



St. Nicholas Catholic Primary School



Policy on Teaching & Learning

Policy Written & Agreed:

Ratified by Full Governing Body:

To be reviewed:

September 2023

September 2024



St. Nicholas

Whole School Policy on Teaching & Learning

This Teaching & Learning policy:-

- reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole staff;
- was discussed, written and agreed by the whole staff;
- has been approved by the Governing body.

The implementation and ownership of this policy is the responsibility of the whole staff.

The overall accountability and effectiveness of the policy will be the responsibility of the Executive Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

At St. Nicholas Catholic Primary School we provide all staff with a passion to provide the highest quality teaching and learning for our children. We believe that it is our mission to teach, live and learn as God intended to ensure we live our lives as God wanted us to; highlighted in our mission statement lead line: We live and learn in the light of Christ.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 At St. Nicholas Catholic Primary School we believe in the concept of life-long learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding experience for everyone and should be enjoyable. Through our teaching we equip our 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 shape our children, and instil values that will help children to grow up to lead happy and rewarding lives.

2.0 OVERALL AIMS

2.1 This policy aims to promote high quality teaching and learning, acknowledging that we all learn in different ways and at a different pace. We aim to provide a rich and varied learning experience that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential. Through our teaching we aim to:

- Maximise children’s learning potential.
- Enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners.
- Encourage creativity, enthusiasm, enjoyment, motivation, independence and co-operation.
- Develop children’s self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with others.
- Develop children’s self-respect and encourage the respect of ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others.
- Show tolerance and respect for all cultures, promoting positive attitudes towards others and their possessions.
- Work with other schools in order to share good practice and moderation of assessment.
- Encourage children to learn to trust God for every aspect of their lives and their learning.

3.0 KEY PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE HIGH QUALITY TEACHING

3.1 At St. Nicholas we expect every teacher to be a good teacher, no pupil deserves less. The requirements outlined in the National Standards for Teachers sets out these expectations and we consider these to be the key principles of high quality teaching:

- Provide a broad, balanced and exciting curriculum in line with statutory requirements.
- To set high expectations for all pupils.
- To insist on high standards of behaviour to ensure learning isn’t interrupted.
- To talk regularly with children about their learning and listen to them.
- To ensure pupils know the learning objective and how they know if they have achieved that objective.
- To be knowledgeable and clear about what we are teaching.
- To reflect on our practice and challenge our own thinking.
- To ensure teachers have a clear picture of their pupils’ knowledge, skills and their level of understanding.
- To differentiate classroom activities to ensure all children become successful learners.
- To meet the needs of all learners through varied teaching strategies.
- To deliver purposeful lessons with appropriate pace and challenge.
- To link lessons to real life situations, problems and other cross curricular subjects.
- To use open-ended, challenging and probing questions.
- To continually assess, both formally and informally, the attainment of our pupils.

3.2 We use our knowledge of the children’s attainment to enhance our teaching by:

- Continually monitoring and assessing pupil progress to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child’s level of ability. (Assessment for Learning informing planning and differentiation)
- Planning work for children with Special Educational Needs, incorporating Individual Education Plan (IEP) targets.
- Close partnership with parents and all members of staff involved in the learning process.

4.0 KEY PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE HIGH QUALITY LEARNING

4.1 We believe high quality learning is reflected in the outcomes of the education experienced by our pupils and this is evident in their attainment and progress. High quality learning is achieved when pupils are:

- Enthusiastic, attentive, responsive, engaged, on task and enjoying their experience.
- Talking confidently and asking appropriate, inquisitive questions.
- Confident to ask for help and support.
- Aware of their achievements and know what they need to do to improve.
- Knowledgeable about their learning.
- Producing good quality work to a high standard.
- Develop skills and ability to work independently and collaboratively.

4.2 We are committed to providing challenge for all learners in order to enable them to succeed and reach the highest level of personal and academic achievement possible. Pupils will achieve this if we allow them to learn in a variety of ways with differentiated activities as we acknowledge that pupils learn at different rates and have different interests and abilities.

4.3 We want to develop children to be resilient and excited learners who understand the need for challenge to progress. We want to develop a curriculum that provides effective challenge and a learning environment where children are encouraged to take risks, make mistakes and work hard to succeed.

