



St. Catherine's CE Primary School

Curriculum Policy

Reviewed: Summer 2013, 2015

Summer 2018 – *significant changes to reflect our curriculum offer*

Next review: summer 2021

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St Catherine's is proud to be a Church of England Aided School, our belief being that God has made our world and has come to it in Jesus Christ.

The Christian values of compassion, honesty, fairness, love, and respect of God's world are at the heart of our inclusive community, giving us the inspiration for our life together as a family school, and underpin everything we do.

St Catherine's values and mission statement support developing every child's potential and individuality. Pupils are at the centre of this school and emphasis is on learning together. The ethos of the school is built on honesty, fairness, love, and respect of one another. The curriculum is developed to encompass creativity in developing children's interests and engaging pupils in purposeful activity.

Aims

- To prepare our children for life through helping them to develop the educational, spiritual and social skills and qualities needed for a positive future.
- To provide an inclusive, safe and happy learning environment based on Christian values.
- To give a breadth of experiences so that each child can achieve their personal potential.
- To help each member of St Catherine's to begin their own personal spiritual journey
- To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- To advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that teaching, learning and curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
- To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimization. To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged as a consequence of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, disability or religious beliefs.

At St Catherine's CE School all children have a right to a broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. Work in St Catherine's is planned to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

We aim

For all our pupils to become:

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.
- effective communicators, through which ever method best suits them.

To provide a curriculum which engages and challenges pupils with widely differing abilities and learning styles.

For our pupils' time in school to be positive, stimulating and rewarding so that their self esteem and confidence can develop along with practical skills and the ability to use and apply their knowledge.

To nurture in all our pupils sensitivity and respect towards others through an understanding of rights and responsibilities.

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To encourage partnership with parents and all who contribute to the development of each pupil, recognising that understanding and involvement are the key to effective cooperation.

To foster caring and trustful relationships between pupils and staff.

The Curriculum @ St. Catherine's

Our school has developed our own stand alone curriculum, which is based on the National Curriculum. The underpinning principles of our curriculum are committed to providing quality and excellence through an exciting, stimulating environment that stretches and develops the child as a whole.

We believe that every child in our school, through The Curriculum @ St. Catherine's principles, will be able to develop the necessary skills needed to progress to Secondary School and the skills they need to succeed as learners in life.

Curriculum Intent – how we designed our curriculum

As a **Church of England** school, education remain at our core. This includes the **pursuit of excellence** and preparing our children as world **citizens of the 21st Century**. In order for this to be achieved our children need high levels of **literacy** and **numeracy**. We recognise **R.E** as a core subject, centred on the Manchester Diocese 'Questful RE' Syllabus and 'Understanding Christianity'.

We have designed our curriculum to provide a breadth of experience within a subject area, drawing on outside speakers, visits and developing a sense of curiosity. Careers advice often features within the curriculum and enables visitors (including parents) to meet with the children and expose them to life outside school, providing them with ideas for their future. We are passionate that all children realise that it is a big and wonderful world out there that they can play an active and positive part in. To do this not only do we pursue excellence but ensure the children are equipped with the correct skills in which to do this. We play an important part in providing the means for **social mobility**.

We also plan opportunities for the children to know about keeping safe, linked to the KCSiE document.

We also plan for and promote **British values**, (Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs) ensuring that children are aware of their rights and responsibilities as a UK citizen.

Pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural** development runs through all that we do. Pupils are encouraged to show themselves to be deep thinkers; to empathise with the feelings and actions of others, seeing points of views and beliefs other than their own. Particularly in RE and **PSHE**, we encourage pupils to show a keen interest in ethical issues and apply their personal values to situations, giving reasons for their decisions and actions. They are encouraged to question arguments and situations.

Subject leaders work on **curriculum coverage of all subjects**, with all leaders being aware of the curriculum expectations and in turn working towards **planning the skills** within their respective curriculum areas. The curriculum is designed to ensure: **deep learning**, with focus made on extending those who are working at a greater depth within the curriculum areas; engagement with their learning and initiating the direction of the units of study, particularly in the foundation subjects along with breadth and balance. Not only do staff review the actual curriculum regularly, but also the principles for learning and teaching.

Our Curriculum rests on a firm foundation of basic skills which will enable our children to ultimately explore and pursue their own interests. Although content is important and is taught according to National Curriculum requirements, skills and attitudes will be developed throughout. Children will discover that learning is not passive, but an active process that leads somewhere and in turn allows the child to see

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physical, tangible evidence of the skills they have learnt. This also helps children develop an evaluative attitude towards their work and a sense of not only pride in their work but a focus for areas to improve.

Through The Curriculum @ St. Catherine's we aim to raise standards. Primary education is not just about targets and results in league tables, nor is it simply a preparatory step for secondary school; it is much more than that. As a school we believe that by developing skills in a stimulating, enjoyable environment, we help children develop as individuals that have access to enjoy learning through a rich and varied curriculum. We want children to take advantage of their primary curriculum. We want children to have a memorable experience at St. Catherine's that encourages and inspires them to achieve in life and to aim to exceed their potential. We hope to foster the attitude of wanting to learn as well as needing to learn.

The Curriculum @ St. Catherine's has given us the freedom to:

- Decide how the National Curriculum is taught
- Free up additional time in the school day to enrich our children's learning – our teachers now have real freedom to own the curriculum and be truly creative with the learning experiences they give their children.
- Teach in a truly cross-curricular way. There is no set timescale for topics – some may be 6 weeks long, others one or two weeks, depending on the needs and experiences of the children. Teachers will need to think carefully about the length of each topic

English

The English Curriculum is delivered using Curriculum 2014 for English for Key Stages 1 and 2. In Foundation Stage the EYFS Statutory Framework 2012 and Development Matters 2012 are used to ensure consistency and progression throughout the phase. For the most part, pupils will tackle English work as individuals, as a whole class or in small groups.

