



Teaching and Learning Policy

St Joseph's is a **happy**, welcoming **community**, enriched by our **diversity**.

A place where we **love** one another, love **learning**, love **Jesus** and **love life**.

Date of Policy	Autumn Term 2024
Next Review	Autumn Term 2025

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we believe that in order for successful learning to take place children need to be valued, motivated, feel safe and experience a flexible and varied teaching approach according to individual needs.

We aspire to deliver inspiring teaching that is outstanding through:

- Expertise and enthusiasm to challenge and inspire pupils
- Confidence, creativity and flexibility in approaches
- A positive rapport and skilful communication to set a great ethos
- Knowledge of pupils to pitch, pace, challenge and support every individual

We value each child as a unique individual; teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We strive to meet the needs of all children and to ensure all statutory requirements are met including matters of inclusion.

Children learn through their total experience. This policy guides what children do, what teachers do, how time is managed, the organisation of the classroom and what the school as an organisation does to create an effective and well managed learning environment in which the individual needs of each child can be met.

Aims

- To lay the foundations for a lifetime of learning through providing active, challenging and enjoyable learning experiences for pupils who will be involved in and aware of the process of learning and become increasingly independently responsible for their learning
- To encourage the mental, physical and spiritual growth of pupils; to stimulate their imagination; to open their eyes to the world around them; to develop their powers of reasoning and to enable them to apply the skills they have learnt to situations they may meet in their everyday lives
- A high level of literacy and numeracy and an enquiring mind which wants to learn more each day
- To ensure that all pupils are provided with high quality learning experiences which lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement
- To allow pupils to make good progress in their learning
- To promote independence
- To prepare pupils to become confident, well-grounded and informed adults by teaching them skills which will inform the basis of their future needs
- To engender social skills that enable children to work and communicate
- To provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities
- To enable pupils to read and express themselves fluently and knowledgeably, to compute accurately and to write legibly
- To communicate an ethos of high expectation throughout the school community

- To promote the use of resources which stimulate the motivation to learn
- To promote effective links between the school, the child's home and the community which promote aspiration and high expectations
- To develop each child's desire to achieve
- To promote pride in achievement and a desire to succeed
- To train, develop and support teachers in their vital role of unlocking the latent skills, knowledge and potential of pupils
- To provide children with a context and purpose for their learning
- To help pupils understand the traditions on which our society is based and to enable eventually to make critical and realistic judgements about such concepts as truth, fairness, justice, tolerance and co-operation. To give them opportunities to explore their natural heritage and to understand themselves
- To learn not only our religious truths and moral values, but also tolerance, acceptance, and appreciation of other races, cultures and religions

Effective Learning and Teaching

At St. Joseph's Catholic School we believe children learn best when:

1. They feel happy, safe and secure

This means that we will see

- Positive, happy, respectful relationships throughout the school
- An all-pervasive caring attitude among children and adults
- Familiar routines for regular events e.g. register, handing out/collecting materials etc. enabling smoothly organised classrooms
- Children aware of boundaries
- Children safe from physical, mental and emotional harm or bullying
- Children are confident and allowed to learn from their mistakes
- Respect for people and property
- Children's learning experiences based on previous learning

2. They feel valued and appreciated

This means that we will see

- Positive, affirming words and actions from the teacher to all pupils
- Children given opportunities to share their point of view and listen to others (use of talk partners)

- Teachers knowing, acknowledging and encouraging the talents, gifts, strengths, aptitudes and interests of the children in their class
- Teachers actively encouraging an atmosphere of encouragement and appreciation

3. **Their learning is carefully planned and structured**

This means that we will see

- Teachers plan carefully structured lessons and programs to ensure that there is a broad, balanced, rich and relevant curriculum based on children's prior learning and achievement
- Teachers use data to inform planning
- Teaching built on prior knowledge
- All lessons to have quality learning intentions and children understand why the lesson is important
- All lessons to have clear success criteria
- Children have time to reflect and self-evaluate their learning
- Lessons are evaluated in order to modify and improve future teaching
- Teachers systematically assess and track children's progress throughout the school
- Children have opportunities to engage in sustained activities
- Teachers planning to teach a combination of skills and knowledge leading to understanding that can then be applied in other situations
- Teachers knowing when to depart from prepared planning to allow for more fruitful learning opportunities to take place
- Tasks and opportunities that the children perform are safe, careful risk assessments are completed and parent consent obtained when needed
- Teaching Assistants are deployed effectively

4. **They are confident, excited and inspired to learn**

This means that we will see

- Teachers who can inspire children to want to learn and achieve their true potential in all areas of life
- A wide variety of activities where possible based on first-hand experience and all made relevant to the child so that they can see why they are doing what they are doing
- Learning experiences in each unit of the creative curriculum supported by visits or visitors
- Adults asking the children a range of questions to really challenge, develop and support their understanding and thinking (key/probing questions)
- Children's learning experiences based on previous learning
- A variety of grouping allowing for flexibility and effective teaching, e.g. working individually, in pairs/groups of three or four, ability/mixed ability, subject specific groups etc

