



DEVELOPING A LOVE OF LEARNING



The National Curriculum

We recognise that a firm grasp of literacy and numeracy skills underpins all learning, and teaching in these areas is given the highest priority. For example, all children have a daily session to develop their understanding of phonics.

The school follows the new National Curriculum. We have our own set of very diverse and child-centred plans to deliver the national curriculum. We supplement these with additional activities to enrich learning so that it is directly relevant to the needs of our children. These plans ensure that the full requirements of all subjects are met, by linking them into thematic units with clear subject learning goals.

Children follow a number of different units of learning a year: all are child-friendly, modern-day topics which appeal to children of primary school age. Each unit incorporates a range of subjects including science, history, geography, ICT, art and PE and provides many opportunities to promote learning in literacy and numeracy. Teachers use a variety of approaches to ensure children's active engagement. These will include active enquiries, personal research, learning outside the classroom, participating in role-play, and learning from each other.

This is a much more exciting and memorable way of learning than studying subjects separately. It allows children to make connections between different areas of their experience, and relates their learning to the world they live in.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Nursery and the Reception Year follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. We aim to establish a strong partnership with parents from the beginning, so that together we can cater for children's individual needs. We recognise that all children are unique, and that they learn in different ways and at different rates.

All learning activities are carefully planned to extend children's capability in a wide range of skills. This enables all children to grow in confidence, self-assurance and resilience. In all activities, particular emphasis is placed on developing children's use of language.

The Nursery and Reception classes work closely together, sharing the same well-resourced learning space, indoors and out. This provides a safe and stimulating environment where children can explore their world, develop their creativity and make positive relationships with adults and other children.

Religious Education

Every child is respected as an individual, some of whom are Catholic, or are practicing in another faith or who do not practice in any religious faith. All members of our school are recognised as being at different stages of their own 'journey in faith'. As a Catholic school, we have various duties with regard to the Catholic faith and religious development of all of our pupils. It is part of our mission to ensure that all children are enabled to maximise their potential. Ultimately, it is through the education of Gospel values that we help children to understand how these are part of our everyday lives and help us feel a sense of belonging as part of a wider faith community.

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning

We give systematic attention to key aspects of children's social learning and emotional well-being. Weekly lessons address such areas as understanding another's point of view, working in a group, sticking at things when they get difficult, resolving conflict and managing worries. Acquiring these skills helps children to gain a positive attitude to their learning and to their behaviour. The themes are not covered in isolation, but relate to other features of school life, such as the School Council, circle time and the playground buddy system.

We have recently developed our school's provision to include systems and practices that are developed through the 'Thrive' approach. In doing this, we aim to ensure that we offer everything we possibly can to meet every child's individual social and emotional needs, whatever these may be. The aim of this is to reduce any problem that a child may have that prevents them from learning as well as they could. By removing these barriers, children can access learning as easily as possible and make the best progress possible.

St Mary's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.