

Teaching and Learning Policy

Mission Statement

To follow in Jesus' footsteps, caring for each other when we work, play and pray.

Introduction

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we recognise that all children have rights as outlined in the UN Convention. As duty bearers, we have the responsibility to respect these rights and are committed to supporting our children through their education and to ensure that they are rights-holders. Our children have the right to a good quality education (Article 28), the opportunity to use education to develop talents and abilities (Article 29) and the right to special education (Article 23). At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary 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; it should be fun. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives.

Impact

We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives. We are committed to promoting resilience amongst our pupils and developing their independent learning skills. The school's Catholic ethos strives to create a learning environment where every child is encouraged and enabled to develop to their full and unique potential as human beings, made in the image and likeness of God. We believe that people learn best in different ways. At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- Enable children to become confident, resourceful, resilient, enquiring and independent learners;
- Foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- Develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- Show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- Enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this Catholic community;
- Help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

The Learning Environment

We acknowledge that people learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to experience opportunities that best facilitate them to learn. In support of our aims, we recognise that children need a consistent school approach:

- to pursue challenging, realistic and achievable targets based on needs and ability
- to feel happy and secure within a supportive, stimulating and constructive environment
- to develop their sense of awe and wonder within the learning process
- to have their achievements recognised
- to be well-motivated
- to experiment and not fear failure

- to be able to discuss their work with adults and other children
- to have access to quality resources and gain independence to choose resources
- to be encouraged to be curious and ask questions
- to receive constructive feedback from their work
- to have the confidence to evaluate their own work
- to develop skills of self-assessment and peer-assessment
- to have ownership of their learning
- to know how they can move their learning forward through shared visions.
- to learn through a variety of different learning styles – visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop their own independence; to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn and to reflect on what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

Support for Learning

In order for children to become independent learners, we need to involve them in the understanding of the learning process and how we are providing them with what they need to learn. Children must be involved in the review of their own progress: self-evaluation, recording achievements and target setting. Teachers must also be encouraged to listen to the pupil voice, learning from pupils' comments about how they learn best. Whether by teacher, classroom supporter, other pupils, through systems in school and in the classroom or by the support of parents/carers at home (including parent support groups and training programmes), the child should be helped to develop a holistic understanding of the relationship between learning and teaching. It is vital that learning in and out of school is seen as a coherent whole. Parents are partners in the learning process and so have a crucial role to play

Inclusion

St Joseph's is an inclusive school and is guided by the Gospel values that are expressed in our school's aims and Local Governing Body's ethos statement. These aims promote inclusive education in its widest sense in all areas of school life.

Children with Special Needs

It is recognised that the majority of children will need extra support at some time during the learning process. St Joseph's School has a commitment to ensuring that all children have fair and equal access to the curriculum (see inclusion statement above) means that each child will be monitored and assessed in order to recognise and establish the level of support required and the best method of support. Within class, teachers will take into account pupil abilities and needs when planning lessons and activities, noting any targets set in Pupil Profiles. Additional learning support will be targeted to those requiring it as identified through formal and informal assessment and discussion with teacher, pupil and parents. The SEND coordinator will oversee the provision and liaise with class teachers to ensure that it will complement and reinforce the work of the class and provide a framework of support for teacher, pupil and parent. Comprehensive details of SEND provision can be found in the SEND Policy.

Children with Marked Aptitudes

At St Joseph's, we recognise that each pupil and teacher is a unique human created in God's own likeness, each with his or her own special gifts and abilities. Within lessons, we aim to provide opportunities for pupils to use and develop these gifts and abilities further. Some pupils can be identified as having marked aptitudes and, in line with the school's inclusive ethos, the needs of these pupils also need to be addressed and supported through the planning of appropriate activities to provide opportunities for children to demonstrate greater depth within a subject. This may be through

cross curricular links to other subjects or through using prior knowledge and skills independently, for example.

The Teaching Environment

All teachers at St Joseph's are committed to school improvement and this requires us to recognise the need for examining our classroom practice, being able to articulate our skills and improve our teaching by design rather than by trial and error and by using a repertoire of teaching styles appropriate to meet particular needs. The organisational strategies that can be applied will vary depending upon the work in progress or the tasks to be covered.

