



# SS John Fisher & Thomas More Catholic Primary School

**A Voluntary Academy**

"Journeying together with Jesus Christ, we learn to love and love to learn."



## **Curriculum Policy**

### **Aims**

The school's motto is: "Journeying together with Jesus Christ, we learn to love and love to learn. Our curriculum is designed to ensure that children achieve their full potential academically, spiritually and personally. We aim to develop good global citizens in a modern and world class system – children that are prepared for success in life. The school aims to ignite children's love of learning through opportunities to excite, enrich and explore!

At Ss John Fisher & Thomas More, we work within a Catholic ethos to create an inclusive learning culture, where children are challenged in their thinking, strive for continuous improvement and are committed to lifelong learning.

Woven throughout our curriculum are the 7 themes of Catholic Social Teaching which are:

- Dignity of the human person – We recognise that each person is created in the image and likeness of God and should always be treated with respect.
- Call to family, community and participation – We recognise that our parents are our children's first teachers and that we need to work in close partnership with each family. We expect all our pupils to be outward looking, thinking of how they can help others within our school community
- Rights & responsibilities – Children learn about the importance of values such as truth, freedom and justice. We teach children the importance of British Values.
- Option for the poor and the vulnerable – We teach children about the importance caring for those in our world who need our help and sharing what we have with those most in need.
- Dignity of work & rights of workers – Consideration is given to providing all pupils with equal opportunities across the curriculum. Pupils learn about mutual respect, democracy and the rule of law.
- Solidarity – We are all one family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic or ideological differences
- Care for God's creation – The children are taught about our collective responsibility to care for our environment. They will learn about key global issues and how we, as a school, can respond to them.

Children will learn about these themes through the curriculum as well as in assemblies, liturgical prayer, RE and PSHE lessons. These themes are evidenced on the subject overviews.

### **Curriculum Intent**

We follow the **English National Curriculum** which aims to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum allowing access to all pupils at their appropriate level. Every effort is made to make learning enjoyable, worthwhile and ensure the school provides stimulating experiences that employ a variety of teaching strategies. English (Reading; Writing; Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling) & Maths are taught discretely in small sized teaching groups which carefully match pupils' learning needs. The other core subject of RE is also taught discretely using the Shrewsbury diocese approved scheme 'The Way, the Truth & the Life'. There will also be a daily act of collective worship in accordance with statutory requirements.

The knowledge and skills in other subjects are taught sequentially across a two year cycle. Each topic / theme links closely to core texts for each year group. This is because we believe that reading and the development of language needs to be at the heart of our curriculum design.

The curriculum is then enriched through a range of external visitors (including artists and sports coaches), trips and visits and other 'wow' moments which help to bring each topic alive for the children.

## **Curriculum Implementation**

### **Curriculum (Nursery & Reception)**

In Nursery and Reception we follow the EYFS statutory framework by offering a balance of child initiated play activities and adult led tasks. Development Matters is used by teachers to support assessment and planning. Each week, staff plan a range of adult led and play based activities; they enhance areas of continuous provision in the classroom to support the children's next steps, interests and topic knowledge.

Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. Our curriculum has been carefully planned to ensure reading and speaking are at the centre of all we do. We have carefully selected key texts to focus on each term and have planned for all learning to link to these texts where possible. Well Comms has also been used to inform our long term plans to ensure speech and language development is maximised. Our curriculum maps out a progression of knowledge and skills in all areas of learning throughout our EYFS department and provides children with the foundations needed for our KS1 curriculum.

Staff make purposeful assessments of the children's learning using our online learning journeys. 'Significant moments' are recorded through observations and photos of the children's work. By only recording significant moments in a child's learning and development we ensure that staff are free to prioritise interactions with the children over observations. Each child has a next step in learning displayed in their key group space. This ensures adults can target their interactions and allows children to be aware of their own next step in learning. Parents are encouraged to contribute to our next step walls and online learning journeys. Staff use their knowledge of the children to inform future planning and to help them assess whether a child is developmentally 'on track' or if they need support.

In our EYFS we have prioritised developing our children's cultural capital by creating a 'Big Goals' document which details the life experiences we will provide pupils with during their time in EYFS. These 'Big Goals' are split in to the following categories: Trips, Performing, Planting/Life cycles, Baking, Stories, Celebrations and Physical activities.

