



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Teaching & Learning Policy

2014

Introduction

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the notion that learning should be rewarding and an enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun!

Our mission statement is "My commandment is this - Love one another just as I love you" John 15:12 and we believe that the Gospel Values will be evident throughout our daily school life. These will enable us to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives.

We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

St. Mary's staff have all contributed to this policy. They are proud of the achievements they have made over the past 12 months and their continual hard work ensures that children at St. Mary's receive a rich and fulfilling learning experience.

The Senior Leadership Team sets priorities and targets for improvement at whole school level based on evidence gained from monitoring procedures. They track progress made on the School Improvement Plan. Monitoring and evaluation principally takes place through reviews and classroom observations of teaching and learning.

Teaching

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary school we believe that the best teaching should involve:

- Positive relationships between pupils and all staff
- Tasks that appeal to different learning styles
- Differentiation that meets the varying needs of the children and includes an appropriate level of challenge
- Lessons that have pace and purpose
- Good subject knowledge
- Tasks that match children's interest level
- Informed planning developed with year group partners
- Providing opportunities to work with organisations and individuals outside the school
- A team approach which uses all adults effectively to enhance the curriculum
- A sense of humour
- High quality consistent role modelling by all

Learning

We believe that the best learning takes place when:

- Children enjoy their learning
- Children have a good relationship with their teacher
- Children feel safe and secure
- Learning intentions are shared and are clearly understood by the children
- Children challenge their own and others thinking through effective questioning
- It is enjoyable
- Children are aware of their targets, their next steps and how they can achieve them.
- There is time to reflect and develop independence in learning
- There are opportunities for whole class work, group work, collaborative learning, paired work, and independent work

Environment For Learning

We believe that for teaching to be really effective:

- The environment will be well organised and as interactive as possible, encouraging independence and enabling learning to take place
- The environment will contain well-chosen and appropriate resources
- The environment will be matched to ability and reflect progressive learning
- The environment should be used to continually raise expectations e.g. Targets, Charters, Learning Intentions displayed, working walls.
- Children's work should be valued and displayed attractively
- There should be a range of displays; some for information, some for celebration, some as tools for learning
- Resources should be labelled and accessible
- There should be inclusive classrooms with multi-cultural content, gender role models and access for pupil ownership e.g. multicultural stories, different visitors and visits arranged, children responsible for classroom resources
- The environment will have a RE Focal area and display
- There will be opportunities for every member of our community to experience prayer, worship and reflection

Planning

Good planning will:

- Include clear learning intentions
- Create opportunities for Cross-curricular learning
- Build on assessment of prior learning
- Have relevant local and global opportunities included
- Indicate how Teaching Assistants will support
- Include AFL participation and progression and indicate guided group work
- Be flexible, catering for all abilities and interests
- Reflect different teaching and learning styles
- Be annotated to show where changes have been made

Behaviour & Attitudes

For teaching to be good:

- Teachers and pupils will have high expectations of behaviour
- There must be positive relationships and mutual respect within the whole school – building on the Gospel Values
- Children should be encouraged to take ownership of their behaviour
- Children are actively involved in developing rights and responsibilities and understand what choices and consequences are in place
- The student voice will be encouraged to reflect on behaviours and attitudes
- Prayer will be a fundamental and core part of school life, giving opportunities to develop spirituality in a variety of ways

The Catholic School as a Teaching and Learning Community

The school as a Catholic community is called to embrace the key components of Christian life. At St. Mary's we ensure there is:

- Welcome – our whole school is welcoming to all members of the school community
- Worship – all prayer and liturgy is a meaningful part of our everyday life in school
- Welfare – children are supported in their learning, shown compassion when their behaviour is challenging and cared for when they are unhappy or in need
- Witness – we share our values and faith which stem from a shared sense of teaching of the Gospel
- Word – in every subject, every lesson, positive values and attitudes are communicated

Assessment for Learning

We believe that the best learning takes place when:

- Teachers know their children's abilities
- It builds on previous knowledge and is part of effective planning
- Children clearly understand the learning intention
- Opportunities are created for peer and self assessment
- Teachers focus on the children giving effective feedback and develop their skills so they know how to improve
- Marking is consistent and appropriate for the ability of the children
- Time is allowed for children to read and respond to targets

Relationships

For learning to be successful our relationships will need to:

- Be safe and positive
- Professional with no favouritism
- Be non-judgemental
- Encourage others to have a go and take risks
- Allow others to make mistakes

Teaching Assistants

For Teaching Assistants to be deployed effectively they will:

- Have a good understanding of planning, intentions & the social and emotional needs of children
- Be professional and work as part of a team
- Set a good example and model behaviour
- Understand the ways in which children can learn
- Challenge and support children

ICT

ICT helps deliver positive outcomes by;

- Motivating all learners
- Creating cross curricular opportunities
- Actively encouraging children to partake in their learning
- Appealing to visual learners
- Bringing the local and global community into the classroom
- Allowing children to practise skills
- Harnessing children's interests
- Enabling skills to be transferred into the real world

Role of Governors

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

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Ensure that the school buildings and premises are effective in supporting successful teaching and learning
- Monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations
- Monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment
- Ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching
- Monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning policies through the school self-review processes. These include the Headteacher's reports to governors and the work of the curriculum and school improvement committees.

The Role of the School in Supporting Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping their children to learn. We work hard to inform and support parents in how they can help further their children's learning and confidence at school.

We do all we can to communicate with parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Sending information to parents at the start of each term
- Holding Parent consultations
- Sending annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- Sending frequent newsletters
- Providing opportunities to liaise with outside agencies that are working with individuals
- Sending regular homework
- Meeting with parents of SEND children to review progress and Set new objectives
- Meeting or contacting parents upon request in addition to parent consultation meetings and at a mutually convenient time.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would like parents to:

- 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
- 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
- Ensure the school No Smoking Policy is observed
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time
- Checking reading folders, homework, diaries for letters and information from school
- Volunteer for school trips when needed
- Volunteer to share their own knowledge and expertise from their own profession

Date: September 2014

Review Date: September 2016