



## **St. Mary's Church of England Primary School**

# **Learning and Teaching Policy**

### **St. Mary's Church of England (Aided) Primary School**

#### **Be the best I can in the love of Christ**

At St. Mary's School we aim to:

1. Create a caring Christian community in which everyone is valued and able to learn and grow together in the love of Christ;
2. Inspire all our children to develop enquiring minds and a lifelong love of learning;
3. Release potential through a broad and creative curriculum;
4. Sustain an environment in which independence, respect and resilience will flourish;
5. Nurture strong relationships between home, school, church and the wider community;
6. Empower the children to become responsible local, national and global citizens.

## **Aim of this Policy**

To provide clear and positive direction for learning and therefore teaching and so ensure effective teaching for learning.

To ensure that children have a firmly rooted understanding of themselves as learners.

## **School Aims**

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3. Release potential through a broad and creative curriculum;
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## **Introduction**

We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and 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. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices.

At St Mary's Church of England Primary School, through high quality teaching, we will support pupils in developing the skills, knowledge and understanding that will enable them to fulfil their intellectual and personal potential and thereby help prepare them to make a mature and valuable contribution to society as an adult. We believe that appropriate learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

The classroom environment should be challenging as well as encouraging because we know that learning is enhanced by challenge.

Children will be inspired and motivated by staff who will continue to develop professionally themselves within a community of learners.

## **Learning**

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. (AfL Assessment for Learning)

In order for children to have an effective learning experience, each lesson must be well-planned.

We use long-term, medium-term and short-term planning to cover all that will be taught in the classroom.

See Planning Requirements.

The teacher is responsible for ensuring that work is suitably differentiated; children may be withdrawn, individually or in groups, for extra support, or receive support in the classroom,

Classes are organised in a variety of ways to allow children to work individually, in small groups, or contributing to whole class activities. Children are encouraged to work collaboratively, co-operatively and independently.

Teachers provide children with activities designed to be interesting and challenging, which will introduce them to new concepts and consolidate previous skills and knowledge.

The types of activity may include:

- Practical investigations and experiments
- Creative activities
- Open-ended investigations
- Predicting outcomes
- Workshops

It is important that activities are well planned so that each pupil is working at their correct level, that they begin promptly and that the initial pace is maintained. All pupils should know what to do as soon as they enter the classroom and after they have completed an activity.

See Appendix 1- Types of Learning Activity

### **Approaches to Teaching/ 'Quality First' Teaching**

Teaching will motivate pupils to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding and should kindle their enthusiasm for the subjects which they are studying.

Lessons should be stimulating, challenging, planned with clear objectives and appropriately related to the scheme of work.

Teachers will make appropriate use of a range of teaching strategies such as: whole class teaching, group work, encouraging individual independent learning, use of thinking time, developing extended tasks, peer marking and review.

Teachers will encourage pupils to think critically for themselves; "spoon-feeding" and reams of photocopied sheets must be avoided.

Quality First Teaching is characterised by:

- Target setting and tracking
- Focused assessment
- Intervention
- Pupil grouping
- The learning environment
- Curriculum organisation
- The extended curriculum
- Supporting children's wider needs
- Safeguarding (see Policy)
- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
- High expectations of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- High levels of interaction for all pupils
- Teacher questioning, modelling and explaining
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk individually and in groups
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- Praise and encouragement to motivate pupils further

See Appendix 2 -Teaching Techniques

### **Differentiation**

There will be a good balance of individual, group and whole-class teaching. Groups will differ in composition and size for different activities. Teachers will vary the way they group children depending on the task and focus. Groupings may be by ability, skill, mixed ability, friendship or other means decided by the teacher. There will be elements of pupil choice and challenge, with pupils sometimes selecting their own level of challenge. All groupings will be flexible according to the needs of the individual and based on continuing assessment by the class teacher.

Teachers choose carefully the style of teaching which is the most effective for the purpose of that lesson. There may be several different activities in progress and at these times the teacher will be helping mainly one group or individual whilst the remainder will be involved in planned activities that do not require teacher input. It is important that while this is in progress pupils stay on task.

This can be helped by:

- having well organised and labelled resources
- taking time to train pupils in procedures
- making sure that pupils are aware of what they must do when they have completed an activity
- making pupils aware that the teacher does not always have to be first in the line of contact

## **Homework**

Appropriate homework will be set in accordance with the homework policy and, when the homework has been handed in, it will be marked according to the school's homework policy. Teachers will take advantage of continuing professional development to remain well informed about their specialist subject and general educational issues.

## **Assessment for Learning (AfL)**

Fundamental to our formative assessment procedures is Assessment for Learning.

A range of AfL strategies are used in the classroom:-

- Learning objectives and individual or group targets are made explicit and shared with the pupils.
- Success criteria are agreed by the pupils and teacher.
- Self and peer assessment is used against the success criteria.
- Pupils are engaged in their learning and receive feedback on their progress
- Marking is based on the Success Criteria and/or focus for that lesson and should include dialogue with the pupil. See Marking Policy.

Use will be made of planned flexi-days when teachers will set independent learning or assessment activities and spend time giving quality feedback to individuals or groups of children.

## **Focused assessment**

Secure knowledge of each pupil's current progress is a core element of learning and teaching. Lesson planning is based on prior learning and throughout the learning process, active assessment is required to ensure that the expected rate of progress is being made. Regular continuous assessment is central to learning and teaching practice. Children's progress is evaluated on an ongoing basis. The child should be involved in this process by the encouragement of self-appraisal and target setting. Summative assessment opportunities are used throughout the year.

Further details are in our Assessment Recording and Reporting Policy.