Teaching Strategies

- whole class teaching
- group work teaching with children of comparable ability
- friendship groups
- teacher directed mixed ability groups
- interest groups
- groups of pupils with the same preferred learning style
- peer support groups
- paired work teaching
- individual teaching

Any of these can be successful, either taken in isolation or by varying the strategies throughout a lesson or session.

Teaching Techniques

At St Joseph's we have a creative approach to teaching and learning. All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities, and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:

- the teaching should build on previous learning;
- it should give pupils the 'big picture' of the lesson;
- the teacher should explain what the children are learning about;
- the lesson should be presented in a range of styles;
- it should allow opportunities for the pupils to build up their own understanding through various activities;
- it should allow opportunities for the children to review what has been learnt;
- it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the children, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies;
- the teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be.

The Classroom Environment

In order to achieve our aims, it is necessary to consider:

- the quality of the environment, effective use of space, resources, time and people.

The beginning of each term is a time to instruct pupils in classroom organisation, behaviour in class and around the school. Expectations need to be reinforced at frequent intervals and all staff are expected to be responsible for whole school involvement, not just their class. Keeping systems on track requires whole school ownership. School rules are displayed in appropriate places around the school. These will need constant reinforcement during the year. We must expect the standards to be

met by everyone and anyone failing to achieve them must be given the opportunity to try again. Classroom rules are displayed in an age-appropriate way and address, not only the organisational aspects, but set out clear guidance for fairness and respect for others:

- Listening attentively and looking at the listener;
- Speaking clearly so that everyone can hear;
- Keeping hands and feet to oneself at all times;
- Encouraging each other etc...

The House Point and Gifts from God Assembly systems should be used as a reward for those pupils who are making efforts to be self-disciplined and courteous. The School's Mission Statement should be prominently displayed and used to reinforce good behaviour. Within the Gifts from God Assembly each term, a number of children will receive a Virtues award if they have demonstrated consistently the Virtues that have been a key focus that half term. A Pupil of The Month award is also given to those who have shown exceptional behaviour and attitude towards their learning.

Display of Pupils' Work

The display of pupils' work serves to:

- impart information;
- acknowledge effort and celebrate achievement;
- arouse curiosity and stimulate activity;
- set standards of quality and raising expectations;
- visually convey something of the ethos of the school to visitors.

Classroom displays should include all areas of the curriculum across the year but Mathematics, English and Religious Education should consistently feature in order to emphasise the high profile of these subjects. There should also be displays of accelerated learning tools. Each classroom should contain:

- well-resourced and attractively displayed book area(s)
- writing areas (including word banks or similar)
- mathematics area/ display
- Prayer area
- Foundation subject areas with relevant and tidy resources.

The management of these areas as resource bases, as well as opportunities to display pupils' work, is crucial to the promotion of pupil independence. Working surfaces should be tidy and well managed, resources should be accessible and clearing away should be planned into the activity. Every aspect of the school should transmit its values, standards and attitudes and should establish the right environment for the child to succeed. Displays can provide foci for different aspects of learning which in turn can form the basis for thought, speech and expression through a variety of media. Such results do not come easily: the foci and presentation of work needs considerable thought from the planning stage, and discussion with colleagues and pupils in order to share the vision and objectives should be part of the process.

Learning beyond the classroom

At St. Joseph's, we believe learning is not confined to the classroom or curriculum hours. We aim to provide a range of opportunities to develop pupils' talents and self-esteem e.g. school council, office assistants, peer mediators, classroom monitors, competitions etc. We also provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities, e.g. peripatetic music provision, sports' clubs, activity and interest clubs,

lunchtime play activities, visitors to school and off-site visits including residential experiences. By working in a range of environments, undertaking varied tasks and working with different people, pupils will be encouraged to develop life-skills, develop existing skills further and acquire new knowledge and skills.

Effective teaching and learning

All teachers strive to meet and exceed the expectations within the National Teacher standards. When we are teaching, we focus on motivating all the children, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum skills sheets to guide our teaching. These sets out the aims and objectives for each subject, and the curriculum maps provide details about what is to be taught to each year group.

Teachers make on-going assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. Our prime focus is to develop further the subject knowledge and skills of all our children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Pupil Profiles. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, and the way in which we assess the children's work.

