ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

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Purpose

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to providing high quality teaching and learning that enables every pupil to let their light shine academically, spiritually and socially.

Our teaching and learning is rooted in our Catholic ethos and Gospel values. We aim to create classrooms where pupils feel safe, valued and included, develop a love of learning and acquire the knowledge, vocabulary and skills they need to succeed.

This policy sets out our expectations for teaching and learning and provides a framework for:

- consistently high quality first wave teaching
- a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum
- inclusive and adaptive classroom practice
- effective assessment and feedback
- purposeful home learning
- professional development and support for staff
- monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and its impact on pupils.

2. Our guiding principles

- Every pupil is entitled to high quality first wave teaching in every lesson, with high expectations for achievement and behaviour.
- Pupils learn best when they feel safe, secure, valued and included within our Christian community.
- Knowledge builds cumulatively. Learning is carefully sequenced so that pupils develop secure knowledge, vocabulary and subject specific skills over time.
- Reading is fundamental to learning. Systematic phonics, reading fluency, comprehension and a culture of reading for pleasure enable pupils to access the whole curriculum.
- Teaching should be explicit and purposeful. Teachers explain, model and demonstrate new learning before providing opportunities for guided and independent practice.
- Learning should be active, social and reflective. Structured pupil talk, including appropriate Kagan approaches, retrieval practice and metacognitive strategies support pupils to develop understanding, reasoning and independence.

- Assessment informs teaching. Teachers continually check pupils' understanding and use this information to adapt teaching and address misconceptions.
- Inclusion begins in the classroom. Teachers identify and remove barriers to learning through high quality adaptive teaching, while maintaining ambitious expectations for all pupils.
- Feedback should be purposeful and proportionate. Pupils receive feedback that helps them understand what they need to improve and gives them opportunities to act upon it.
- Behaviour supports learning. Classrooms are calm, predictable and respectful. Pupils are explicitly taught routines, emotional regulation and conflict resolution.
- Learning extends beyond the classroom. Reading, home learning, enrichment, community links and opportunities for service strengthen pupils' learning and their understanding of Gospel values.

Our curriculum is rooted in Catholic values and the statutory National Curriculum. We deliberately select the knowledge, vocabulary, experiences and skills that pupils need to become confident, knowledgeable and active members of their community.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Headteacher

- establishes high expectations for teaching and learning
- ensures teaching and learning priorities reflect the school's improvement priorities
- oversees monitoring and evaluation
- ensures appropriate professional development and support are available to staff
- reports to governors on teaching, learning and pupil outcomes.

3.2 Senior Leadership Team

- establishes and monitors school priorities
- coordinates the teaching and learning monitoring cycle
- supports and challenges subject and phase leaders
- oversees professional development and coaching
- monitors provision for vulnerable pupils
- evaluates the impact of teaching and learning on pupil outcomes.

3.3 Subject and phase leaders

- maintain and quality assure curriculum progression documents
- ensure knowledge, vocabulary and skills are coherently sequenced
- provide appropriate resources, exemplars and guidance

- support colleagues through subject specific professional development
- monitor curriculum implementation through planning scrutiny, learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil voice
- identify areas for improvement and contribute to staff development.

3.4 SENDCo

- oversees the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do and Review
- supports teachers to provide effective adaptive teaching
- coordinates appropriate specialist advice and provision
- ensures provision maps are maintained and reviewed
- provides training and guidance relating to SEND and inclusive practice.

3.5 Teachers

- provide high quality first wave teaching
- use curriculum progression documents to plan and sequence learning
- use assessment to identify prior knowledge, misconceptions and next steps
- adapt teaching in response to pupils' needs
- provide appropriate scaffolding and gradually develop pupil independence
- provide purposeful feedback
- maintain accurate assessment information and contribute to provision mapping where appropriate
- communicate effectively with parents and carers about learning and progress
- promote the school's Catholic ethos, values and expectations.

3.6 Support staff

- know pupils well and understand their individual needs
- support pupils to access the curriculum without replacing teacher instruction
- deliver agreed intervention programmes and guided practice
- use agreed assessment approaches
- communicate relevant information about pupil progress to teachers
- model positive learning behaviours and inclusive classroom routines.

3.7 Pupils

- attend school ready to learn
- participate actively in lessons
- listen respectfully and contribute appropriately
- use taught strategies to support their learning
- take increasing responsibility for their learning
- respond positively to feedback

- uphold the school's values and routines
- support a positive learning environment for others.

3.8 Parents and carers

- support reading and agreed home learning
- encourage positive attitudes towards learning
- ensure pupils have the routines and resources needed to be ready to learn
- attend relevant meetings and events
- communicate important information with school promptly.

