
St. Mary's CE Academy

'Excellence through faith & learning'



Teaching & Learning Policy

*"I have come that they may have life,
and have it to the full."*

John 10:10

Reviewed: Spring 2022

Approved by Governors: Spring 2022

Date of next review: Spring 2024

Teaching & Learning Policy



Introduction:

At St Mary's Church of England Academy, we aim to provide a caring environment where every child can thrive and is supported to achieve their unique & amazing potential as a child of God. In facilitating our children to get the very most from their time with us, we also aim for them to:

- Understand the concept of lifelong learning;
- Develop the self-knowledge of how we learn best;
- desire to take their learning further;
- enjoy learning for its own sake, as fun, rewarding and enjoyable for all.

As facilitators of learning, teachers at St Mary's aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices. We believe that appropriate skills-based teaching and stimulating learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Aims and Objectives:

At St Mary's, we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. As facilitators of learning, we aim to:

- excite and motivate children;
- develop in children a love of learning;
- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- show respect for all cultures and, in doing so, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

Effective Learning

At St Mary's, we want children to experience a wide variety of learning experiences, including:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;
- group work;
- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- Talking about their learning experiences & how they learn best;
- self-assessment;
- peer assessment;
- use of ICT;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- outdoor learning experiences within the grounds & the locality;
- creative activities;
- watching television and responding to music;
- debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and creating;
- participation in athletic or physical activities.

We encourage children to:

- take responsibility & ownership for their own learning;
- understanding themselves as learners & how they learn best;
- assess and review their own & each other's learning;
- Lead their own learning through questioning.

Effective Teaching

At St Mary's, we see the teacher's role as a facilitator of learning rather than one of just simply imparting knowledge. We focus on motivating children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding. We use the school curriculum map to guide our teaching & details what is to be taught to each year group.

We base our teaching on our assessment of the children's knowledge and levels of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the learning, knowledge and skills of the children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning learning for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's individual One Page Profiles. We have high expectations of all children, and aim for all children to reach their full potential.

We set individual learning targets for the children and we share these targets with parents at Parents' Evenings in the form of our Pupil Progress Report Booklets. Individual academic targets are set early in the Autumn term using each child's prior data. We review the progress of each child at the end of each term through Pupil Progress Meetings between teachers and the School Leadership Team (Executive Headteacher, Head of School /Assistant Headteachers & SENDCO).

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the National Curriculum. Our differentiated lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed and the way we assess the children's work.

Our teachers make every effort to establish excellent working relationships with every child in class. We have an agreed code of conduct. Teachers make the utmost effort to:

- treat children with kindness and respect;
- treat children fairly, giving equal opportunities to take part in class activities;
- follow the school Positive Behaviour Policy with regard to rewards, discipline and classroom management.

We set out and agree the school and class code of conduct within our Positive Behaviour Policy with children from each class & have a whole school set of 5 Rainbow Rules. We encourage all children to follow these rules and to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by doing so we help to build positive, Christian attitudes towards our school, each other and learning in general. We encourage good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave, we follow a warning ladder system which can be used to elevate consequences, but can also be used positively to move down again.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, the adult in charge of the activity/visit is responsible for writing the risk assessment and presenting it to the Executive Headteacher / Head of School for approval at least 2 weeks before the date of the visit. We inform parents and obtain their permission – no child may take part in an activity outside of the school without this.

We deploy teaching assistants and other adult helpers as effectively as possible. They work both with individual children and with small groups. They also assist with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment.

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. All classrooms have Learning Journey, Maths, English and theme display areas. We change displays at least once a term to ensure that the classrooms reflect the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries and fiction and non-fiction books. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and an exciting classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by children.

We conduct all our teaching within our Christian ethos, nurturing trust and respect for all.

The Role of the Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review school policy. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- monitor teaching strategies in the light of Health and Safety Regulations;
- monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;

- ensure that staff development, appraisal and performance management policies promote good teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's policies through the school self-review processes. This includes the termly Executive Headteacher's Report to governors and may include those from subject leaders as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff;
- Meet with staff and pupils in their roles of class & link governors.

The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all that we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- holding termly parents' evenings to discuss individual children's progress and how they can further improve;
- holding parents' meetings to explain school strategies such as: transition to new year groups & secondary school, Relationships & Health Education, Online-Safety, SATs and residential trips;
- holding new FS2 parent workshops and parent curriculum workshops;
- sending target and curricular information regularly to parents;
- explaining to parents how they can support their children with homework.

We encourage parents to support their children in the following ways:

- ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.

Monitoring and Review

We are aware of the need to review the school Teaching and Learning Policy regularly so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. This takes place on a two-yearly cycle.