### **Our approach to teaching Maths:**

At Ss John Fisher and Thomas More, we take a mastery approach to teaching mathematics. This has been inspired by the performance of children in Singapore and other Southeast Asian nations and uses high quality, well researched textbooks. The lessons take the following structure:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Exploration of a problem (Explore)                 | } | 40 mins                                |
| 2. Structured discussion                              |   |  |
| 3. Journaling   |   |  |
| 4. A period of reflection (Master)                    | } | 25 mins                                |
| 5. Practice - guided and then independent (Workbooks) |   |  |
| 6. Arithmetic focus                                   | } | 10 mins min (KS1)<br>20 mins min (KS2) |

The main areas taught are:

- Number and place value,
- Addition, subtraction,
- Multiplication and division
- Fractions
- Measurement
- Geometry: Properties of shape, position and direction
- Statistics
- Algebra, ratio and proportion at year 6.

### Our approach to teaching English:

At St John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we follow a synthetic phonics programme called 'Read Write Inc' produced by Ruth Miskin Training from Nursery upwards. Read Write Inc is a method of learning centred around letter sounds and phonics, blending them together to read and write words and using these learnt sounds in their reading and writing. In EYFS and Year 1, children will follow a daily phonic programme to create fluent, enthusiastic readers, confident speakers and willing writers.

In Year 2 upwards, children follow a daily 'Literacy and Language' (L&L) programme that equips them with the skills to read and understand texts confidently, write fluently, think critically and articulate thoughts and ideas clearly. Highly acclaimed texts are chosen to suit the year that your child is in and are then linked to the wider curriculum areas.

Grammar & punctuation are taught discretely and within 'L&L' lessons. Skills are practised in 'applied write' sessions in other subjects.

Children are taught comprehension and inferential skills through an additional daily 'Reading Skills' session using a 'Reading & Modelled Practice' approach (RAMP) which teaches the following strategies:

- Activating prior knowledge
- Making predictions
- Clarifying vocabulary
- Retrieval
- Author's use of grammar and punctuation.
- Inference
- Summarising
- Reflecting

Children who need further support with phonics from Year 2 upwards, will be identified and they will continue to receive Read Write Inc lessons. Those in Years 5 and 6 who need additional support will receive the Fresh Start intervention Programme.

We believe in fostering a love of reading and actively promote the importance of pupils' independent reading throughout the school. We do this through our 'Accelerated Reader' programme which enables pupils to choose library books based on their readability range or Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Children are encouraged to 'quiz' at the end of each book they have read in order to gain class and school reading awards which are announced in a weekly Friday assembly.

In the EYFS, children are exposed to high quality story books which they read and learn off by heart in order to promote engagement and further develop pupils' vocabulary.

Spelling is taught from Year 2 using the RWI Spelling programme.

### The wider curriculum:

We currently follow the National Curriculum for all subjects.

Information about each subject taught can be found on our school website: 'Curriculum'.

### Science, History, Geography, Art & Design Technology

The starting point for each unit is the key texts planned for each year group. Links are then made with the programmes of study and the attainment targets for each subject. This is not always possible therefore some units will be taught discretely.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum and key non-fiction books are used within the classroom to support the teaching of each unit in KS1 & KS2.

With the exception of DT, teachers create a Knowledge Organiser which contains the relevant 'I can' statements that the children will be assessed against. These are used to support pupils' learning and their ability to know more & remember more. These are used to track progress in each subject and to identify any gaps in knowledge.

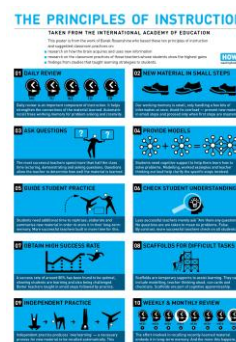
Bespoke Schemes of Work are in place for all these subjects which build on knowledge and skills learned in previous key stages. These schemes have been developed to reflect the pupils' context and interests as well as to reflect current national and global issues.

### Our approach to teaching the wider curriculum

Our approach to teaching and learning in the subjects above is based upon Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction. These define the key elements of effective practice. They are based around research, including cognitive load theory, and are designed to give direct links from research into practice.