3.9 Governors

- support and challenge leaders regarding teaching, learning and pupil outcomes
- receive reports on progress and the impact of school priorities
- monitor the appropriate allocation of resources to support teaching and learning.

4. Planning

Planning at St Mary's ensures that learning is carefully sequenced and that pupils build secure knowledge, vocabulary and skills over time.

Every subject has progression documentation showing the knowledge and skills pupils are expected to acquire from Reception to Year 6.

Long term planning

- the sequence of learning across the year
- progression between year groups
- opportunities for curriculum enrichment and cultural capital.

Medium term planning

- the knowledge and skills to be taught
- threshold concepts where appropriate
- key vocabulary
- prior learning
- intended end points
- opportunities for retrieval and assessment.

Weekly and lesson planning

- appropriate retrieval of prior learning
- explicit explanation and modelling
- guided and scaffolded practice

- opportunities for independent application
- purposeful questioning and structured pupil talk
- assessment checks
- opportunities to address misconceptions.

Planning should be proportionate and should support effective teaching rather than create unnecessary workload.

Reading

- Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils receive daily systematic synthetic phonics until accurate decoding is secure.
- Pupils develop fluency, comprehension and reading stamina throughout Key Stage 2.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to read high quality texts selected for literary merit, curriculum relevance and cultural capital.
- Reading is promoted as both a means of accessing the curriculum and a source of pleasure.

Early Years

- In Reception, planning provides an appropriate balance of adult led and child initiated learning.
- Particular emphasis is placed on communication and language, early reading and phonics, early mathematics, personal, social and emotional development, and purposeful play and exploration.
- Reception baseline assessment and ongoing assessment inform provision and support progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

5. Learning environment

The learning environment at St Mary's should be welcoming, purposeful and reflective of our Catholic values.

- promote a calm and respectful atmosphere
- reflect Gospel values and the school's expectations
- provide accessible resources that enable pupils to work independently
- display relevant key vocabulary and important knowledge
- use knowledge organisers, worked examples and other resources where these support learning
- provide appropriate opportunities for reading
- enable all pupils to participate fully.

Classroom routines should be explicitly taught, practised and reinforced. Transitions should be calm and predictable.

Seating and classroom organisation should support visibility, participation, collaboration and independence.

Pupils should be taught strategies for emotional regulation and conflict resolution. Restorative approaches and rewards should reflect the school's Gospel values and Behaviour Policy.

Displays should support learning rather than become decorative. They should be reviewed and changed when they no longer serve a clear learning purpose.

6. Adaptive teaching

Adaptive teaching is an essential part of high quality first wave teaching. Teachers maintain ambitious expectations for all pupils while adapting the way pupils access, practise and demonstrate learning.

Teachers should use their knowledge of pupils and ongoing assessment to identify and remove barriers to learning.

- explicit modelling and worked examples
- pre teaching key vocabulary
- visual and multi sensory approaches
- structured talk
- writing frames and sentence stems
- appropriate scaffolding
- manipulatives and practical resources
- chunking information
- additional explanation and guided practice
- carefully selected accessible texts
- opportunities for rehearsal and retrieval
- reducing unnecessary cognitive load.

Scaffolds should support pupils towards independence and should be reduced when they are no longer required.

SEND

High quality classroom teaching is the first response for pupils with SEND. Where additional provision is required, staff follow the school's graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do and Review.

Teachers work with the SENDCo to implement appropriate reasonable adjustments and monitor their impact.

EAL

Teachers identify pupils' language needs and provide appropriate opportunities to develop vocabulary, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Reading fluency and comprehension should be considered separately from the process of acquiring English.

Disadvantaged pupils

Teachers use their knowledge of individual pupils and the Pupil Premium Strategy to identify and address barriers to learning. Support may include targeted teaching, tutoring, reading intervention, vocabulary support and enrichment where appropriate.

Support staff

Support staff should be deployed strategically to maximise pupil learning. Their role is to complement teacher instruction through guided practice, questioning, modelling and targeted support rather than replace high quality teaching.

Intervention

- interventions should be short, focused and evidence informed
- intervention content should be aligned with classroom curriculum sequences wherever possible
- entry and exit criteria should be clear
- impact should be reviewed regularly
- specialist support should be accessed through the SEND procedures where required.

7. Home learning

Home learning should reinforce and consolidate important learning rather than introduce substantial new content.

The main purposes of home learning are to:

- develop reading fluency and a love of reading
- practise essential number facts and mathematical fluency
- consolidate key knowledge and vocabulary

- develop positive learning habits.