- Classrooms organised so that children can be independent learners, with resources and materials and resources clearly labelled and readily available
- A global perspective to children's learning
- ICT supporting learning whenever possible or appropriate
- A positive attitude to learning throughout the school day
- Adults giving clear instructions
- Children engaged in purposeful learning from the start of the school day to the end of it

1. **5. They are actively involved in their own learning**

This means that we will see

- Children being taught how to learn
- Children being encouraged to ask 'enquiring questions'
- Classrooms organised for independent learning with high quality resources and materials, clearly labelled and readily available for children to use independently
- Children having time and confidence to express their own opinions and listen to /discuss those of others (use of talk partners)
- Children routinely being involved with self-assessment

6. **They are surrounded inspired by examples of excellence**

This means that we will see

- Classrooms attractively arranged with high quality children's work attractively mounted and displayed
- Teachers using excellent examples of writing, oracy, art, presentation, drawing etc. to inspire children to high standards of achievement
- High quality classroom displays with a range of interesting pictures, books and artefacts to inspire children
- High quality resources and materials, clearly labelled and readily available for children to use independently
- An absence of mess and clutter
- A classroom where the theme of work is immediately clear
- Display boards carefully mounted and regularly maintained with a range of content – finished children's work, interactive displays to stimulate interest/inspiration, working walls etc
- Displays changed termly
- Excellent role models from adults (teachers, teaching assistants and helpers) and children

- Opportunities for children to learn from other adults e.g. visiting artists, people who help us, sportspeople and members of the local community

7. **Their learning is relevant and practical, drawing from their own interests and rooted in first-hand experience**

This means that we will see

- Children actively engaged in work from first-hand experience
- Children being able to explain what they are learning and why they are learning it
- Children working from a range of starting points including the school grounds and the locality of Sunderland
- Teachers reading fiction to the children
- A range of pictures, (paintings/photos. drawings etc.) books and artefacts, models etc. in the classroom for them to use and be interested and inspired by
- A wide range of extra-curricular clubs where children can explore new areas of learning and practice/extend/develop ones already started

8. **They understand how to improve**

This means that we will see

- Children reflecting on their achievements and areas for development , in work, behaviour, attitudes and relationships
- Children able to self and peer assess against criteria and verbalise what they have learnt and what they could do to improve
- Children working towards targets set to ensure progression
- Children being increasingly involved in target setting as they progress through the school

9. **Teachers have high, but realistic expectations of them**

This means that we will see

- Children and teachers discussing success criteria and expectations
- Challenge for the more able in every lesson
- A positive 'can do' ethos promoted throughout the school
- A culture where achievement is expected but also celebrated
- Children developing resilience, stamina and determination in seeing a task through to successful conclusion
- Children being held accountable for their work – both quality and quantity

10. **They are physically comfortable and alert**

This means that we will see

- Tables suitably arranged for ease of working, flexibility, purposeful discussion, provision of quiet corners, large working surfaces.
- Chairs will be sufficient in number for the activities in the classroom and leave enough room for children to move easily around the room
- Storage units arranged to support different areas of the curriculum, support a project or activity, give character to a room
- Water available to children when they need it
- Children not spending too long on the carpet

11. **They have the right environment to work in – calm, quiet and productive with minimal distraction**

This means that we will see

- Children working quietly, with a noise level appropriate to the activity in hand, but never loud so as to cause distress, or disturbance to children's learning or disruption to neighbouring classrooms (including the hall)
- Children able to work hard in a sustained manner
- Activities on the board/interactive whiteboard at the start of the day

12. **There is a strong mutually supportive relationship with home**

This means that we will see

- Parents/Carers (and grandparents/relatives) being encouraged to help children at home through homework and other activities
- Regular planned meetings with parents to celebrate achievements and highlight targets and areas for development
- Parents evenings to celebrate learning
- An open door policy throughout the school which makes parents feel they are always welcome
- Parents encouraged to support pupils with activities such as homework, attending class liturgical prayer, performances and fundraising events etc

A Check List for Planning Units of Learning

These should be present in every unit of learning:

- Planned opportunities for speaking and listening (e.g. use of hot seating, freeze frames) when appropriate
- Pupil voice (what do children want to learn/do?)
- Assessment for Learning

- First hand experiences
- Opportunities for writing
- Different groupings
- Display or indication of theme in the classroom
- Assessment opportunities for the teacher
- Opportunities for the children to ask questions and pursue answers
- Time to produce work of real quality
- ICT
- Ensure opportunities for application of skills (literacy, numeracy, history, geography etc) across the curriculum

Classroom Management

Display

Display should be used to create an attractive and stimulating environment. The work displayed should be of a high standard, use both 2D and 3D in a variety of media and be changed regularly. It should include work on different aspects of the curriculum and reflect the individual child's efforts as well as ability.

