



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

CURRICULUM POLICY

‘Walking in the footsteps of Jesus, loving and serving together’

At St Joseph's Catholic School, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum and endeavor to enrich our children's learning through a range of stimulating experiences. Our creative curriculum ensures full pupil entitlement to the National Curriculum. Children's learning is enhanced through an enquiry-led model and frequent enrichment opportunities. Hence, our pupil engagement is high and there is a real buzz and positive attitudes to learning when walking into classrooms!

The focus on making learning relevant and meaningful incorporates practical experiences for all our children, using both the local environment and further afield. Our curriculum leaders and our class teachers ensure there is clear progression of skills and opportunities for creativity, by planning from the National Curriculum Programmes of Study through the four stages of the Cornerstones Imaginative Learning Projects (ILP). Opportunities for depth of learning are planned by teachers and led by children's prior knowledge through regular questioning and assessment.

Children start each ILP with an exciting, stimulating experience (Engage). This may be an educational visit, a visiting speaker or an immersion day where children discover and explore their new learning. Children are then challenged through a range of stimulating, exciting learning experiences to learn, develop, solve problems, apply themselves creatively and express their knowledge and understanding effectively across the curriculum (Develop). The third stage, Innovate, enables children to then apply their new skills and knowledge to another area of learning working independently, in small groups or as a class. At St Joseph's Catholic School, we believe children learn better when they are encouraged to use their imagination and apply their learning to engaging contexts. Thus, our curriculum provides a variety of learning challenges throughout the year which enables them to express their learning, transfer their skills and knowledge to other areas of learning and develop their interpersonal, communication skills when they share their work to their parents and children in other year groups (Express stage).

We also have a rigorous essential skills framework that outlines the end of each ILP expectations in all subjects. Progress is monitored by the class teacher and the curriculum leader.

We use our evaluations and assessments to continually update our curriculum maps, ensuring breadth and balance. Throughout the school year, we ensure that our children are kept up to date with current local and global news through special assemblies and whole school projects eg World War 1 centenary, Roald Dahl day etc.

As a school, we value the foundation subjects and hence our curriculum for these areas are closely monitored and guided by Curriculum leaders who apply their subject expertise to support the planning and ensure that high-quality experiences are being identified and delivered.

Intent

At St Joseph's Catholic School , we follow the Cornerstones Curriculum which is a creative and thematic approach to learning. It has been mapped to the 2014 Primary National Curriculum to ensure comprehensive coverage of national expectations. Our curriculum is delivered through Imaginative Learning Projects (ILPs) which provide a rich menu of exciting and motivating learning activities that make creative links between all aspects of our children's learning. Our curriculum is taught through a pedagogy that:

- Excites, promotes and sustains children's interest
- Promotes problem-solving, creativity and communication
- Enables and fosters children's natural curiosity
- Offers all children a memorable experience at the start of every topic
- Promotes innovation and entrepreneurialism
- Enables children to reflect on and evaluate their learning
- and actively encourages and welcomes parents to take part in children's learning and experiences.

We believe children learn better when they use their imagination and apply their learning to engaging contexts. Our curriculum provides lots of learning challenges throughout the academic year which require children to solve problems, apply themselves creatively and express their knowledge and understanding effectively across the curriculum.

Implementation

Every year, children complete six ILPs and progress through four distinct stages of learning in each ILP – Engage, Develop, Innovate and Express. Assessment is a vital part of teaching and learning and as such helps teachers in planning work, identifying problems and helping children to make progress. Through half-termly assessment, we monitor all children and through cross-curricular links (English,

Maths and Computing) embed key skills and knowledge immersing our children in their learning.

Engage

At the "Engage" stage, children:

- Gain memorable first-hand experiences, such as going on a visit or inviting a special visitor into school.
- Enjoy 'WOW' experiences.
- Get an exciting introduction to a topic or theme.
- Begin researching and setting enquiry questions.
- Get lots of opportunities to make observations.
- Develop spoken language skills.
- Take part in sensory activities.
- Have lots of fun to fully 'engage' with their new topic.

