



Teaching and Learning Policy

The Teaching and Learning Policy Document relating to St George's C of E Primary School

was approved by the Governing Body on

02.11.22

Our Vision

We are a caring Christian community

We help and respect each other

We enjoy learning and embrace challenges

We persevere and learn from our mistakes

So we can grow into enthusiastic, confident learners for life

Introduction

At St George's C of E Primary School, we believe in lifelong learning – children and adults alike are open to learning new things every day. We have high standards and expectations and we encourage children to aim high and embrace challenge. Our pupils know, however, that they will be supported on their journey and we promote an open atmosphere in which children are encouraged to ask questions, make mistakes and, above all, enjoy their learning. As a Church of England School, our practice is rooted in our core values and sits within our caring, Christian community.



Principles

We are committed to providing a safe yet stimulating learning environment in which all children are challenged through high quality teaching and supported through excellent pastoral care. Our core business is education yet we believe that school is about much more than academic achievement: it is about developing a love of learning, a capacity for independent and critical thinking and self-confidence.

Our aim for children leaving St George's to begin Secondary School is that they should be:

- Proficient in English and Maths so that they can access the full curriculum
- Enthusiastic learners eager to improve
- Aware of their own strengths and areas for development
- Confident to tackle new challenges, academic or otherwise

- Enquiring and critical – thinking in depth about their learning

We encourage children and adults to cultivate a Growth Mindset. Based on Carol Dweck’s work on Mindset Theory, we promote the belief that most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. We celebrate those who demonstrate these attitudes and aim to model them at every opportunity. The St George’s Yeti is our school mascot; he reminds us not to say ‘I can’t do it,’ but ‘I can’t do it **yet!**’



Every week, two children from each class are awarded ‘Star of the Week’ based on their attitude to learning. Throughout the week, teachers can send children to share their work and achievements with the Headteacher.

Curriculum

All planning for Years 1-6 is based on the 2014 National Curriculum. We plan our wider curriculum topics from the ‘Dimensions’ Curriculum, with units mapped out on a two year rolling programme. Dimensions organises the content and coverage of the National Curriculum non-core subjects into meaningful, engaging units of work. Progression in both knowledge and skills is mapped out across the three phases of the school (Key Stage One, Lower Key Stage Two, Upper Key Stage Two) to guide teachers’ planning and assessment.

See ‘Curriculum Intent Statement’ for further details.

We make links to English and Maths wherever possible so that pupils have an opportunity to apply and transfer their skills within the context of their termly topic. However, we do not force links where there are none.

In addition to the knowledge and skills detailed in the National Curriculum, we also take the following into consideration when planning a term’s topic:

- How to **engage** and **enthuse** the children, particularly at the start of the topic
- Providing a **context for learning** in as many curriculum areas as possible
- Planning ‘**essential learning experiences**’ to bring the topic to life eg. trip/ in-school experience.
- ‘**Hooks**’ for writing – plan for written outcomes across the term (linked to the topic where possible) with a clear, **motivating purpose**

- Find and use **high-quality texts**, linked to the topic where appropriate, to broaden children’s reading experience and act as a stimulus for writing
- The topic should be evident in the classroom environment
- Making use of the **local community, including St George’s Church**, to enhance children’s learning across the curriculum, including in RE lessons
- Planning **engaging, hands-on** activities to bring learning to life
- Making use of our **outdoor space** where practical
- Termly themed weeks which provide an opportunity to plan for progression across the whole school eg. the ‘Take One Book’ approach during our annual Book Week

Learning Environment

We ensure that the Learning Environment is welcoming, well-ordered and supportive. The following features are evident in every classroom:

- St George’s Core Values
- Dimensions character traits
- Reading area with relevant displays promoting reading for pleasure
- Evidence of the writing process – a work in progress across a unit
- Evidence of mathematical problem-solving / application
- The termly topic should be very evident around the classroom
- Celebration of good work and achievements.

Resources are readily available to pupils and are clearly labelled, promoting independence.

