



Curriculum

Inspiring Children to love learning and live in the light of
Christ.

Curriculum Introduction

Curriculum Intent

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, our intention is to provide an ambitious, broad, and balanced education which will help the children in our care to grow to their full potential. We pay close regard to the formation of the whole person, so that they leave our school strong in faith, and academically ready to make a positive contribution to the world.

Our vision at St Mary's Catholic Primary School is to provide the highest quality of education within a Catholic ethos. Through the love of God, we nurture the uniqueness of each child, working hard using the talents God has given us for the good of other people and to achieve our best. Together, with our families, our parish and our local community, we seek to create a safe, happy school where we treat each other with love and compassion and where our children become confident and caring citizens with a passion for learning.

Our curriculum is tailored specifically to the children of St. Mary's Catholic Primary School. We focus on giving the children the knowledge and skills outlined in the National Curriculum of England, whilst modelling and teaching the virtues given to us by Christ, through the Gospels. We intend our Curriculum to be intellectually stimulating by giving the children unique learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom. These experiences will give the children opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, and cultural capital to succeed in life, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs or disabilities.

Throughout our curriculum are woven the threads of social, moral, cultural, spiritual, and vocational development alongside an understanding of democracy, rule of law, liberty, respect, and tolerance. The curriculum is just a starting point though; how the curriculum is implemented is of equal importance.

Implementation

Children are challenged daily to be inquisitive, resilient, creative, and independent learners through the quality teaching of knowledge and skills in all subjects. Whilst we teach subjects discretely, teachers skilfully ensure content is combined in a cross-curricular approach.

Teachers' pedagogy is based on Rosenshine's Principles of Effective instruction. We use it as a model for quality first teaching. Teachers constantly review prior learning to build on knowledge, they continually question children to broaden their thinking and to assess understanding, and they support and stretch pupils based on their ability. When teachers introduce new content, they do so in a logical, sequential way and always model best practice.

Timetabling

The Educational Endowment Foundation asks us to consider three key principles from their studies into cognitive science and the processes by which all of us commit information to our memories.

1. Learning requires information to be committed to long-term memory.
2. Information is processed through the working memory.
3. The working memory has limited capacity and can be overloaded.

We have taken this into account when planning our school timetable. In order to commit information to the long-term memory, we practise subjects daily and in a logical sequence. In the mornings, all classes will learn English. Depending on the age of the children, this will include handwriting practice, phonics, spelling, grammar and writing. There will also be a dedicated reading lesson as described in our English curriculum. The children will have a break, and then move on to daily Mathematics lessons.

After lunch, we have decided to trial a different approach to teaching Science and our 'foundation subjects'. Knowing that the working memory has limited capacity and can be overloaded, we have tried to reduce the amount of switching between subjects. By teaching our foundation subjects of history and geography in termly blocks with an emphasis on either history or geography each half term. By focussing on key skills and knowledge, we will dedicate more time to a subject. We hope this will commit more to the children's long-term memory by giving them a chance to study topics in more depth, whilst reducing the pressure on their working memory.

Impact

When children leave St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, they will have a strong spiritual knowledge and faith based upon the Catholic nature of our school.

They will have a strong web of knowledge across the curriculum subjects that is deep, durable, and transferable from one context to another.

They will have the ability to retrieve knowledge and make connections between contexts; apply their skills across a range of subjects; an ability to think deeply about important concepts and apply their knowledge and use it to solve problems and generate creative solutions.

They will be creative, innovative, and critical thinkers; be sympathetic and have an awareness of other people's feelings; and show tolerance and forgiveness.

They will be resilient, confident learners who will be prepared for their next phase of education and beyond.