



St. Michael's Church School

Teaching & Learning Policy

Version: 2

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St. Michael's Church School

Teaching & Learning Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. At St Michael's we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children continue to learn new things every day throughout the course of their lives. We maintain that learning should be a challenging but rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1. At our school we aim to provide a rich and varied learning experience that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

2.2. Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- enrich their spiritual lives with daily teaching about the word of the Lord
- 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 beliefs and, in so doing, promote positive attitudes towards everyone;
- 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;
- nurture a sense of pride in themselves and their environment.

Our overall aim is to develop children who are confident, kind and considerate, embracing learning at school and in life outside of St Michael's.

3. Effective learning

3.1. Through this policy we aim to ensure that children learn effectively. The characteristics of effective learning are when pupils make good progress, respond well to challenging tasks and adjust well to working in different contexts. To be effective learners children need to work in a sustained manner with commitment and enjoyment, be confident in raising questions and have resilience when answers are not readily available. Also, children need to be able to evaluate their own work, select appropriate methods, organise the resources they need effectively and then be able to evaluate their own work. When appropriate, they also need to help each other.

3.2. In acquiring these characteristics, we acknowledge that children learn in many different ways and we recognise the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them.

3.3. We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- investigation and problem solving;
- research and finding out;

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- group work;
- paired work;
- independent work;
- whole-class work;
- asking and answering questions;
- use of a range of technology;
- fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest;
- creative activities;
- responding in a critical and discerning way to a range of media;
- taking part in debates, role-plays and oral presentations;
- designing and making things;
- participation in physical activity.

3.4. We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn.

4. Effective teaching

- 4.1. Effective teaching is when teachers challenge and inspire pupils, expecting the most of them. Effective teachers have good subject knowledge and are technically competent in teaching phonics and other basic skills. Teachers will use a variety of methods to enable all pupils to learn effectively and will manage pupils well, insisting on high standards of behaviour. They will assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments to help and encourage pupils to overcome difficulties. Teachers plan effectively, setting clear objectives that pupils understand and use time, support staff and other resources effectively.
- 4.2. At St Michael's we base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment, using the assessment frameworks for writing and mathematics. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child. We have high expectations of all children.
- 4.3. We set whole school, group and individual targets, as appropriate, for children in each academic year and share these targets with children and their parents.
- 4.4. We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the Early Year's Framework and the National Curriculum. Our lesson plans contain information about the tasks to be set, the resources needed, the strategies we will employ to make sure the needs of all pupils are met and the way we assess the children's work. We evaluate lessons so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.
- 4.5. All teachers work hard to establish good working relationships with all children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We treat them fairly and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to behaviour and discipline. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct at the beginning of each academic year and we expect all children to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good order and behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school behaviour policy.
- 4.6. We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. When we plan to take children out of school, we inform parents and obtain their permission if the visit will extend

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the school day or goes beyond our local community. We also carry out detailed risk assessments as appropriate.

4.7. We deploy learning support assistants and other adults according to identified needs across the school. Sometimes these adults work with individual children and sometimes they work with small groups.

4.8. All teachers reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and in collaboration with senior leaders, plan their professional development needs accordingly.

5. Structure of lessons and teaching methodologies

5.1. We vary the way in which we teach to suit the purpose of each lesson. A variety of strategies are used including:

- Flexible lesson organisation - the length of the lesson determined by the learning.
- Episodic teaching and learning
- Plenary sessions
- Child initiated learning & learning through play
- Modelling, scaffolding, demonstrating learning
- Activities well matched to children's learning
- Guided sessions

5.2. **Use of booster sessions** offer children opportunities to attend additional classes in reading, writing and mathematics if we feel that the children will benefit from them.

5.3. **Collaborative learning strategies** provide regular opportunities for children to work together, sharing ideas and learning from each other. For example, teachers might employ the use of 'talk partners' whereby children work together to test out each other's thinking and explain their answers or reasoning.

5.4. **Specialist intervention for pupils with English as an additional language or Special Educational Needs** aim to ensure that pupils' individual needs are met. We aim to provide a learning support assistant in every classroom.

5.5. **Programmes of work for gifted and talented pupils** aim to provide extension and/or programmes to deepen learning for more able pupils when appropriate.

6. Learning environment

6.1. We work hard to ensure our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly, to ensure that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We aim to ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some time during the year. All classrooms have a range of dictionaries, fiction and non-fiction books, as well as displays relating to English, Maths and foundation subjects. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and a well organised classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

7. Curriculum

7.1. The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the

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National Curriculum and the Early Years Framework, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

7.2. The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability;
- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- to teach children the basic skills of English and mathematics and computing and media studies;
- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- to teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time;
- to enable children to be positive citizens in society;
- to fulfil all the requirements of the Early Years Framework and the National Curriculum
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to understand right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others.

7.3. Curriculum Planning is done at whole school, year group and individual class level to ensure complete coverage and effective progression of knowledge and skills.

