



St. Mark's Catholic Primary School



Fir Avenue, Halewood,
Merseyside, L26 0XR

Headteacher
Miss S. Bradshaw

Tel: 0151 288 8910
Website: www.stmarkshalewood.org.uk

Curriculum Statement 2022

Intent

In Nursery and Reception we follow the EYFS areas of learning. Our KS1 and KS2 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. We believe they all have an entitlement to receive a broad and balanced curriculum, so that each pupil can achieve their personal best and make progress.

In planning our curriculum, we take into account current research surrounding the knowledge-based curriculum and cognitive learning. We provide a wealth of experiences, so pupils can build upon secure knowledge 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, provoking their intellectual curiosity. This will ensure children's vocabulary is improved through learning experiences and educational visits. Ofsted research indicates that a lack of a wide range of vocabulary is the biggest barrier to children's achievement.

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 Mathematics as an academic discipline, but also a precondition for success across the curriculum. We believe maths is essential to everyday life; critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for financial literacy and most forms of employment. A high-quality mathematics education therefore provides a foundation for understanding the world, the ability to reason mathematically, an appreciation of the beauty and power of mathematics, and a sense of enjoyment and curiosity about the subject.

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. Pupils feel secure and we instil confidence in them to enable them to succeed in a variety of learning experiences.

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

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





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Implementation

Each teacher is a leader for at least one subject, some teachers have several. 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 curriculum provision possible for our pupils. Staff attend a wide range of courses, to develop their subject knowledge and to understand how to improve provision within school.

Subject leaders are developing into strong leaders and are effective in identifying Continued Professional Development for all staff. School Development Plans, subject action plans and Performance Management are all linked to curriculum developments.

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

We have talented and dedicated teachers and TAs with a 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 social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. We take every opportunity for pupils to continue their learning outside of the classroom. We enhance our provision with educational visits and / or visitors to school where possible.

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 prior learning.

Curriculum developments within school have endeavoured to address the following:

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

Curriculum overviews show topics to be covered for each year group. English and Maths are taught daily. Science, PE, Computing, Spanish (KS2), RS(H)E / PSMHE and Music are taught weekly and other subjects are taught in three half term blocks. RE is taught following the Come and See scheme of work which equates to 10% of our curriculum time.

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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. We aim to 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.

A range of formative and summative assessments are used to check pupils' understanding and to inform teaching. Start & End tasks are being used at the beginning and end of each topic to assess pupils' prior knowledge in Geography, History and Science across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. 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 progress.

Reading is a vital skill for learning and life, this is given the highest priority throughout the school beginning in Nursery with letters and sounds. We use the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme to get children started on their early phonics and literacy journey. 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 enjoys guided reading sessions each week. 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 readers are shared daily to promote reading for enjoyment and to allow teachers to model expression and intonation. Class reading books linked to Foundation Subject topics provide an opportunity to broaden children's literature and deepen subject knowledge within topics.

Maths is a core subject. Reception, KS1 and KS2 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 are planned for and allow pupils to apply their learning in other subjects. As a school, we aim to inspire a real love for maths whilst supporting our pupils to become fluent, to reason mathematically and to approach problem solving with confidence and resilience.

Pupil work books are passed up year on year to show progress over time and to celebrate achievements. Work can be recorded in a variety of ways including:

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

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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:

- is a well-rounded individual who understands the importance of Christian and British values
- 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
- shows respect for all and values difference and diversity
- demonstrates appreciation and wonder of the world they live in

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