



St Mary's C of E Primary School

Teaching and Learning Policy – Autumn 2017

Introduction

At St Mary's School 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. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

School Mission Statement

'Learning for Life'

Aims and objectives

Through the concept of St Mary's Learner we aim to help pupils to develop the behaviour, attitudes and skills that they need in order to learn effectively. We have agreed a set of expectations in every year group and we encourage pupils to work towards meeting these expectations both at home and at school.

St Mary's learner supports our school Christian Values. These values are taught across the curriculum and play a vital role in developing our pupils into positive young learners. As 'St Mary's Learners', we try to foster good behaviour for learning, which means developing the following attitudes towards learning:

- Always ready to learn.
- Enthusiastic, willing to take part and speak up.
- A risk taker – always confident to have a go.
- Happy to try and try again.
- Not afraid to learn from mistakes.
- Able to learn well from others.
- Able to learn well on their own.
- Reflective – able to think and talk about their learning.

Through our teaching we aim to provide an education which:

- Enables children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring, independent and reflective learners.
- Challenges pupils of all abilities.
- Encourages children to ask questions.
- Fosters children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people.
- Develops children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others.
- Shows respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people.
- Enables children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community.
- Enables children to grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

Effective teaching and learning

Personalised and independent learning is at the heart of effective teaching and learning. At St Mary's, we recognise the need to develop strategies that will allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them so that they may fulfil their potential. Many learning opportunities are made available to the children that take account of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles.

Such opportunities include:

- Developing effective 'Pupil Talk'.



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- Philosophical thinking.
- Investigation and problem solving.
- Research and finding out.
- Group work.
- Paired work.
- Independent work.
- Whole-class work.
- Asking and answering questions.
- Use of Computing and Technology.
- A range of experiences – fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest.
- Visitors.
- Creative activities.
- Debates, role-plays and oral presentations.
- Designing and making things.
- Participation in athletic or physical activity.
- Outside classroom / environment.

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.

Effective teaching and learning is characterised by the nine features of Personalised Learning:

- High quality teaching and learning.
- Target setting and tracking.
- Focused assessment.
- Intervention.
- Pupil grouping.
- The learning environment.
- Curriculum organisation.
- The extended curriculum.
- Supporting children's wider needs.

'Quality first' teaching and learning

At St Mary's we aim to achieve this by having:

- A creative 'skills' based curriculum that inspires all pupils.
- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives and differentiated success criteria and activities.
- Lessons which provide challenge for all pupils.
- Quality resources that help all pupils to meet their success criteria and make rapid progress during lessons.
- 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.



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- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently.
- Praise and encouragement to motivate pupils further.
- A high level of behaviour management in classrooms and during lessons.
- Extra intervention for pupils who need to make more rapid progress.

Target setting and tracking in core and foundation subjects

- Individual pupils' progress is tracked, together with that of cohorts and specific groups throughout the school. We use a range of performance measures including teacher assessment (using National Curriculum 'End of Year Group Expectations') and test results. Strengths and areas for development are identified to inform planning and to implement intervention programmes as appropriate. Data is collected on a regular basis and is shared with the staff, parents and pupils.
- Pupil progress is managed through whole-school monitoring using gap analysis.
- Year group, class and individual progress is discussed at Pupil Progress Meetings.
- Pupil progress is also discussed regularly at SLT meetings to identify strengths / weaknesses in teaching performance and / or identify CPD requirements.
- Pupil voice is central to target setting and the review of performance and target setting.
- Parents / carers receive regular updates on their child's progress so that they can provide support / encouragement as appropriate.
- Senior curriculum leaders monitor pupil progress through regular lesson observations, pupil interviews, book and planning scrutiny.

Focused assessment

Secure knowledge of each pupil's current progress is a core element of teaching and learning at St Mary's. 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. Summative assessment opportunities are detailed in the assessment policy.

Fundamental to our formative assessment procedures is Assessment for Learning (AfL). A range of AfL strategies are used in the classroom:

- Learning objectives are made explicit and shared with the pupils.
- Differentiated Success Criteria are agreed by the pupils and teacher.
- Self and peer assessment is used against their individual Success Criteria.
- Pupils are engaged in their learning and receive immediate feedback on their progress.
- A range of questioning techniques are used using strategies such as individual whiteboards, number fans, lollisticks etc.
- A range of AFL strategies eg Jump the fence; walk the line; tickled pink and green for growth etc.
- Pupil talk is encouraged through the use of learning or 'talk' partners.
- Work is regularly marked and provides useful feedback and next steps. Pupils are encouraged to respond to this feedback by initialling comments; answering any questions the teacher has posed or making corrections.

We hold regular moderating sessions to ensure consistency of Teacher assessment across classes and year groups. We also attend moderating meetings for Maths and Literacy with our local schools network.



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Intervention

It is expected that the great majority of pupils at St Mary's will make at least the expected rate of progress through first quality, class based teaching. However, for some pupils this approach may not be sufficient and these pupils, at various stages, may benefit from additional small group or 1:1 intervention programmes to enable them to make the progress required to achieve their full potential.