#### **Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction are:**

1. Begin a lesson with a short review of previous learning
2. Present new material in small steps with student practice after each step
3. Ask a large number of questions and check the responses of all students
4. Provide models
5. Guide student practice
6. Check for student
7. Obtain high success rates
8. Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks
9. Require and monitor independent practice
10. Engage students in weekly and monthly review



#### **At Ss John Fisher & Thomas More, we facilitate these principles through:**

- ✓ Regular opportunities for recall and review of previous learning
- ✓ The regular use of knowledge organisers to support retrieval of key knowledge and vocabulary, as well as to encourage students to think about their own learning
- ✓ Asking a range of deliberately planned questions
- ✓ Lessons which include guided and independent practice.
- ✓ Modelling, worked examples and teachers' 'thinking out loud'
- ✓ Introducing new information in small steps.
- ✓ Adapting teaching to ensure that all pupils can succeed

### [PE, PSHE, Music, Computing, French](#)

The National Curriculum is followed to teach the subjects listed below. Teachers are provided with fully-resourced, high-quality schemes of work produced by specialist organisations. The organisations are listed below:

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>PE</b>        | Amaven                                      |
| <b>Music</b>     | One Education                               |
| <b>PSHE</b>      | TenTen                                      |
| <b>Computing</b> | National Computing Curriculum for Excellent |
| <b>French</b>    | Twinkl                                      |

In addition to the above, specialist teachers will teach some aspects of the PE, swimming and music curriculum.

### [Enrichment Opportunities](#)

All children have the opportunity to take part in trips, visits and enrichment activities across the curriculum. Every effort is taken to engage disadvantaged and SEND pupils in enrichment activities, which include after-school clubs and residential visits.

### [International Schools Award \(ISA\)](#)

Our curriculum has recently been redesigned with increasing opportunities for our pupils to learn about important aspects of human life and its history; exploring issues of concern, addressing global issues and celebrating and reinforcing achievements of humanity. With our partner schools, we wish for our children to learn together and learn from one another. This has resulted in us achieving the British Schools International School Award in July 2022.

## **Evaluating Impact**

*How will we know we are successful?*

At SS John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary School we embrace a pedagogy of 'Personalised Learning'; an approach which expects all children to reach or exceed national expectations, to fulfil their early promise and develop latent potential. High expectations of progress apply equally to children working above, at, or below age-related expectations, including those who have been identified as having special educational needs. There is an expectation of participation, fulfilment and success; and teaching and learning is characterised by ambitious objectives, challenging personal targets, rapid intervention to keep pupils on trajectory and rigorous assessment to check and maintain pupil progress. There are clear plans to support those who are struggling to maintain trajectory. The teacher's priority is to support children so that they can keep up with the pace of learning and make good rates of progress. Traditionally it was expected that teachers would differentiate by task or expectation and many different levels of success were accepted, this approach often ran the risk of lowering expectations. Today, the effective teaching practices at SS John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary School, see teachers expecting everyone to succeed by offering higher levels of support or extra challenge for those who need it, so that all pupils can access the learning at the expected year group standard.

The school adopts a graduated approach for pupils who may have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are in place for all pupils who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or receive SEND support. Teachers ensure that lessons are adapted to suit the needs of these children.

Progress is tracked each term in all subjects. In English & Maths, assessments are supported by nationally recognised tests (PIRA, PUMA & GAPS) which help teachers to identify any pupils who may be at risk of under achievement. Support and intervention can then be put into place for the following term.

In Writing, RE and across the EYFS assessments are made on a termly basis. These are moderated internally amongst staff and externally alongside schools within the Wythenshawe Catholic Cluster.

In some subjects, teachers use their knowledge organisers at the end of a topic to evaluate the knowledge that each pupil has retained. This information is then used to inform the school tracking system which is updated termly.

Subject Leaders have developed 'Progression of Skills' documents for each subject which support knowledge organisers where appropriate. These show how both knowledge and skills taught are built upon each year. This enables teachers to have a clear understanding of what prior learning has taken place before starting a new unit. Subject Leaders will carry out learning walks, collect samples of work, talk to children, conduct book flicks and collect any moderated assessments in order to gain an accurate picture of the progress that pupils are making in each year group.

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|-----------------|------------------|
| Policy Written: | Policy Reviewed: |
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