Develop

At the "Develop" stage, children:

- Improve their knowledge and understanding of the topic.
- Develop and practice their new skills.
- Write an extended cross-curricular piece of writing.
- Compose, make, do, build, investigate, explore, write for different purposes and read across the curriculum.
- Research their own questions and those set by others.
- Follow new pathways of enquiry based on their interests.
- Complete homework activities that support their learning.

Innovate

At the "Innovate" stage, children:

- Apply skills, knowledge and understanding in real-life contexts.
- Solve real or imagined problems using everything they've learnt.
- Get inspired by imaginative and creative opportunities.
- Revisit anything not fully grasped at the 'Develop' stage.

Express

At the "Express" stage, children:

- Become the performers, experts and informers.
- Share their achievements with parents, classmates and the community.
- Evaluate finished products and processes.
- Link what they have learnt to where they started.
- Celebrate their achievements.

Impact

At St Joseph's Catholic School , our curriculum gives every child the opportunity to:

- See clear links between different aspects of their learning
- Develop a rich and deep subject knowledge
- Explore the breadth and depth of the national curriculum and apply their learning to other subject areas
- Understand the purpose and value of their learning and see its relevance to their past, present and future
- Develop and demonstrate their creativity
- Experience the challenge and enjoyment of learning
- Develop new skills through a variety of interesting contexts
- Develop self-esteem and confidence in their abilities
- Follow their own interests and be themselves
- Reflect and think mindfully about their learning
- Work in a range of groups and settings

Through pupil voice, we strive to continually improve our curriculum. Regular half-termly meetings with school council members to encourage pupils to share:

- What they like and dislike about their learning
- Evaluate their own learning
- Express their opinions on a range of different topics and issues
- Explore ways of becoming an active citizens
- Take part in charity events within their ILPs.

In addition to this, we pride ourselves on working closely with families to ensure all our pupils achieve in a happy learning environment. The engagement of parents and carers is crucial to this and we work hard on building a strong cohesive link between school, home, parents and the community that makes learning more real which is active, interactive and exciting.

Mission Statement

The Mission of our school is to provide a broad and challenging education within the context of a Christian environment. An understanding of the Roman Catholic faith, in line with the Gospel message, underpins the whole work of our school. Our main aim is to develop the self –esteem, dignity and respect of all members of the community in a celebration of each person's infinite worth in the eyes of God.

“The Catholic school is, or should be, a unique Christian community. It brings together in one enterprise, not only the teachers and pupils, but also the parents

and local Priests. It is therefore, a community, not only where the faith is taught and learned, but where it can be celebrated through well planned liturgies and lived in daily practice.

CARDINAL BASIL HUME

September 19th 1988

Our Standards

Our school is committed to equal opportunities including race equality, promoting positive approaches to difference and fostering respect for people of all cultural backgrounds. The school's Christian ethos, vision and aims encourage the involvement of people from all sections of our local community.

Our Approach

Our approach is based on high expectations which are essential to successful learning. We want our school to be a caring, happy and a secure environment. We are proud of ourselves, our school and our achievements.

Implicit in all we do is the intention to foster moral and ethical standards of behaviour, which include concern for others, self-discipline, respect, honesty, fairness and politeness, responsibility, friendship, courage.

At St Joseph's:

- We have an environment of mutual respect;
- All Pupils, parents, staff, governors, community members and visitors are warmly welcomed, greeted with a smile and an offer of help;
- Staff and pupils notice and reinforce high standards of behaviour throughout the school at all times;
- Staff and pupils talk in a positive manner at all times throughout school;
- Staff know all children by name and take an interest in each individual;
- The whole school environment reflects the positive Christian school ethos and school aims;
- We have a supportive ethos in our classrooms and encourage a culture of peer praise;
- Pupils and staff are treated consistently and fairly;
- Parents are aware of behavioral expectations and work in partnership with the school;

- We maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to, in line with our Child Protection Policy;
- All staff have an equal and proactive responsibility to ensure children are cared for and that the school runs smoothly;
- We promote diversity and celebrate our international links.