Central to the effective planning of an intervention programme is the knowledge the teacher has of a particular pupil or groups of pupils. When considering pupils for intervention, a wide range of assessment evidence is drawn upon to support judgements made about pupil progress. (cf SEN Policy)

Pupil Grouping

All classes are mixed ability apart from Year 6, whom are set for Maths and Literacy and Year 5 who are set for Maths. In order to meet the learning objectives and learning needs and provide appropriate challenge and support for all pupils, teachers use a range of grouping options across the year group and within their classes.

- Ability groups across the class or year group (maths, literacy).
- Skills based grouping (guided reading / writing).
- Paired work (learning partners) to facilitate discussion.
- Individual work.
- Pupil choice.
- Whole class groups.

Currently, the school employs additional teachers to teach a targeted group for Maths and Literacy, one in Year 4 and one in Year 6 which is funded through Pupil Premium.

The Learning Environment

Our classrooms 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, for example, 'learning walls', are used to engage pupils and encourage self-help strategies. Vocab displays are used to encourage the use of a high level of vocab across the Curriculum. Celebration displays, for example 'Star Writer' are used to model expectations and celebrate success in the classroom.

All classrooms are extremely well resourced facilitating a wide range of different teaching and learning activities.

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

Creative use of internal space has provided areas for small group intervention work and increasingly, external spaces are being used to provide the 'outdoor classroom'.

Curriculum Organisation

We use the new National Curriculum to guide our teaching. We write medium term plans, using year group objectives and expectations for each subject, to ensure that all of the correct skills are being taught in each year group and that there is good progression of skills across the whole school. Our medium term plans set out the aims and objectives and detail what is to be taught in each year group. Our medium and short term lesson plans contain detailed information about the skills being taught, teaching activities and tasks to be



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set, differentiated success criteria, the resources needed, and the type of assessment to be used. In personalising the curriculum, we aim to find appropriate challenges for pupils and address their particular needs 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 gifted and talented.
- Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Learners with English as an additional language.
- Girls and boys.
- Looked after children.
- Learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- Children from Forces families.

The Extended Curriculum

Helping pupils to discover and / or develop new interests is essential to personalised learning at St Mary's. During the school year a range of activities are organised to enhance the curriculum:

- Residential visits.
- Clubs.
- Day visits.
- Visitors.
- Workshops.

This approach extends beyond school hours. The school also hosts a number of after school clubs.

Supporting children's wider needs

Schools that are able to identify barriers to learning beyond the classroom and address them are in a strong position to provide personalised learning for individual pupils. At St Mary's, we aim to establish good relationships with all our families and to provide a climate open to dialogue.

Where additional support from other agencies is required, a 'team around the family' approach may be needed. We identify barriers to learning and as a result, TAF meetings, involving a range of multi-agency professionals, are set up by the SENCO and a Lead Professional.

The role of governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by helping to allocate resources effectively.
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises promote successful teaching and learning.
- Ensure that high quality staff are appointed.
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment through link visits to the school and in consultation with subject leaders.
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching and learning.



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- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include reports from curriculum group leaders, SENCO, Senior Leaders and the termly headteacher's report to governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The role of the school

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Holding curriculum evenings to explain our school strategies for teaching the National Curriculum.
- Sending information to parents at the start of each term in which we outline the curriculum that the children will be studying during that term at school.
- Sending annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further.
- Explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework.
- Holding family consultations which provide an opportunity to discuss each child's learning with both the child and their parents / carers.
- Holding 'open classrooms' at the beginning of the year.
- Holding 'exhibition afternoons' after each Curriculum week, to share pupils work.

The role of Parents

We believe that parents, as their child's primary educator, have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. Parents have a responsibility to:

- Encourage their child to be a good St Mary's Learner by developing good behaviour and attitudes for learning, both at home and school.
- Ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible.
- Ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit.
- Ensure that their child is supported with homework activities which consolidate learning.
- Inform us of their child's interests and capabilities.
- Do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school.
- Inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour at school.
- Promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.
- Fulfil the requirements set out in the home / school agreement.

The role of the child

We believe that the child has a responsibility to:

- Participate as fully as possible in the learning opportunities and help other children to do the same
- Work hard and try his / her best.
- Behave appropriately in school according to the school's behaviour code.
- Be polite and helpful to other pupils and adults in school.
- Come to school regularly and be on time.
- Talk at home about what he / she has learnt at school.
- Take good care of the school environment.
- Do the homework regularly and bring it back to school.
- Wear the correct school uniform.



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- Tell the teacher or an adult at home if he / she finds the work difficult.

Monitoring and review

All our teachers reflect on their strengths / areas for development and their professional development needs are planned for accordingly. We provide internal and external guidance to support our teachers in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding so that they can continually improve their practice.

We are aware of the need to review the school teaching and learning policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

Policy written by: Kate Chenery (Deputy Headteacher)

Next review due: Autumn 2017