



Learning at St Mary's

Building Learning Power Statement

At St. Mary's, we encourage all pupils to build their own learning power. Building Learning Power emphasises the development of lifelong learning values and skills. We aim to ensure that all children develop persistence and curiosity for learning and become adventurous risk takers who are not afraid of the 'don't know' state of mind. At St. Mary's, children will develop the ability to take responsibility for their own learning, self-assess and be able to articulate themselves as a learner. They will have the opportunity to develop the ability to know what's worth learning, know how to face confusion and know the best learning tool for the job.

The Curriculum

At St Mary's School we value the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum. The Key Skills underpin all learning activities and priority is given to the development of these to ensure that children become equipped with these vital skills. The Key Skills are communication, numeracy, ICT, learning to learn, working with others and problem solving. Each child is taught in a class with children of his or her own school year group (between 1st September and 31st August in any given school year). Teaching methods include whole class, group and individual teaching as appropriate. The curriculum is planned through thematic topic studies and covers the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. We seek to maximise the potential of all our pupils, including the most gifted and those who find difficulty with some aspects of learning. The preferred learning styles of individual pupils are taken into account when planning learning activities, whether visual, auditory or kinesthetic. We continually seek to provide first hand learning opportunities to engage and motivate pupils and thus foster a love of learning.

Please see the Class termly newsletters that are published on this website for individual class curriculum overviews.

Foundation Stage

Appropriate emphasis is given to the Early Learning Goals. These include:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum are taught through a wealth of first hand experiences. Children are actively encouraged to become independent, make decisions, interact with their peers and problem solve. We believe that these first steps into primary school are crucial. The children's happiness and personal and social wellbeing is at the heart of St Mary's and is a priority in this first year.

Key Stages 1 and 2

Children begin the National Curriculum, within which English, Mathematics, Science, Religious Education and Computing are known as the '*Core Curriculum*.'

The National Curriculum foundation subjects are: History, Geography, Music, Art, Design Technology, Physical Education and Modern Foreign Language (Spanish). The wider curriculum includes environmental studies, dance, drama, media studies, personal, social, health and economic education and citizenship. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to attend swimming lessons. Policies on sex, relationships education (SRE) and teaching about drugs have been developed with due regard the school's status as an Aided Church of England Primary School. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from any SRE that falls outside the statutory curriculum. Parents with concerns should make an appointment with the Headteacher and a full copy of the policy is available on request.

RE and Worship

Religious Education has been a statutory requirement since the 1944 Education Act, which also established the daily act of corporate worship. As a Church of England School, we follow the Manchester Diocesan Board of Education R.E. Syllabus which includes visits to our local church and other places of worship such as a local Mosque, Jewish Synagogue, Gurdwara Temple and Hindu Temple.

As a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, and since the introduction of the teaching of world faiths in Key Stage 2 provision is not made for withdrawal from RE. Much teaching and learning is done through the thematic approach, and therefore withdrawal may have a detrimental effect on a child's learning. Any request for withdrawal must be made in writing to the Governing Body.

Each school day includes a collective act of worship. This is usually in the form of a school assembly, but sometimes takes place in classrooms and church. Parents are invited to join us for celebration assemblies each Friday. Canon Alan Butler, the priest in charge of St. Mary's Church, visits the school regularly to lead both assemblies and circle times. Most assemblies are of a Christian nature, however we show respect to and raise awareness of all faiths to reflect the multi-cultural nature of our society.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship after consultation with the Governing Body.

Assessment

Assessment for learning is an important element of the daily interaction between teachers and pupils. This means that teachers regularly mark and assess work and use the information to advise children about what they need to do to improve or to reach the next stage of their development. This form of assessment is presented in a positive and supportive manner, with each child's current level of achievement duly celebrated and acknowledged.

While pupils' progress is assessed throughout each term, teacher assessment is supported by Qualifications and Curriculum Authority Tests in English and Mathematics in each of the Key Stage 2 classes. During Year 2 and Year 6 (usually at ages 7 and 11 respectively) children undertake Standard Attainment Tasks (SATs) and assessments. Pupils are also assessed by the teacher at the end of the Foundation Stage against the Foundation Stage Profile.

During Year 1, children undertake a statutory phonics screening check.

Children's progress is formally reported to parents in two Parent Consultation meetings per year, as well as one detailed written report presented at the end of the summer term. Informal consultations may take place at other times.

Enriching and Extending Learning

In addition to the compulsory National Curriculum Programmes of Study, the school has a comprehensive programme of enrichment activities. These include:

- Residential trips in Year 5 or Year 6
- A programme of day trips, visits and visitors in every year group
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities that meet at lunchtimes and after school (please see below for more details)
- Small group musical instrument lessons (for which an extra charge is payable)
- Cycle training and Heart Start training
- Themed days often to help raise funds for identified good causes
- Themed weeks such as 'Anti Bullying Week / E-safety Week'
- Inter school activities with other local primary schools
- Activities linked to topical events such as the Olympics
- Children are also encouraged to participate in class assemblies, concerts and in dramatic productions.

Children's Involvement in their Learning

Wherever possible the school looks to involve children in their own learning. The school considers that this motivates and inspires children to achieve their best and to develop positive attitudes to future learning

We do this for example through:

- Children are sometimes given choices about how to present their work to their teacher, their class or their group.
- They sometimes have choices about the role they will take in a group project.
- Children sometimes choose to study a particular area of interest in more detail.
- They discuss and debate and vote for issues related to their learning and the School.
- They help plan themed days and participate in assemblies.
- They self-assess their own learning in addition to their teacher's assessment.

Extra Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities are invaluable in enhancing children's self-esteem, motivation and enthusiasm about school. Parental permission is required for children to participate in extra-curricular activities. The parental consent form, which parents are asked to sign, stresses the need for responsible commitment, high standards of behaviour and sportsmanship. Adherence to rules and personal safety are of paramount importance in all of these activities. This involves our insistence on the safe use of equipment and on participants` wearing appropriate clothing and footwear. At the heart of our school ethos is the cultivation of sporting attitudes, honesty and fair-play. This is further stressed in our "Declaration of Fair and Safe Play", which all children sign as a condition of their being allowed to play football and other team games during playtimes and lunchtimes.

2.3

Below is a range of extra-curricular activities that have been provided throughout the year:

football (Years 1 - 6)

netball (Years 5 & 6)

badminton (Years 4 - 6)

cricket (Years 4-6)

rounders (Years 5 & 6)

hockey (Years 5 & 6)

gymnastics (Years 2 - 6)

choir (Years 3 -6)

band (Years 4 - 6)

Eco (Years 3-6)

Multi Skills (Year 1 - 6)

Handball (Year 3-6)

Cross Country (Year 3-6)

Zumbatomic (Reception-Year 6)

Groundbreakers (Years 3 - 6)

Ethos (Year 2-6)

ICT (Year 6)

Change For Life 'Fun Club' (Year 3 and 4)

As with sport and other performance skills, we believe that musical performance carries considerable potential for raising children's self-esteem and confidence.