Home learning should be:

- purposeful
- age appropriate
- manageable for pupils and families
- clearly communicated
- proportionate.

Reading at home is a priority. Pupils are provided with appropriate reading materials and families who require additional support are offered guidance and resources.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support vocabulary development, discussion and reading for pleasure.

8. Marking and feedback

The purpose of feedback is to improve learning, not simply to demonstrate that work has been marked.

Our approach is based on the principles that feedback should be:

- timely
- specific
- actionable
- proportionate
- appropriate to the age, subject and learning.

Teachers use a range of feedback approaches, including:

- verbal feedback
- live marking
- questioning
- whole class feedback
- self assessment
- peer assessment
- focused written feedback where appropriate.

Immediate verbal feedback and live marking should be used where they are effective in addressing misconceptions during learning.

Written feedback should be used selectively and should focus on significant misconceptions, errors or next steps rather than correcting every error.

Pupils should have opportunities to respond to feedback and improve their learning.

Feedback expectations should vary according to the subject and age of pupils. For example, oral feedback will be particularly important in Early Years and in subjects where spoken language is central, while written feedback may have a greater role in extended writing.

The approach should minimise unnecessary workload and avoid written marking that has little impact on pupil learning.

9. Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and is used to understand what pupils know, remember and can do.

Formative assessment

- identify prior knowledge
- check understanding
- identify misconceptions
- adapt teaching
- identify pupils requiring additional practice
- determine whether pupils are ready to move to the next stage of learning.

Methods may include questioning, retrieval activities, quizzes, observation, guided practice, reading checks and short assessment tasks.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment provides additional information about pupils' attainment and progress.

- standardised assessments in reading and mathematics
- teacher assessment in writing
- phonics assessment
- statutory assessments
- Reception baseline and Early Years assessment
- subject specific assessment of key knowledge and vocabulary.

Assessment information is used alongside teacher knowledge and classroom evidence to form an accurate picture of pupil attainment.

Foundation subjects

Assessment in foundation subjects focuses on whether pupils have secured the important knowledge, vocabulary and skills identified within curriculum progression documents.

Recording

Class assessment information is updated termly. Provision maps for pupils receiving additional support are reviewed at least each half term and updated where required.

Assessment information should be purposeful and manageable. Staff should only record information that is useful for teaching, intervention, accountability or statutory requirements.

Reporting

- parent meetings
- annual written reports
- regular communication about reading and home learning
- additional communication where pupils require targeted support.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

The purpose of monitoring is to evaluate the quality and consistency of teaching and learning and, most importantly, its impact on pupils.

Monitoring should be supportive, evidence informed and linked to school improvement priorities.

The termly monitoring cycle may include:

Planning scrutiny

- curriculum sequences are being followed
- learning is appropriately sequenced
- retrieval is used purposefully
- key knowledge and vocabulary are identified
- assessment opportunities are incorporated.

Lesson visits and learning walks

- explicit modelling
- guided and independent practice

- questioning
- adaptive teaching
- pupil engagement
- feedback
- behaviour for learning.

Work scrutiny

- cumulative development of knowledge and skills
- appropriate use of vocabulary
- opportunities to retrieve and apply learning
- appropriate challenge
- progress over time
- effective response to feedback where relevant.

Pupil voice

- what they are learning
- what they have learned previously
- reading
- vocabulary
- how they improve their work
- how they feel about learning.

Assessment and data review

- strengths
- gaps in learning
- groups requiring additional support
- curriculum areas requiring further development
- the impact of interventions.

Monitoring provision

Leaders review provision maps and targeted interventions to evaluate whether additional support is improving outcomes for pupils with SEND, EAL and disadvantaged pupils.

Professional development

Monitoring findings are used to identify professional development priorities. Coaching, lesson study, modelling, team teaching and other appropriate approaches may be used to strengthen practice.

Monitoring findings are reported to governors through the school's established reporting cycle.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team and presented to governors.

The next scheduled review is 30 September 2027.

The policy may be reviewed sooner where:

- monitoring identifies a significant area for development
- school priorities change
- statutory requirements change
- national guidance or inspection expectations change
- evaluation indicates that amendments would improve teaching and learning.

12. Links with other policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage Policy
- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Assessment Policy
- Home School Agreement
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Staff Performance Management Policy
- Pupil Premium Strategy
- Reading and Phonics guidance
- Subject specific curriculum policies and guidance.

Our commitment

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we believe that every child has the capacity to learn, grow and contribute. Through excellent teaching, an ambitious and carefully sequenced curriculum, inclusive practice and strong relationships, we seek to enable every pupil to develop their knowledge, skills, confidence and character and to let their light shine.