Learning, Teaching and the Curriculum

Learning is:

- Being interested, excited, enjoying the experience and having fun;
- Being appropriately challenged and made to think;
- Wanting to ask questions and find out more to further understanding or knowledge;
- Taking risks;
- Building on interests and what is already known;
- Being resilient;
- Being resourceful;
- Forming positive and effective relationships;
- Being reflective and considering next steps in learning;
- Making links between different areas of learning and real life situations;
- Empowering and confidence building.

Teaching is:

- flexibly timetabled and designed to meet the needs of the children's learning, whilst ensuring curriculum coverage is not compromised;
- built on and modified to meet the children's interests;
- creative in its delivery and content, cross curricular wherever possible, purposeful, varied, exciting and fun;
- communicated to parents and carers through termly curriculum information sheets;
- focused on the learning process and, where appropriate, the product;
- planned and has at its heart:
 - challenge and high expectations for all groups and individuals;
 - the use of probing and challenging questions by both the teacher and the pupil;
 - opportunities for children and teachers to take risks together;
 - opportunities for working independently and in a variety of groups building confidence and relationships;
 - time for pupil reflection including time to consider next steps in their learning.

Long Term Planning:

- Is planned to be creative, distinctive to our school and designed to meet our pupils' needs;
- Ensures continuity and progression in learning as children progress through the school and transfer to the next Key Stage;
- Is based, in the Early Years, on the EYFS Development Matters and in KS1 and KS2 on the new National Curriculum.
- Organises the curriculum learning intentions over a three year rolling programme.

Medium Term Planning:

- Ensures coverage of all statutory curriculum elements and reflects the distinctive Christian nature of our school;
- Is organised to provide challenge and high expectations for all;
- Is designed to raise standards in the non-core subjects and basic skills;
- Creates cross curricular contexts for learning to ensure effective links are made;
- Is discrete when appropriate;
- Explicitly states the key skills to be covered / EY objectives;
- Develops creative approaches to learning whilst raising standards;
- Is flexible in its delivery;
- Has depth based on the identified needs of the pupils.

Short Term Planning:

Is owned by the teacher.

FS use EYFS Development Matters headings to plan their work.

KS1 and KS2 use National Curriculum outcomes for short term planning.

Planning is informed by previous learning, assessments and evaluations. Short term planning is constantly evolving to meet the needs of the children.

Short term planning is on a planning format or PowerPoint slides for Mathematics. The remaining short term planning is on Cornerstones which the teachers adapt using the Cornerstones timetable and planning tool.

When short term planning is reviewed as part of monitoring of lessons by the Head teacher and Curriculum Leads, the following areas are considered:

- Are the objectives clear and appropriate?
- Does the implementation reflect the intent/WALT.
- Are there clear learning outcomes for all groups?
- Are vulnerable groups identified?

The learning environment

A high quality and excellent learning environment, both inside and outside is vitally important in achieving the school's vision and aims. The class teachers have a set of Classroom environment principals to work from, these include;

Each class has:

- A display for class expectations and school values;
- Other displays change termly to reflect the topic focus and celebrate children's work;
- Key questions and vocabulary on all displays to create an investigative and word rich environment;
- Each display is clearly labelled as its purpose.
- All displays can be accessed and seen by the children.
- A display of relevant artefacts when available;
- A display of relevant fiction and non-fiction texts;
- A clearly displayed reward system linked to a whole class reward;
- A designated Reflection Area that promotes spirituality and is linked to the liturgical calendar.

The school environment:

- The school library is kept clean, tidy and well organised;
- There are displays dedicated to:
 - The school and community information such as policies and newsletters;
 - The Chaplaincy Team display;
 - reflecting the Christian ethos;
 - the governing body;
 - staying safe on-line poster in class;
- The public areas are clean and tidy, including toilets, staffroom, small group rooms and communal areas.

