



# 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 in assemblies, collective worship as well as RE and PSHE lessons. They will also explore these themes through our thematic approach to the other areas of the curriculum.

### 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.

Where-ever possible, the knowledge and skills in other subjects are taught thematically 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)**

The curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach as outlined by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 'Development Matters' document. Children are provided with a range of rich, meaningful first-hand experiences in which they explore, think creatively and are active. We aim to develop and foster positive attitudes towards learning, confidence, communication and physical development. As a team, we use observations and assessments to offer learning experiences in all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum. We identify current interests to create an overall theme which makes the learning meaningful and purposeful. The seven areas of learning are split between prime and specific areas of learning.

The prime areas of learning are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

The specific areas of learning are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

Learning opportunities in each area are planned and delivered through weekly 'Adult Focus' activities and 'Continuous Provision'.

Each week staff will create a plan detailing the adult led sessions taking place that week. This plan will include whole class/group carpet sessions and any adult led small group tasks taking place. Each week staff will also plan how they will enhance the areas of continuous provision. These enhancements should be linked to previous assessments, children's interests or the current topic the children are learning about. Daily observations and assessment are made by all practitioners each week and used to inform the next steps in learning for each child.

### **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 (In Focus)
  2. Structured discussion
  3. Journaling
  4. A period of reflection (Let's Learn)
  5. Practice - guided and then independent (Workbooks)
  6. Arithmetic focus
- |                 |
|-----------------|
| } 40 mins       |
| } 25 mins       |
| } 20 mins (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.

Here are some links to further explain this approach:

<http://www.mathsnoproblem.co.uk/parent-videos>

<http://www.mathsnoproblem.co.uk/singapore-maths>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/0/24925787>

### [Our approach to teaching Reading:](#)

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' 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.

Children are taught comprehension and inferential skills through an additional daily 'Reading Skills' session

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.

### [The wider curriculum:](#)

We currently follow the National Curriculum for all subjects.

The curriculum is organised using a thematic approach across a two-yearly cycle. Long term planning takes place in EYFS, KS1, Lower KS2 (Years 3 & 4) and Upper KS2 (Years 5 & 6)

The starting point for each topic 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 topic in KS1 & KS2.

At the start of each topic, teachers create a topic page (Knowledge Organiser) which contains the relevant 'I can' statements that the children will be assessed against. These are used to track progress in each subject and to identify any gaps in knowledge.

Each half term, teachers evaluate the key learning objectives that have been covered in each curriculum subject in order to assist with future planning.

An outline on when various subjects and topics are taught can be found on our school website: '*Curriculum*'.

In addition to the above, specialist teaching in French (Key Stage assemblies with French specialist teachers), PE (sports coaches teach some specific aspects of the curriculum whilst providing CPD for staff), Music (Music specialist teacher and drumming teacher). All pupils will learn to swim in KS2 as well as having the opportunity to attend an Outdoor Education residential visit.

## **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.

Progress is tracked each term in all subjects. In English & Maths, assessments are supported by nationally recognised tests (PIRA & PUMA) 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 other subjects, teachers use their topic pages (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 'knowledge ladders' for each subject which shows 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 topic. Subject Leaders will collect samples of work, conduct book scrutinies ('Friday 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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