## **Curriculum Organisation**

The National Curriculum 2014 is used to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims and objectives and details what is to be taught in each year group. We also follow the EYFS guidance for children in our Reception Class.

"Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The school curriculum comprises all learning and other experiences that each school plans for its pupils. The national curriculum forms one part of the school curriculum. All state schools are also required to make provision for a daily act of collective worship and must teach religious education to pupils at every key stage.

Maintained schools in England are legally required to follow the statutory national curriculum which sets out in programmes of study, on the basis of key stages, subject content for those subjects that should be taught to all pupils. All schools must publish their school curriculum by subject and academic year online.

All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice. Schools are also free to include other subjects or topics of their choice in planning and designing their own programme of education."

*The National Curriculum in England framework document.*

At St Mary's we have a creative, skills based curriculum. We have a long term Curriculum Map for each year group. Our medium and short term lesson plans contain detailed information about the teaching activities, skills to be taught and tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the expected learning outcomes.

Children have an input into the planning for the topic for the coming term through the Topic Web which they fill in at home and return to their teacher so that their ideas can be incorporated into planning as appropriate.

We also hold an annual 'Curriculum week' which focuses specifically on one area or subject.

In personalising the curriculum, we aim to find appropriate challenges for pupils and address their particular needs and learning styles so that they may all have an equal opportunity to succeed.

We aim to cater for the needs and interests of a full range of learners including:

- the more able/gifted and talented
- learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- learners with English as an additional language
- gender differences
- looked after children
- learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

See SEND and Inclusion Policy

### **The Learning Environment**

Our classrooms and school buildings are attractive learning environments.

Displays are changed regularly, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year.

Highly visual and interactive displays, such as, 'learning walls', are used to engage pupils and encourage self-help strategies.

See Display Policy

All classrooms are extremely well resourced (each room containing an interactive whiteboard, classroom computer, access to iPads, class libraries of fiction and non-fiction books etc) facilitating a wide range of different learning and teaching activities.

We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and a well-organised classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

Creative use of internal space, including the refurbished ICT suite, has provided areas for small group intervention work or 1:1 tuition and increasingly, external spaces are being used to provide the 'outdoor classroom' eg Forest School.

### **The Extended Curriculum**

Helping pupils to discover and/or develop new interests is essential.

During the school year a range of activities are organised to enhance the curriculum:-

- Educational trips – classes will usually either go on a trip, have a visitor or special curriculum/enrichment day each term
- Residential visit (currently France)
- Extra- curricular clubs for all abilities and interests for children in KS2
- Local and district events and competitions eg Music and Dance festivals and sports matches and tournaments

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we first inform parents and obtain their permission. In so doing, we follow the LA guidance on Off-Site visits and volunteers. Staff complete detailed risk assessments using the Evolve system, which are authorised by the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) and Head teacher.

See Off-site and Educational Visits Policy

## **Achievement**

Social, physical, creative and academic achievements are celebrated in many ways as an on-going process in all aspects of school life, by:

- verbal or written praise by headteacher, teachers, other staff
- the awarding of stickers, house points and certificates
- Headteacher's Awards (given out after whole school worship)
- displays of work
- opportunities to perform or share
- sharing success with the whole school community (in class assembly time)

## Appendix 1

### Types of Learning Activity – definitions

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Applying</b>	Pupils deepen and extend their skills, knowledge or understanding by applying what they have learned in a new context
<b>Creating/Composing</b>	Pupils plan and make a new artefact or product
<b>Critiquing</b>	Pupils analyse and understand more deeply each other's work and what has been achieved
<b>Enquiring</b>	Pupils explore a range of different lines of research in response to an open question or hypotheses
<b>Investigating</b>	Pupils follow a line of enquiry that has a specific aim devised by them or the teacher
<b>Problem Solving</b>	Individuals or groups of pupils devise strategies and carry them out to a specific brief
<b>Researching</b>	Pupils gather available information from a range of sources as part of the process of enquiry
<b>Simulating</b>	Pupils take on and develop roles in response to a specific brief within a clear structure
<b>Consolidating</b>	Pupils cement their learning, revisit, revise, practise, rehearse

## Appendix 2

### Teaching Techniques – definitions

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Instructing</b>	Setting a structured task as a series of steps to be followed to achieve a particular outcome. Giving directions about how to do something.
<b>Explaining</b>	Presenting ideas and processes, step by step, to develop the listener's knowledge and understanding, through clarification that may prompt questions.
<b>Presenting</b>	The provision of information in an organized way, for identifying or clarifying issues, initiating activities and leading pupils on to further study.
<b>Demonstrating</b>	An illustration that explains a procedure, skill or process clearly and in a practical manner, often through the use of equipment and/or materials.
<b>Questioning</b>	Eliciting pupils' recall; understanding of acts, procedures and concepts; and further their ability to apply these.
<b>Coaching</b>	Intensive teaching of an individual or small group, usually applied to skill development or performance.
<b>Discussing</b>	An exchange of opinions and/or ideas to increase pupils' awareness and understanding of an issue or concept.
<b>Debating</b>	A formal pre-planned discussion within defined rules, of knowledge, ideas and opinions to support one of a number of opposing views. Involves the presentation of a case and responding to challenges.
<b>Modelling</b>	By example, demonstrating the values, attitudes or skills appropriate to the activity e.g. silent reading, dealing with conflict, and writing poetry.
<b>'Thought Showers'</b>	Generating ideas, usually to a very short timescale, as a starting point for further work.
<b>Reviewing/Assessing</b>	Giving individuals or groups planned feedback on their work and progress, with the aim of identifying future needs.