Classroom organisation

The teacher organises seating taking into account a wide range of factors and the seating plan will change throughout the year. The seating arrangements are also fluid within lessons, as teachers respond to pupils’ needs and target activities and support accordingly (see Planning and Assessment below).

As a reflection of our Growth Mindset approach, we do not use the language of ‘top group’ or ‘top table’ and we do not publicly compare or rank pupils.

Planning and Assessment

Long-term planning is set out in the two-year rolling programme. Weekly/daily plans are written by teachers for their own use in the classroom; there is no set format but it is expected that plans will be annotated with daily observations and assessments in order to inform next steps.

Target Tracker is used to track pupils' attainment and progress. At the beginning of each academic year, teachers work with the Head to set individual targets for pupils in Reading, Writing and Maths. These are based on previous performance and the teachers' knowledge of the children. Progress towards these targets is discussed on a termly basis at Pupil Progress meetings. For these subjects, teachers input summative assessment judgements for each pupil on a termly basis, in the second half of each term. A range of information is used to reach this judgement, including ongoing formative assessment and more formal tests in Reading (PIRA) and Maths (PUMA). Question-level analysis of these tests enables teachers to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding for cohorts and individuals.

Other, non-core subjects are assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

At St George's, assessment is an ongoing process. Teachers, and Learning Support Assistants, constantly assess pupils' understanding in order to provide activities at the appropriate level of challenge and give targeted support where needed. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own level of confidence and understanding too. Within a lesson, pupils are expected to seek support if they need it or challenge if they are ready for it. At the end of a lesson, pupils in Key Stage Two may write a learning comment to signal to the teacher their level of confidence and understanding. Teachers then plan the next lesson taking into account all the assessment information, providing consolidation tasks or additional input for those needing it and further challenge to deepen the understanding of others.

Phonics Teaching

The National Curriculum for English states:

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

We teach Phonics using the Read, Write, Inc programme. This is a highly-structured programme which introduces sounds in a systematic way. Children learn the English alphabetic code: first they learn one way to read the 40+ sounds and blend these sounds into words, then learn to read the same sounds with alternative graphemes.

We teach Phonics daily for 30 minutes in small groups across the Early Years and Key Stage One class (Years R-2). These are led by teachers and support staff, all trained in delivering the Read, Write, Inc programme. The sessions are fast-paced, repetitive and fun; pupil progress is reviewed at least half-termly.

Lively phonic books are closely matched to children's increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky' words and, as children re-read the stories, their fluency increases. Children take home a 'Book Bag Book' matched to their Phonics groups and a black-and-white copy of the book being read in the daily sessions. In addition to this, they are able to choose a third book from a selection of age-appropriate books in the classroom.

Independent Learners

We encourage, and expect, children to take a proactive approach to their learning and to engage with the learning process. Independence is promoted in a variety of different ways depending on the age and stage of the pupils:

- Access to resources / equipment to support learning
- Editing writing (self and peer)
- Pupil response to teacher marking and feedback, including completing challenges set or making amendments as required
- Self-evaluation against targets

Home Links

We work hard to build positive relationships with families and believe they have a crucial role to play in supporting children's learning. Home Learning begins in the Early Years where we focus on promoting reading for pleasure and learning to read. Parents are also encouraged to contribute to children's Learning Journey by documenting achievements, experiences and activities at home.

As children move through the school, homework focuses on the fundamental skills of reading, spelling and maths fluency (facts such as number bonds and times tables).

Children are expected to read regularly with an adult and we encourage families to read to and with their children throughout the Early Years and Key Stages One and Two. Spellings are practised at home and teachers assess individual pupil progress, providing additional support where needed. Homework activities set will link to these basic skills or will directly link to work done in a lesson in order to consolidate learning. Practical or research-based tasks linked to the term's topic may also be set.

Amendments Nov 22:

- *Principles: Removed all reference to 'Learning Powers'*
- *Curriculum: Updated to reflect use of Dimensions Curriculum*