

St John the Baptist Church of England (VA) Primary School



Loving learning, Building
Community, Growing in faith

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Curriculum Policy 2024-2025

Review

This policy was reviewed by the Governing Body in Autumn 2024 and will be reviewed every year.

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Signed: Jill Carr, Chair of Governors

At St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School we believe that children are ‘a gift from God, a real blessing’ Psalm 127:3; each child is precious and unique. Through our curriculum, underpinned by our school and Christian values, we aim to nurture and challenge our children to flourish and be the best they can be.

Loving Learning, Building Community, Growing in Faith
“Prepare the Way” Isaiah 40:3

1. Intent – why and what

The breadth of our curriculum is designed with these goals in mind:

- To give pupils the appropriate experiences to develop as confident, responsible citizens of the future – social responsibility with all members having a voice (democracy) and to feel a valued and vital member of our school community.
- To give pupils as many opportunities as possible – all pupils have well-planned opportunities to participate in the full breadth of the curriculum that lead to a better understanding of the world.
- A coherent, structured, academic curriculum that leads to a deep level of understanding utilising pedagogies that are based on evidence in cognitive science.

Community

We have developed our curriculum drivers to help shape our curriculum, bring about the aims and Christian values of our school, and respond to the needs of our community.

- Community – Understanding our local context and needs
- Love and Compassion
- Resilience
- Koinonia and forgiveness
- **Knowledge Building**
- **Diversity**
- **Enrichment**

Opportunities

- The school plans the curriculum to allow for sustained periods of time studying subjects. As well as the National Curriculum, there are experiences from the wider curriculum based on the curriculum drivers that are thread through the full curriculum for pupils.
- Pupils will build their cultural capital – the background knowledge of the world pupils need to infer meaning from what they read – as well as promoting oracy and new vocabulary, which, in turn, helps pupils to express themselves in a sophisticated, mature way.
- Opportunities will extend to providing a curriculum that will prepare them for life whatever their circumstances. The school aims to support pupils to value their education.

Success

Underpinned by our core drivers, our academic curriculum maps and our skills and knowledge ladders set out:

- a clear list of the breadth of topics that will be covered;
- the build-up of skills and knowledge pupils should acquire;
- Sequence of progression within the threshold concepts.

Implementation

2. Curriculum

The curriculum is all the planned activities that the school organises in order to promote learning, personal growth and development. It includes the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, the content of which is arranged in an order securely based on evidence associated with age-related progression. Along with this content is a range of planned activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of our children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum' or what the children learn from relationships in school, 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, whilst developing knowledge, skills and attitudes to learning, in order that they achieve their true academic potential.

3. Powerful knowledge

Powerful knowledge starts from the idea of equal citizens with an equal entitlement to knowledge; an entitlement that is not limited on grounds of assumed ability of motivation, ethnicity, class or gender. Powerful knowledge comes from specialist communities and centuries of learning; it does change, but much more slowly than people believe' (Michael Young, Professor of education at UCL).

We recognise the school's responsibility to transmit shared and powerful knowledge through the curriculum.

- Knowledge that provides pupils with new ways of thinking about the world
- Knowledge that provides pupils with powerful ways of analysing, explaining and understanding
- Knowledge that gives pupils some power over their own knowledge
- Knowledge that enables pupils to follow and participate in debates on significant local, national and global issues
- Knowledge of the world

Powerful knowledge opens doors and without this kind of knowledge, children remain dependent upon those who have it. This shared and powerful knowledge is verified through learned communities and the subject leaders strive to keep up to date with guidance provided by subject associations and current research when deciding upon curriculum content.

4. Curriculum coherence, organisation and planning

When organising the curriculum and learning opportunities, we start with the questions. 'Why this?' and 'Why now?' We believe that the 'WHY' has to be much more than getting pupils to the age-related expectation (ARE) in National Curriculum subjects. We are convinced that if we get the curriculum right, academic success will be one of many positive outcomes for the children.

A whole school curriculum overview is in place and is regularly reviewed by school leaders, subject leaders, classroom practitioners and stakeholders. This overview indicates what will be

taught in each term, which subjects are linked by a theme or project, and enrichment activities. Careful attention is paid to how the material to be studied in each subject is organised. The key knowledge and concepts taught in each subject are clear. Any cross-curricular links within the projects are meaningful, ensuring that there is a clear rational and conceptual rigour underpinning the project approach to curriculum planning. This approach takes account of necessary prior knowledge when introducing new content. A certain degree of flexibility and creativity is encouraged. By being clear about why and when we are teaching a certain skill, knowledge or concept, we are confident to be spontaneous and, when appropriate, change the context of the learning to make it more meaningful to pupils. Objectives can be covered in a different order, or a different way; skills and knowledge can be applied across different curriculum areas. Importantly this gives us some freedom to respond to pupil interest or things that happen in the news, city, environment, etc.

Each teaching team uses the long-term plan or overview to produce medium term plans which break down the planned learning into a sequence of lessons. Medium-term planning gives clear guidance on the objectives, teaching strategies and key knowledge and vocabulary that we cover when teaching each subject. This ensures progression in learning and provides children with many opportunities to consolidate learning and develop mastery. Fluency activities feature across the curriculum to further support the commitment of key knowledge to long-term memory.

