

Our Approach to the Curriculum

Curriculum Intent

St Mary's has an ambitious, rich and broad curriculum that is embedded securely and consistently across the school. It is aligned to the National Curriculum and is clear about how pupils reach the curriculum endpoints.

The curriculum is taught systematically and explicitly enough for all pupils to acquire the knowledge and skills that they need in order to achieve. New knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before. The curriculum is driven by the needs of the pupils and addresses any gaps in their knowledge and skills. It is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils.

The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop as independent, confident and successful learners, with high aspirations, who know how to make a positive contribution to their community and the wider society. It ensures that academic success, creativity and problem solving, reliability, responsibility and resilience, as well as physical development, well-being and mental health are key elements that support the development of the whole child and promote a positive attitude to learning.

The curriculum values diversity. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, ensuring that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. We have a responsibility to promote social mobility. St Mary's introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said and equips pupils with the cultural capital that they need to succeed in life. Our pupils will be inspired by what the world has to offer. They will have self-belief, inquisitive minds and a spirit of curiosity. Ultimately, we want all of our pupils to be the best they can be. Above all, we hope that our pupils will be happy.

Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced to equip pupils with cumulative knowledge and skills for future learning. Learning is re-visited and developed year-on-year, to ensure a real depth of learning across the school.

Subject Leaders have the necessary expertise to play a pivotal role in both the design and delivery of their subject area; ensuring a clear progression of both skills and knowledge across all year groups, underpinned by a robust assessment system.

Teachers enable pupils to understand key concepts and connect new knowledge with existing knowledge. Teaching is inspirational and the learning ethos in lessons is exceptional.

Teachers plan lessons meticulously using prior skilful assessment to match the learning according to need. There is outstanding questioning and opportunities for speaking and listening through discussion, paired and group work and through role-play. Teachers present information clearly

and have excellent subject knowledge. Lessons are pitched with high expectations that maintain and drive the high standards that are achieved. Well prepared lessons have imaginative activities matched to learning questions and tasks are demanding.

Active learning strategies and carefully chosen resources are utilised effectively.

Continuing Professional Development for all staff is a priority to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver the highest standards across the entire curriculum. Assessment is used effectively to inform provision and identify next steps and includes skilful differentiation, targeted support or tailored interventions. Teachers are adept at monitoring pupils' understanding during lessons, identifying and correcting misconceptions and adjusting activities where needed.

St Mary's takes pride in providing a highly inclusive environment and pupils at all levels are helped to achieve their potential. Those who are most able are challenged and offered tasks which provide opportunities for greater depth. Those who struggle are encouraged and given targeted support to embed skills, to develop at their own pace or simply to learn in a style that best suits their individual needs.

Homework is differentiated by ability. Expectations about the amount of homework increases as the pupils progress through the school. Homework is aligned to the curriculum and a variety of activities are utilised including subscriptions to online learning and Google Classroom where appropriate,

Staff are highly effective and experienced in teaching systematic, synthetic phonics. Reading is a strength. It is prioritised and staff ensure that it is promoted throughout the curriculum.

Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension. Pupils are taught to foster a love of reading by teachers talking knowledgeably about the literature in their classrooms and having book areas that demonstrate how much books are valued. Teachers read aloud daily to pupils in a way that excites and engages them, introducing new ideas, concepts and vocabulary. Teachers also make time to talk to the children about books.

St Mary's provides pupils with memorable experiences in addition to diverse and rich opportunities from which pupils can learn and develop a range of transferable skills.

Visitors are regularly invited into school and educational and residential visits are carefully chosen to deepen understanding. We make the most of our outdoor learning environment to enhance hands-on learning experiences and promote active learning.

Our curriculum recognises the importance of pupils' physical and mental well-being in shaping their long-term life-style choices. St Mary's offers a varied timetable for extracurricular activities, with clubs that support the core curriculum offer, as well as those which develop specialist skills.

Pupil Voice is valued and encouraged with children given many opportunities to be actively involved in whole school decision making. Children also hold many positions of responsibility.

We have high expectations of attendance and pupil behaviour. We are committed to working in partnership with parents as we believe that when home and school work closely together we achieve the best outcomes for our pupils.

Curriculum Impact

The curriculum is well constructed and well taught. Pupils' work is consistently of a high standard and pupils achieve strong outcomes. This has been sustained over many years and pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. The curriculum design ensures that the needs of all pupils are met.

The impact of the curriculum is monitored through planning, monitoring of books and displays, lesson learning walks, date outcomes and discussions with staff, pupils and parents.

Pupils' enjoyment of the well-planned curriculum promotes achievement, confidence and exceptional behaviour. Our pupils are able to form meaningful relationships based upon mutual respect and trust, recognising and celebrating difference, not only within the school community, but in the wider world as well. They have a real sense of responsibility as future citizens and grow up being able to make a positive contribution to the world in which they live. The curriculum provides a strong foundation for future learning and allows pupils to collaborate and develop social skills. Our carefully well-planned curriculum, delivered by exceptional staff in an ethos of care and support, enables our pupils to be well rounded, happy and empathetic young people who have a thirst for learning and a respect for the world around them. It produces confident, independent, resilient pupils who are motivated learners and have a real thirst for learning. Pupils leave St Mary's well equipped with the skills needed to achieve success in life. Our curriculum allows each pupil to excel and be the best they can be.

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