In all year groups the majority of English work is done in the class, with work being differentiated to match the needs of different children where required. Guided and supported work, alongside interventions are used to support children who are not on track to meet age related expectations or progress targets.

Phonics

Our phonics in infants follows the Letters and Sounds programme.

Letters and Sounds is a focused teaching strategy that teaches children how the alphabet works for reading and spelling.

In EYFS and Year 1 Letters and Sounds is taught as a discrete 20 minute 'Time to Shine' session each day. Each lesson follows the structure of review, teach, practise and apply. The programme is broken down as follows:

Nursery - Phase 1
Reception - Phases 2-4
Year 1 - Phase 5

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Maths

At St Catherine's, through an alliance with Maths Hubs and research that includes NCETM materials, we have embarked on a mastery approach: a set of principles and beliefs. The NCETM: Teaching for Mastery 2015 states that this:

'...includes belief that all pupils are capable of understanding and doing mathematics, given sufficient time. Pupils are neither 'born with the maths gene' nor 'just no good at maths'. With good teaching, appropriate resources, effort and a 'can do' attitude all children can achieve in and enjoy mathematics.' (NCETM: Teaching for Mastery 2015)

We understand that teaching for mastery means that a class works together on the same topic, providing all pupils with the opportunity to master the curriculum and for some to gain greater depth of proficiency and understanding. Mastery is not just being able to memorise key facts and procedures and answer test questions accurately and quickly. It involves knowing 'why' as well as knowing 'that' and knowing 'how'. It means being able to use one's knowledge appropriately, flexibly and creatively and to apply it in new and unfamiliar situations. Rather than accelerating into new mathematical content, children are challenged through a deeper understanding of the same content (mastery in greater depth).

In order to achieve our aim to ensure that learning is sufficiently embedded and sustainable over time, teaching is clearly focused during our daily hour long lesson. Children are then provided with the opportunity to consolidate and deepen their understanding the next day during a 'Maths Workshop' which is a twenty minute session that proceeds the maths lesson. This time also allows for teacher intervention with those children who are not secure with the content from the previous day, before moving on. As a result, long term gaps in learning should be prevented.

Maths No Problem

Here at St Catherine's from Years 1 to 5 we use Maths No Problem to enable children to master maths skills. It is based on the research and lesson approaches used in Singapore. It is a highly structured approach to teaching maths and deepens the understanding of all children. Each lesson is based around an 'anchor task' which the children explore using different methods. The children are encouraged to talk about their maths and explore their ideas fully, then work independently using the workbooks. Teaching maths for mastery is a transformational approach to maths teaching which stems from high performing Asian nations such as Singapore. When taught to master maths, children develop their mathematical fluency without resorting to rote learning and are able to solve non-routine maths problems without having to memorise procedures.

Creative Curriculum

We provide a creative curriculum based around the Cornerstones Curriculum. We have worked hard to refresh our school approach and provision for pupils. As part of this work we have implemented the new Cornerstones Curriculum, a nationally recognised approach for delivering outstanding learning opportunities for children.

What is the Cornerstones Curriculum?

The Cornerstones Curriculum is a creative and thematic approach to learning that is mapped to the 2014 Primary National Curriculum to ensure comprehensive coverage of national expectations. Our curriculum is delivered through Imaginative Learning Projects (ILPs) which provide a rich menu of exciting and motivating learning activities that make creative links between all aspects of our children's learning.

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We believe children learn better when they are encouraged to use their imagination and apply their learning to engaging contexts. Our curriculum provides lots of learning challenges throughout the academic year that requires children to solve problems, apply themselves creatively and express their knowledge and understanding effectively across the curriculum.

Cornerstones also provides a rigorous essential skills framework that outlines the end of year expectations in all subjects. These essential skills are tied to activities and are age related so that staff can track children's progress and identify their individual learning needs.

Children progress through four stages of learning in each ILP – Engage, Develop, Innovate and Express.

Specific enhancements

Sport has remained central to both our curriculum and extra-curricular provision. We know this is hugely beneficial to all our children. We have invested heavily with the **P.E. and sport** provision, with inclusion for all.

We recognise that **music** is as important a subject to study as English and maths and can exert a powerful influence on our lives. We have made a commitment that from September 2018 we will invest heavily in music education because:

- musical performance rewards individual effort and teamwork
- learning to play an instrument teaches focus, concentration and perseverance
- performing, composing and appreciating music is beautiful and joyful.

PSHE

Teaching staff at St. Catherine's provide **PSHE** by building on the content of the **HEARTSMART** materials, with compliments from visitors from the community and whole school approaches to themes such as bullying, drugs awareness, internet safety and British values. In addition to this children in upper Key Stage 2 receive standalone sessions focused on their changing bodies and sex education.

HEARTSMART is designed to support children to build **resilience, emotional intelligence** and active **empathy**. It enables children to adopt a growth mind-set whilst maintaining a healthy emotional self.

HEARTSMART is about loving and accepting ourselves as well as loving and responding well to others. There are 5 themes (known as 'High Five') that are shared throughout the year which are linked to the principles of feeling valued, considering others and showing empathy, forgiveness, being truthful and not giving up when faced with challenge. HEARTSMART is therefore about loving and accepting ourselves as well as loving and responding well to others.

In recognising the development of the whole child the pastoral support given to children so they can access the curriculum is strong. The school has various systems which support the emotional and mental well-being of children.

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