Routines and Rules

Routines and Rules in the classroom contribute to a healthy learning environment. To be effective they should be:

- Agreed by the children and clearly understood
- Fair and consistent
- Realistic and positive
- Kept to a minimum but enforced
- Daily activities with which the children are familiar

All rules should result in the children knowing the boundaries of behaviour and be set within the terms of The Behaviour Policy

Time Management

It is important that activities are well planned so that each child is working at their correct level, that they begin promptly and that the initial pace is maintained. All children should know what to do as soon as they enter the classroom and after they have completed an activity. A reminder list of tasks for individuals who have completed work ahead of the group is often helpful. Efficient planning and classroom organisation will significantly reduce time-wasting activities.

Class Organisation

- The class Inclusion file and medical file should be readily available in the class cupboard
- To ensure continuity, teachers should leave written guidance and suggested activities for all planned absences from the classroom

School Policies

School Policies are on the school 360 drive. It is the duty of each teacher to be familiar with school policies and to apply them.

Special Educational Needs

The learning environment should be organised to ensure the learning needs of all children are met and the best work of children displayed in the classroom and around the school. Teachers must ensure that work is differentiated according to need, refer to Individual Education Plans when planning and liaise with learning support staff to ensure effective use of time. Teachers should also take account of the needs of the most able pupils when planning.

Equal Opportunities

All children have the right to equal opportunities. Staff expectations of behaviour and performance by all children should be the same. Groups, lines and all activities should be mixed where possible. Teachers must ensure that the same children do not dominate in group work, including use of the computer. All activities, including extra-curricular are open to all children, numbers permitting.

Record Keeping

All teachers should keep detailed records of their work with the class and of individual children's activities and progress. The school has a policy for planning, assessment recording and reporting of National Curriculum subjects that must be adhered to.

Role of Teaching Assistants

We know that Teaching Assistants make a major contribution to the work of our school and we recognise the significant contribution that they and other adult helpers can make in raising standards and increasing efficiency.

Teaching Assistants and other adult helpers are deployed in a variety of ways. Sometimes they work with individual children and sometimes small groups. They also support with the preparation and storage of classroom equipment to support learning. They will be engaged in a wide range of tasks and should:

- Value every pupil irrespective of ability, race, gender, age or attainment
- Respond to pupil needs yet encourage independence
- Demonstrate by example that learning is an ongoing process
- Be clear on the goals of the learning process
- Help pupils understand instructions through repetition, rephrasing and modelling
- Be able to give clear, accurate exposition and lucid explanation
- Be effective in the demonstration of key points and ideas
- Be effective and sensitive in using questioning techniques
- Contribute to planning challenging differentiated learning tasks
- Uphold clear classroom routines and systems
- Monitor the effectiveness of the planned activities and feedback to the teacher and Special Educational Needs coordinator
- Contribute to Support plans and review meetings as appropriate

The Role of Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to learning and teaching. In particular, they:

- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively
- Ensure that the school buildings are used optimally to support learning and teaching
- Check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations
- Seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management promote good quality teaching
- Monitor the effectiveness of the school's learning and teaching approaches/policies through the school self-review processes which include reports from subject leaders, the Headteacher's termly report to governors and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff.

Monitoring and Review

In order to evaluate, reflect and progress learning and teaching across the school, the following will take place:

- Lesson observations, using the Ofsted criteria in conjunction with this teaching and learning policy
- Work scrutinies
- Moderation of pupils' work

- Moderation of pupils work
- Data analysis
- Tracking of individual pupils
- Use Optional SATs

We are aware of the need to monitor the schools teaching and learning policy and to review it regularly so we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. This policy therefore will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

How to Help Teachers to Become Even Better

The three ways to write Learning Intentions:

1. Children will know that
2. Children will be able to
3. Children will develop their understanding of/that.....

Why it is important to write good Learning Intentions

1. They help to define appropriate activities

(Knowledge can be taught to children; skills have to be carried out by children; understanding develops over time as a result of different experiences).

2. They help to define time

(Knowledge can be taught over a relatively short space of time; skills have to be practised and take most time; understanding develops over long periods of time).

3. They help to define assessment

(Knowledge can be pencil and paper tested, skills must be observed; understanding has to be judged).

The eight key lesson skills:

1. Beginnings and endings
2. Pace
3. Teaching Style
4. Limited focus
5. High expectations
6. Questioning
7. Observing
8. Adaptive teaching

Moving from Activities to Outcomes

The focus of the 'beginning' and 'end' to lessons should be on what children are learning rather than what they are doing. This means that we need to talk with them about:

- What they will be expected to learn during the lesson or over the next week (the time span will differ depending on their age)
- How/what, they will be doing is linked to what they are expected to learn
- What they have learned and how it fits with previous and future learning

This need not take an enormous amount of time, but it should happen very frequently.

Creating High Expectations

1. Start lessons promptly and efficiently
2. Define learning objectives with pupils
3. Make sure children are clear about what to do and how to be successful by using Visible Learning grids
4. Mark work against learning objectives/success criteria
5. Keep children on task
6. Praise positive work habits rather than criticising poor habits
7. Create a working classroom