Each of our teachers makes a special effort to establish good working relationships with all of the children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All staff follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct, and we expect all children to comply with the rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave, we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our policy on behaviour.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children perform are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited where possible, risk assessments are completed, and appropriate permissions are obtained. We inform parents or carers, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.

We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. Sometimes, they work with individual children, and sometimes they work with small groups.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly, so that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and of both fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to English and maths. We also use displays as learning prompts for the children. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and

that an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources, which results in high-quality work by the children.

All of our teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, and plan their professional development accordingly. We do all we can to support our teachers in developing their skills, so that they can continually improve their practice.

We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

The role of the Local Governing Body

Our Local Governing Body determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to 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 used optimally to support teaching and learning;
- check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
- seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good-quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, the Principal's report to Local Governing Body, and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff.

The role of parents and carers

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

- by holding parents' evenings
- by sending information to parents and carers, at the start of each term, which outlines the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- by sending parents and carers termly reports in which we explain the progress made by each child, and indicate how the child can improve further;
- by explaining to parents and carers how they can support their children with homework, and suggesting, for example, regular shared reading with very young children, and support for older children with their projects and investigative work;
- by holding various workshops / curriculum presentations throughout the year to invite parents in to work with their child during a lesson.

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

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- to support learning at home and the promotion of reading, homework and extra learning opportunities; to fulfil the requirements set out in the home-school agreement.

Monitoring and review

We are aware of the need to monitor the school's teaching and learning policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum,

developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years or earlier if necessary.

The Schools within the St John Paul II MAC British Values Statement

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to serving our community and local area, in doing so we reinforce British values, which are taught in line with Gospel values.

Democracy

Democratic values are an explicit part of the ethos at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. All adults listen to the views of the pupils and value their opinions. Pupils have further opportunity to have their voices heard through our School Council and Pupil Voice interviews, etc.

The Rule of Law

The importance of laws and rules are consistently reinforced in the classroom, as well as through school assemblies. Pupils are taught to understand the need for laws - that they are there for individual protection, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken. Pupils follow a positive behaviour policy and clearly understand the rewards and sanctions that are used.

Individual Liberty

Pupils are encouraged to be independent learners, constantly making choices, within a safe and supportive environment. Developing their self-esteem and self-confidence is very important. Pupils are encouraged to understand their personal freedoms and are taught how to use these rights to best effect. All pupils are keen to support charities, whether local, national or global. They are taught consideration for others through our Religious Education curriculum and PSHE lessons in particular as well as through the Catholic Life of our school.

Mutual Respect

Our ethos and behaviour policies are based on Gospel values, with the important commandment being, 'Love one another as I have loved you'. Assemblies constantly promote respect for others and the importance of good manners. All pupils are taught the importance of self-respect, honest and open communication with others and fair play. Pupils work collaboratively and value others' opinions.

Tolerance of those of Different Faiths and Beliefs

As a Catholic worshipping community, pupils are reminded of their place in a culturally diverse society. This is achieved through our Religious Education curriculum and the spiritual life of the school. Assemblies and class work promote the diversity of society and the right for each person to be respected and valued equally regardless of ability, gender, faith, heritage or race. Visits to different places of worship and teaching of other faiths and cultures underpin this teaching.

Extremism and radicalisation

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, including:

- feeling alienated or alone;
- seeking a sense of identity or individuality;
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression;
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause;
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs.

Signs of radicalisation

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive;
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified;
- viewing violent extremist material online;
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material.

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a Notice of Concern form, and refer the matter to the DSL and/or Principal.

Logging an incident

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on Safeguarding and Child Protection Software for Schools (CPOMS) as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern;
- date and time at which the record was made;
- name of the child involved;
- a factual report of what happened;
- If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words;
- name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The record will be given to the DSL who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about child abuse, the DSL will contact Children's Advice and Support Services (CASS). The DSL will follow up all referrals in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact CASS directly.

For minor concerns regarding radicalisation, the DSL will contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) or Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator. For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSL will contact the Police using 999.

Allegations against staff

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded on a Notice of Concern record form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (eg police) should be informed, and the School /Club will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours. Following advice from the LADO; it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate the School/ club will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.