil's prior learning through the use of pre-learning challenges;
- Assessment informs planning and identifies clear next steps in learning for all pupils, enabling pupils to make at least expected progress;
- Assessment carefully and accurately tracks pupil performance and informs the target setting practise;
- Assessment engages pupils in their own learning, encourages them to reflect on their learning, assessing the progress which they have made.
- Where gaps in learning are identified, these are planned for through immediate intervention, "Impact" and through precisely planned provision mapping.

### **Impact**

Our curriculum has ambition for high achievement of all pupils irrespective of background and starting point. The teaching and learning process is cyclical, therefore assessments are used to inform teaching, but also to measure progress. Progress is measured through the use of post learning challenges at the end of each unit of learning, through the use of knowledge organisers/quizzes, Friday Maths and Grammar Challenges and summative tests. All of these strategies support an accurate assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills, enabling staff to ascertain how learning has been embedded in long term memory and also gaps in learning.

Outcomes of national tests are a useful indicator of pupils' learning and one which supports staff in measuring the impact of the school's curriculum. However, at St. Joseph's, we continually measure the impact of our curriculum

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by scrutinising pupils' books, speaking to pupils about their learning and the use of internal assessments.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher has the responsibility for the leadership of the curriculum and delegates responsibility to key staff:

- The Deputy Headteacher co-ordinates the work of the subject leaders and ensures that the curriculum has progression and appropriate coverage;
- Subject leaders are responsible for the medium term plans and liaising with class teachers over the content and delivery of the units of work. They evaluate and monitor standards in their subject;
- Class teachers ensure that the curriculum is taught and that the aims are achieved for their class. They plan collaboratively to ensure parity across the year group;
- The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher ensure that the progress of each pupil is tracked and that there is appropriate challenge support and intervention;
- Governors monitor the success of the curriculum at whole Governing Body meetings through the Headteacher's report and reports from subject leaders.

Reviewed: October 2025

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