

# ST MONICA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

**"Strive to succeed in the presence of God"**

**Together** as a Catholic community **Everyone** – children, parents, staff and parish, **Achieves** in their own unique way and strives to be **More** like Jesus

## INTRODUCTION

The school's principal aim is to fulfil the potential of each individual child; academically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically. The school meets the statutory requirements of the national curriculum and guidance from the Diocese for the teaching of Religious Education. The class teachers plan a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which develops each individual child according to their age and ability.

## OUR SCHOOL VALUES

We consider our main task to be that of sharing our faith in Christ. The message of the Gospels permeates every aspect of school life.

We are inspired by the lives of Saints and have four House Saints which underpin our Catholic school values.

St Francis of Assisi is the Patron Saint of the Environment and through his example, we aim to teach the children about their place in the world and themes around conversation and climate change.

St John Baptist de la Salle is the Patron Saint of Teachers. He was founder of schools for the poor and strongly believed that children should not only have an excellent academic education but also one which focused on Gospel values and civility. Through his example we strive to provide an education which is fully inclusive of all children.

St Cecelia is Patron Saint of music and she inspires us to foster a love of music and develop our creativity.

St Theresa of Lisieux is also known as "St Theresa of the little ways". She advocated doing small things with great love. She stated, no one alone can solve world peace but as individuals we can do small things which collectively make a huge difference towards achieving a peaceful world. St Theresa inspires us to care for the emotional health of each individual in the school.

Using the example of these leaders from Jesus, through to the Saints we strive to instil a sense of leadership into each child. They learn responsibility and independence and learn over time that they are all unique with a range of gifts and talents. Children's achievements are celebrated regularly through the school newsletters, school website, displays in classrooms and shared areas, communication with parents/carers and in the weekly awards assemblies.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The whole school follows units which have been produced by Margaret Carswell to link with the Liturgical Year and have been written to complement the 3 year cycle of readings. This scheme concentrates on the development of our Catholic faith as an academic subject, linking aspects that are taught, to scripture, traditions of the church, God in the world around us and our personal experiences. It also includes the teaching of two other faiths, Judaism and Islam as well as a range of festivals from other faiths. 10% of the weekly taught curriculum is allocated to Religious Education. We work closely with St Monica's Parish and strive to make links with other religious traditions. Home, school and parish work together as no one group can easily succeed alone.

## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

In Reception class, the children also follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum. There are seven areas of learning. The three Prime Areas are: Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. The four Specific Areas are: Literacy, Mathematical Development, Expressive Art and Design and Understanding the World. At the end of the Foundation

Stage year the children are assessed against each area and judged to be at 'working towards expected levels' or 'meeting expected levels'.

All year groups follow the statutory national curriculum for all subjects ie English, Maths, Science, Art & Design, Citizenship, Computing, Design & Technology, Geography, History, a modern foreign language (French in Key Stage 2), Music and Physical Education. A programme of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is also delivered across the school as well as the statutory RSE curriculum.

## **INTENT**

Our Curriculum, through our values aims to:

- Equip the children with the knowledge, skills & values they need to succeed locally, nationally & globally
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, to enable them to achieve their full potential and make progress in their learning
- Provide a rich 'cultural capital' and address social disadvantage
- Promote the importance of spoken language in pupils' development – linguistically, cognitively and socially and broaden children's vocabulary
- Build up children's confidence and motivation to learn through the use of a range of learning and teaching styles
- Demand high standards and embed key skills of literacy and numeracy
- Provide opportunities to revisit learning to aid long term memory and apply knowledge and learning in practical ways
- Make learning more meaningful, by putting it into context
- Listen to pupil voice and involve pupils in planning and decision making
- Provide a creative approach to planning and delivery that includes and goes beyond that of the National Curriculum and EYFS Curriculum
- Provide enrichment opportunities where learning and teaching can take place beyond the classroom
- Promote British Values and pupils' good behaviour and safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and encourage children to become more active citizens within the school community and beyond
- Prepare children for the next stage of their education.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The school promotes the development of theme based approaches whilst maintaining subject disciplines. This allows the children to make meaningful connections and apply knowledge in their learning across a range of subjects, in order to enrich their educational experiences.

We have a specialist music teacher and pride ourselves on the musical outcomes achieved by the children in a range of musical instruments as well as singing. The specialist teacher works closely with class teachers as well as peripatetic teachers to make links with curriculum topics being studied.

