



St. Mark's Catholic Primary School



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Curriculum Statement 2019

Intent

In Nursery and Reception we follow the EYFS areas of learning. Our KS1 & 2 curriculum is built on the National Curriculum Programmes of study for each subject area. The National Curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens.

We are ambitious for all pupils including disadvantaged and SEND, irrespective of background or ability and believe they all have an entitlement to receive a broad and balanced curriculum, so that each pupil can see their achievement in whatever area of learning they can.

In planning our curriculum we take into account current research into the knowledge based curriculum and cognitive learning. We provide a wealth of experiences, so pupils can build upon a secure knowledge based curriculum sequentially across all subjects, enabling them to grow and develop personally and academically.

We will ensure that all children gain a wealth of experiences beyond learning facts in the classroom. We want our curriculum to inspire children to want to learn more, to provoke children's intellectual curiosity. Ofsted research indicates that a lack of a wide range of vocabulary is the biggest barrier to disadvantaged children in achieving.

We aim to address social disadvantage by placing vocabulary at the heart of our curriculum. We are consciously aware of gaps in pupils' vocabulary and strive, through our curriculum, to allow all children to become confident and fluent with an extensive range of powerful vocabulary.

Reading is an essential skill for learning across the school's curriculum offer and for lifelong learning. Reading is therefore given a very high priority throughout the school for each pupil.

We also recognise the importance of Mathematics as an academic discipline, but also a precondition for success across the curriculum.

Relationships within the school are very strong, between all members of St Mark's community, within and across groups of pupils, staff, parents and governors. We are aware that a number of our pupils benefit from the care, support and stability the whole school community gives them, so they are secure in their school environment to succeed in a variety of learning experiences.

Our aim is that St Mark's curriculum will lead to our pupils achieving well at secondary school and beyond, followed by further study or in the world of work, to become well informed and responsible, cultural citizens in the future, who will make a positive contribution to their community in the future.

Implementation

Each teacher is a leader for at least one subject, some teachers have three. We have developed a collaborative approach within St. Mark's to support each subject leader, through staff meetings and twilights to ensure all staff share ownership of our curriculum offer to provide the best knowledge and skills based curriculum provision possible for our pupils. Staff have attended a wide range of courses this year, to develop their subject knowledge and how to improve provision within school.

Subject leaders in core subjects and History, Geography are strong leaders and are effectively developing CPD for staff in knowledge development in collaboration within our teachers and Teaching Assistants. School Development Plans identified these subjects initially and once these improvements have been embedded, further subject areas will be addressed.

We have enhanced subject expertise, to supplement current staff strengths by employing specialist Computing, Music and Spanish teachers to deliver high quality lessons for pupils. They will not only enhance the learning experiences of our pupils, but develop our own staff expertise.

We have talented and dedicated teachers and TAs with a wide ranging breadth of knowledge and skills acquired over time. They are all totally committed to developing every pupil within St. Mark's to ensure pupils grow academically in terms of knowledge and skills acquired, but equally importantly in their wider development in terms of socially, morally, spiritually and culturally.

We are implementing a curriculum which is knowledge based and sequenced, as research has shown that knowledge frees up the brain's capacity for thinking and we learn new things by making connections with knowledge learnt and remembered previously.

Curriculum developments within school have endeavoured to address the following:

- choose relevant content which needs to be embedded in long term memory,
- consider what pupils actually remember from a lesson.
- avoid overloading the working memory (less is more)
- provide spaced repetition for 'overlearning'

Start & End tasks are being developed to be used at the beginning and end of each topic to assess pupils' prior knowledge. Currently, it is being used in Geography, History and Science across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They are currently being developed for all Foundation Subjects.

Start & End tasks differ across year groups, older children may have a quiz, with questions about the subject knowledge to be covered, for younger children it could be a group discussion of pupils' pre-knowledge, followed by notes from discussions. Assessing prior knowledge in this way allows both pupils and teachers to assess what knowledge pupils have gained and evidence measurable improvement.

Knowledge Planners are being developed for all topics, which are placed into exercise books after the Start & End task and before the teaching of each topic has begun. They have vocabulary specific to each topic. Knowledge Planners also include the learning focuses and knowledge for each lesson. As pupils are exposed to their whole learning before a topic begins; their intended learning outcomes can be reviewed and gains in subject knowledge can be recognised and celebrated.

Formative and Summative Assessments are used to check pupils' understanding and inform teaching.

All subjects are taught discretely, but links and common themes are planned for between subjects where relevant and meaningful. Some of our pupils have limited access to the wider locality and beyond, so topics are chosen to broaden their horizons and open their experiences to find out about knowledge of life in different times and places, experience creative and artistic skills and knowledge and have access to high quality rich experiences during their time at St. Mark's.

Curriculum overviews show topics to be covered in each year group. English and Maths are taught daily, Science, RE and PE are taught once or twice weekly, other subjects are taught in three half term blocks over the school year. Teachers continually review curriculum provision for each subject during staff meetings to ensure knowledge is sequenced and progressive within subjects, but also across subjects, where meaningful and relevant.

Reading is a vital skill for learning and life, so this is given the highest priority throughout the school beginning in Nursery, where we use the *Read Write Inc (RWI)* programme to get children started on their literacy. *RWI* is a method of learning centred around letter sounds and phonics, and we use it to aid children in their reading and writing.

Every child from Reception to Year 6 have a 1:1 reading session at least once a week with an adult in school, and a large number of children have two or three sessions weekly. Each child in Years 2-6 has a guided reading session each week, many children have two. Home reading books are sent home to consolidate and reinforce reading activities and highlight the importance of reading to both children and their parents.

Class reading books linked to Foundation Subject topics are being provided in each class to broaden children's literature and deepen subject knowledge within topics.

Talk 4 Writing was introduced in EYFS last year, as we are aware that a large number of our pupils need to develop their knowledge of stories and the related vocabulary and we are developing this into KS1.

Maths is a core subject, KS1 & 2 follow the White Rose scheme of work and it is vital that all pupils achieve well, to access curriculum content in Foundation Subjects. Links between Maths and subjects such as Science and Geography will be planned for.

Science

Pupils in KS2 have a separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics book, which they will use from Year 3-6. This will make sequencing and progression of knowledge and skills acquired over time more measurable. Each class also has a big book, which record work such as investigations and practicals completed by pupils.

Humanities

Each child will have a KS1 History and Geography book and they will have a further History and Geography book in KS2.

Work completed in other subjects is recorded in a variety of ways. Each class has two folders to document pupils' achievements:

- Science Practical book – a record of practical science investigations
- Learning Journal – photographs of group learning activities and pupil comments which may not be recorded in pupil books

In a caring Christian community together we love, learn, laugh and achieve.



Impact

Our aim is for the curriculum to extend beyond academic achievements and we highly value educating the whole child in preparation for life in the modern world. This will be evident when a St. Mark's child:

- has confidence and self- belief in their own ability to achieve
- has excellent attitudes to learning
- enjoys learning and is excited and inspired to learn new things
- is an independent learner
- can confidently recall key knowledge from current and previous areas of learning
- retains knowledge in their long term memory
- can confidently apply knowledge to their learning
- is confident using and applying high-level vocabulary
- is articulate and confident to talk about a wide range of topics
- is a well-rounded individual who understands the importance of Christian and British values
- shows respect for all and values difference and diversity
- demonstrates appreciation and wonder of the world they live in