7.3.1. **Whole School level – long term planning**

At whole school level we will have an agreed curriculum map for each year group covering Reception to Year 6. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. Our curriculum is fully integrated. It also encompasses development of key skills. These skills, we believe, form the basis of success in all aspects of school life and are vital to life-long learning. We teach key skills through all curriculum subjects, and we also develop them within the pastoral curriculum. Key skills form a cornerstone of curriculum planning throughout the school. For example, we give the children many opportunities to develop the application of number skills in their geographical studies, and when we teach physical education we stress the importance of working with others.

Key skills that we aim to develop include:

Communication includes listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Collaboration involves the ability to work well with others as a team member or team leader. When children are offered the opportunity to work with others, they learn to consider the views of others and to develop the social skills of co-operation and mutual understanding.

Improving own learning and performance involves children in evaluating their own

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performance, and understanding what they need to do next in order to improve.

Problem-solving & Reasoning involves learning how to apply common techniques to solve problems in a variety of contexts and situations in any aspect of life.

Resilience and Perseverance develops, teaches and nurtures children so that they can relish challenge and embrace taking appropriate risks in their learning.

7.3.2. Year Group & Class level – medium & short term planning

Teachers organise learning objectives into coherent units of work which will challenge, engage and meet the needs of all pupils.

8. Assessment, recording and reporting

8.1. We believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. We give our children regular feedback on their learning so that they understand what it is that they need to do better. We use information collected from assessments to allow us to plan lessons based on detailed knowledge of each pupil.

8.2. Procedures used by the school

- **National statutory tasks and tests** are externally produced and taken at the end of the Key Stages 1 & 2. A Phonics screening test is administered at the end of Year 1. They enable us to compare pupils' and the school's performance against local and national benchmarks. We use this information to set targets for improvement.
- **Non-statutory tasks and tests** enable us to keep track of children's progress and to set targets for improvement.
- The **Foundation Stage profile** is used to report on whether individual children are judged to be 'emerging', 'expected' or 'exceeding' against the seventeen (17) early learning goals.
- **Teacher assessment** is used to provide ongoing information and track how well children are achieving in each subject against specific learning criteria.
- **Annual reports** highlight assessment in all curriculum areas for all pupils. The school has a statutory responsibility to inform parents of their children's progress in all subjects every year.

The school has an annual cycle of assessment, recording and reporting which means that across the year, children's attainment in all subjects is systematically assessed.

9. Children requiring special provision

9.1. The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. Teachers constantly adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children although when more significant adaptations are required, this will be done in consultation with parents. This may include for children who have special educational needs, children with English as an additional language or children who have very well-developed learning skills or who might excel in one or more specific fields.

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- 9.2. If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. In most instances, by differentiating the curriculum, teachers are able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, and/or they have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), we work alongside parents and appropriate external agencies to provide a modified curriculum, additional resources and support.
- 9.3. We aim to give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, and achieve this by providing:
- teaching which enables children to respond at their own level;
 - enrichment tasks that broaden learning in a particular skill or knowledge area;
 - a differentiated curriculum that enables a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
 - the opportunity for children to progress through tasks at their own rate of learning as appropriate;
 - flexible organisation that enables children to work with specialist staff or with additional programmes;
 - a range of extra-curricular activities which offer children the opportunity to support or further extend their learning in a range of areas.
- 9.4. For more detailed information please read our Inclusion Policy and SEN Information Report.
- 9.5. A number of our children have particular learning and assessment requirements, which are linked to their progress in learning English as an additional language. These children have skills and knowledge about language similar to monolingual English-speaking children and their ability to participate in the full curriculum may be in advance of their communicative skills in English.

We ensure as full access as possible to the curriculum and to assessment by:

- using accessible texts and materials that suit children's ages and levels of learning;
 - providing support through use of technology, video or audio materials, dictionaries and translators, readers and amanuenses;
 - using the home or first language where appropriate;
- 9.6. We use a range of ongoing strategies to identify children with additional needs and this process begins as soon as the child joins our school.

10. The role of parents in teaching and learning

- 10.1. We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We aim to inform parents regularly about what and how their children are learning by:
- holding **termly parents' evenings** to share our school strategies for teaching and learning and to provide information about children's attainment;
 - **sharing information with parents at the start of each term** in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying;

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- sending **annual reports to parents** in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;
- **working with parents** to help them support their children's learning at home.

10.2. We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We expect parents to:

- 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 at school;
- promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- fulfil the requirements set out in the home/school agreement.
- support children with reading, mental arithmetic, and spelling

11. The role of the Governing Body in teaching and learning

11.1. The school's governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's policies on teaching and learning. In particular they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are appropriate 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 achievement;
- ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning policies through the school's self-review processes.

11.2. Governors at St Michael's are actively involved in supporting and monitoring teaching and learning. They do this in a number of ways.

The Curriculum Committee monitors implementation of the school development plan, and evaluates and reviews associated policies. The full Governing Body receives a termly report from the Headteacher. Governors also carry out focused visits to the school in order to learn more about a specific aspect of teaching and learning and support the Governing Body in its aims and duties.

12. Monitoring & Evaluation

12.1. 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 policy will be reviewed on a 3 year cycle.

13. Complaints

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- 13.1. If a parent wishes to complain about this policy they should, in the first instance, raise it informally with their child's class teacher. Any issues that remain unresolved at this stage will be managed according to the school's *Complaints Policy*. This is available on the school's website or, on request, from the school office.