We are fortunate to have a range of places for the children to learn: classrooms, two halls, an ICT suite, an amphitheatre, a forest. The spaces can be used flexibly to enhance teaching and learning.

Organisation of learning is flexible and is designed around the subject being taught and the needs of the children. There is a sharp and shared understanding on pedagogy and teachers work within the framework of school policies. This is monitored rigorously by middle and senior leaders to ensure high quality provision and ambitious outcomes are met.

Careful curriculum mapping ensures that children build upon prior learning and revisit and use knowledge to embed it in long-term memory. Each topic begins with an opportunity for recalling prior knowledge and an overview of the main subject discipline. Planning ensures that children are exposed to the best of what has been thought, said and done. We study a wide range of influential individuals and their achievements and the children are increasingly made aware of possible career opportunities following the study of individual subject disciplines.

Our approach to curriculum and pedagogy ensures that all children have equal access to the curriculum. Teachers are skilled in modifying the curriculum and approaches to learning to ensure all children with identified additional needs achieve highly. We strive to find all children's specific gifts and talents and do all we can to celebrate their achievements.

## **IMPACT**

Teachers and practitioners make full use of formative and summative assessment, carefully checking pupils' understanding of knowledge taught and their ability to apply it before moving on. The goal is for the majority of pupils to have sustained mastery of the curriculum content and we monitor carefully to ensure pupils are on track to reach at least age related expectations.

All children are continually assessed from one lesson to the next, enabling the teacher to plan lessons which match the children's ability. Teachers provide timely feedback to the children to check on understanding and ensure progress is made. They are continually assessing children's learning against the assessment statements and unit quizzes. Time for retrieval tasks is built in to enable teachers to assess how well the children have retained information.

In Years 1-6 we assess children in reading, writing and maths against the Age Related Expectations for each year group, from the statutory curriculum. The PM Benchmarking kit continues to be used forensically to assess reading. STAR assessments are used for reading and maths from Years 2-6 and "No more marking" is used to assess writing from Years 1-6. There are termly pupil progress meetings with the Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher for Curriculum, Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, class staff and Phase Leader to monitor and discuss the progress being made by all the children in the school.

A statutory Baseline Assessment of children entering school in Reception class is completed by the end of their first half term in School (October). A statutory phonics screening is completed towards the end of Year 1 and repeated in Year 2 for those children who do not pass. At the end of Year 2 (Key Stage 1) and Year 6 (Key Stage 2) there are statutory tests known as Standard Assessment Tasks/Tests (SATs). Schools must report the results of these SATs to the Local Authority and the results of the KS2 SATS are published.

There are two formal meetings for parents during the year in the Autumn and Spring terms. Every child receives an end of year report towards the end of the Summer term. All parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's report with the class teacher. At a parent's request and by appointment, teachers will discuss the progress of a child at any additional time during the year. The Phase and Senior Leaders also available by appointment, to discuss any problem or anxiety.

## **CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT**

We consider that enrichment activities across the curriculum contribute an important part of our pupils' enjoyment and achievement. We offer a varied range of activities that include all curriculum subjects.

To further enhance the curriculum, we plan additional theme weeks and special whole school event days. These allow for further in-depth development of knowledge, concepts and understanding across all subjects. Link to community and current affairs are made and we provide further in-depth coverage of subjects such as PSHE, RE, PE, History, Art and STEM.

School visits or visitors of an educational nature are arranged during the school year for every year group. These are seen as an exciting part of the curriculum, stimulating the children's interests and supporting the work carried out in the classroom. See separate 'School Visits Policy'.

We seek to understand and recognise the unique gifts and talents of each child. Where children demonstrate gifts, talents or interests in a particular subject area, we seek to extend learning opportunities. In addition, the school signposts clubs or opportunities outside of school.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents are children's first educators and we seek to actively include them in the school's curriculum. An overview of each year group's curriculum is posted on the school website. More detailed information about

what children learn is sent to parents at the beginning of every half term via a "Curriculum Newsletter". Additional information is contained in the weekly letters from the Headteacher. From the outset, parental communication is usually encouraged through the home reading scheme which involves a regular dialogue between parents and teachers. Parents are also encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher through email.

We believe in a reasonable amount of regular home learning (outlined in the school's Homework Policy) and use a digital education programme (Google Classroom/Tapestry) for this purpose. Parents are strongly encouraged to become involved in the work their child has been set. Parents are also invited to join their children for class assemblies as well as religious worship.

October 2022

This Policy is reviewed annually by the Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body.