The medium-term plans provide a sequence of weekly or daily lessons. These medium term plans are adapted and adjusted in the short term, so that the needs of the children are fully met in terms of challenge and support. Year group teams plan together but individual teachers ensure the plans are appropriate for their classes. Flexibility and creativity are encouraged so that children are engaged and inspired to learn.

5. The Early Years Foundation Stage

The curriculum that we teach in the reception class meets the requirements set out in the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Our curriculum planning focuses on developing children's knowledge, understanding and skills, as set out in the Framework document. Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through engaging in well-planned structured activities along with opportunities to apply and deepen their learning through play. Teaching in the EYFS classes build on the experiences of the children in any pre-school learning. We build positive partnerships with the pre-school providers in the area to enable a smooth transition.

Children are taught to read using the sounds that they have learnt. Texts for shared, guided and independent reading are organised and selected to match the sounds that children have been taught each week.

6. Personal Development

Essential Skills and Attributes - Personal Effectiveness

- a) Self-improvement (including through constructive self-reflection, seeking and utilising constructive feedback and effective goal-setting).
- b) Identifying unhelpful 'thinking traps' (e.g. fixed mindset, generalising and stereotyping).
- c) Resilience (including self-motivation, perseverance and adaptability).
- d) Self-regulation (including promotion of a positive growth mindset and managing strong emotions and impulses).
- e) Recognising and managing peer influence and the need for peer approval including evaluating perceived social norms.
- f) Self organisation (including time management).

- g) Strategies for identifying and accessing appropriate help and support.
- h) Clarifying own values (including reflection on the origins of personal values and beliefs) and re-evaluating values and beliefs in the light of new learning experiences and evidence.
- i) Recalling and applying knowledge creatively and in new situations.
- j) Developing and maintaining a healthy self-concept (including self-confidence, realistic self-image, self-worth, assertiveness, self-advocacy and self-respect).

Essential Skills and Attributes - Interpersonal and social effectiveness

- a) Empathy and compassion (including impact on decision-making and behaviour).
- b) Respect of others' right to their own beliefs, values and opinions.
- c) Discernment in evaluating the argument and opinions of others (including challenging 'group think').
- d) Skills for employability including:
 - Active listening and communication (including assertiveness skills), Team working, Negotiation (including flexibility, self-advocacy and compromise within an awareness of personal boundaries
 - Leadership skills, Presentation skills
- e) Enterprise skills and attributes (e.g. aspiration, creativity, goal setting, identifying opportunities, taking positive risks).
- f) Recognising, evaluating and utilising strategies for managing influence.
- g) Valuing and respecting diversity.
- h) Using these skills and attributes to build and maintain healthy relationships of all kinds.

Essential Skills and Attributes - Managing risk and decision-making (integral to personal, interpersonal and social effectiveness)

- a) Identification, assessment (including prediction) and management of positive and negative risk to self and others.
- b) Formulating questions (as part of an enquiring approach to learning and to assess the value of information).
- c) Analysis (including separate fact and reasoned argument from rumour, speculation and opinion).
- d) Assessing the validity and reliability of information.
- e) Identifying links between values and beliefs, decisions and actions.
- f) Making decisions.

7. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (including British Values)

Across the curriculum pupils have opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and skills.

The Spiritual Development of children is shown by their:

- Ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings, values and faiths.
- Sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible.
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences.

The Moral Development of children is shown by their:

- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives. To have a respect for the civil and criminal law of England.
- Understanding of the consequences of their behaviour.
- Interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues. Able to accept, respect and appreciate that others may have a different viewpoint.

The Social Development of children is shown by their:

- Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively.
- Willingness to volunteer.
- Interest in, and understanding of, the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.
- Acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, respect and tolerance of those with differing faiths and beliefs. Their attitudes towards these British values allows the children to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

The Cultural Development of children is shown by their:

- Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others.
- Willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities.
- Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain.
- Interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity.
- The extent to which pupils understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

8. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers plan lessons so that pupils with SEND and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons are planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our equality policy, SEND policy and information report.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets.
- The school is teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement.
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEND).
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate.
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to changes which may affect the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- The governing board subcommittee is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions.
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN.

The role of the curriculum subject leader:

- To provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject
- To ensure curriculum coverage and progression in the subject
- To support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject
- To monitor pupil progress in that subject area
- To provide efficient resource management for the subject.

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time when required, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. It is the role of each subject leader to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each subject leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and that progression is planned. All staff will ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.

11. Monitoring arrangements

Our governing body is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented and ensuring the curriculum is broad and balanced. Governors review each subject area and meet termly with subject leaders.

The Deputy headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The headteacher and senior staff monitor the plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum.

Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They monitor planning, conduct book scrutines, talk to a range of pupils to capture their voice and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- EYFS policy
- SEN policy and information report
- Equality policy
- Subject policies
- Teaching and Learning Policy

Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for maintained schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the National Curriculum programmes of study

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

It complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.