Pride is taken by all staff and children in all areas of the school environment.

Homework

Homework is set on a Thursday on a two weekly cycle and collected on a Tuesday.

FS2: Homework develops through the year. Reading homework and an activity which could be TT Rockstars, Mathletics, Prodigy Maths, Spelling Frame, Purple Mash or Reading Theory.

Yr1-Yr6: Homework develops through the year. Reading homework and an activity which could be TT Rockstars, Mathletics, Prodigy Maths, Spelling Frame, Purple Mash or Reading Theory

All homework is marked and kept by the teachers.

- Teachers will check online platforms to monitor child's engagement. Teachers will talk to parents of children who consistently fail to complete homework to the required standard.
- Each class has its own system of rewards for homework such as house points and Certificates for learning platforms.

Assessment

Assessment is used to evaluate progress to support, extend, encourage and challenge appropriately. At the heart of assessment is children knowing how well they are doing and the next steps they need to take. Assessment is undertaken daily through marking and oral and written feedback to the children.

Foundation Stage

- Regular phonic assessments (ongoing but formally 3 times per year);
- An in-school on entry FS baseline assessment using Development Matters (by October), reassessed using Development Matters in February and June;
- Ongoing assessments through observations and adult led activities and recorded in Learning Journeys;
- An electronic Learning Journey called Tapestry assesses daily learning and tracks attainment and progress.

KS1 & KS2

Teacher observations, marking and assessments are made and recorded using Cornerstones assessments. Attainment is reported at Pupil Progress meeting every two terms. This data is used to support children to make the best possible progress (See Pupil Progress Meetings below).

English:

In reading, KS1 children are assessed on their phonic phase and a reading book level linked to their phonic phase is used.

Whole class reading sessions are taught weekly and are assessed against levelled objectives.

Phonic assessments are undertaken 3 times a year in KS1 and relevant children in KS2.

All Y1 children (and Y2 children who did not pass) undertake the phonics screening check.

Maths:

In KS2, mental maths is assessed when appropriate to the children's learning to inform teaching.

Cornerstones assessments carried out 3 times a year.

Children's levels are moderated regularly in staff meetings. English is linked to other subject areas during moderation, such as the RE standard of writing.

Monitoring

Various monitoring and moderation activities led by the Head teacher and Curriculum Leads will include:

- Monitoring of planning;
- Pupil interviews – linked to all subjects;
- Moderation activities in Staff Meetings – focus of which determined by SDP;
- Organising focus children so that higher, middle and lower ability children are considered;
- Work scrutiny – focusing on SDP priorities
- Organising activities to raise attainment – eg cold and hot write ;
- Curriculum Walks – Subject Leaders focus on evidence for their subject;
- Learning walks with Head and Curriculum Leaders,
- Involvement in Pupil Progress Meetings.

Pupil Progress Meetings

Pupil Progress Meetings are held three times a year (December, April and June). This process is used as a platform to discuss each individual child in school and to ensure that appropriate actions are put in place.

Year Group data sheets are completed by the teachers prior to the Pupil Progress Meeting to provide additional information for the meeting.

Cornerstones assessment tracking is also completed prior to the Pupil Progress Meetings.

Pupil Progress meetings are held three times a year and are seen as a vital component to support the following:

- to raise standards across school;
- to ensure each child's needs are being met;
- to ensure each child is making the progress of which they are capable;
- to share good practice and ideas to support individuals to make accelerated progress;

- to enable us to target support (for instance, reading, writing, maths interventions or involving outside agencies);
- to reflect on interventions used in class.

Further meetings may be held for any child for whom it is deemed necessary.

Present at Pupil Progress meetings are:

The Head Teacher – responsible for data and overseeing provision for certain vulnerable groups;

The SENCO and DDSL - responsible for SEND provision and interventions.

Class Teacher – responsible for assessing children and ensuring agreed actions are implemented;

It is the responsibility of all members of the meeting to challenge progress and support interventions.