4.4 We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways that may involve the use of varied seating arrangements, these include:

- Independent work.
- Paired work.
- Group work.
- Whole-class work.
- Investigation and problem solving.
- Independent and group research.
- Asking and answering questions.
- Debates, role-plays and oral presentations.
- Watching and responding to live drama and musical presentations.
- Creative activities, designing and making activities.
- Use of technology.
- Outdoor work and visits to places of educational interest.
- Use of audio visual resources.
- Use of games.
- Participation in physical activity.

4.5 As a result of incorporating these learning techniques, there is an understanding that not all work needs to be recorded in books. Some evidence may be recorded in the ‘Class Learning Journal’ in the form of photographs, post-its, brainstorm and/or annotated worksheets.

5.0 CURRICULUM PLANNING EXPECTATIONS

- 5.1 The National Curriculum is taught according to current legislation and incorporated into our School Curriculum which is taught through a creative, topic based approach. The School Curriculum is organised through long, medium and short-term plans. We ensure all our plans:
- Meet statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, RE and Collective Worship Curriculum and SMSC.
 - Are inclusive ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils.
 - Are shared with parents via Termly Study Plans and the school website to encourage a learning partnership.
- 5.2 **Long Term Plans** (*Subject Leaders at Start of Year*) present an overview of the curriculum for each year group, by half-term for the academic year and are reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and Curriculum Subject Leaders. These are prepared by Subject Leaders deciding the specific order of progression and rationale behind this at the start of each year.
- 5.3 **Medium Term Plans** (*Class Teachers, Term by Term*) are designed to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning. They give a more detailed overview of topics taught and cross-curricular coverage. These are prepared by Class Teacher's using the Long Term Plan for guidance, showing a series of lessons over a half-term block. These are monitored by Subject Leaders, checking coverage, progression and challenge then made available to parents in the form of a 'Termly Study Plan' and these are also published on the school website.
- 5.4 **Short Term Plans** (*Class Teachers, Weekly*) are produced for the weeks teaching and learning, giving details of which lessons are being taught and the Learning Objective for each lesson. There is no expectation to provide detailed individual lesson plans for the Senior Leadership Team, however, teachers must have a clear structure and purpose to their lessons which supports the progression expected to achieve the Medium Term Planning goals. Class Teachers must share their Short Term Planning with Subject Leaders and Senior Leadership Team via the Staff Shared Area. They must produce:
- A weekly timetable of objectives in each subject for that week
 - A weekly RE plan for the 2 lessons that week
 - A weekly plan for English
 - A weekly plan for Mathematics

6.0 CLASSROOM LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- 6.1 We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning. An exciting classroom atmosphere promotes independence, risk-taking and high quality work from the children. As a school, our learning environment will:
- Promote the independent use of resources.
 - Make Learning Objectives specific and challenging for all pupils.
 - Ensure all pupils know exactly what they are going to learn and what is expected by the end of the lesson.
 - Focus on what the children are *learning*, not what they are *doing*.
("By the end of today's lesson you will all know/be able to/have an understanding of...")
 - Include Success Criteria or Steps to Success when appropriate.
 - Encourage self and peer assessment of work against the Learning Objective and Steps to Success.
 - Provide opportunities for pupils to question, think, share and talk with a partner.
 - Use questioning effectively to inspire and engage pupils.
 - Demand high expectations of behaviour to ensure an effective learning behaviour is established.
 - Stimulate pupils through classroom display.
 - Ensure all children have the opportunity to display their best work for others to see.
 - Use space effectively and ensure the layout accommodates movement.
 - Have resources easily accessible to aid learning.
 - Encourage children to be creative independent learners.

6.2 Additions to the classroom environment include:

- A focused prayer area.
- Prayers of the day displayed.
- School Mission Statement.
- ‘Working Walls’ when required.

7.0 SUPPORT STAFF

7.1 Teaching Assistants and Support Staff are highly valued at St. Nicholas. Teaching Assistants are deployed in line with the needs of the school, individual staff requirements and the school budget. We aim to make the best use of assistant’s strengths and aim to support their professional development.

7.2 The main responsibility of teaching assistants and support staff is to work with individual or small groups of children, to support the learning in the lesson and focus on facilitating children in achieving the lesson objective. Teachers and teaching assistants need to communicate effectively, discussing the learning objective and the desired learning outcomes and expectations for the children. ***Be active, not passive.*** Also, assisting in the preparation of resources, displays around the classroom and the storage of materials.

8.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of the Governing Body

8.1 The Governing Body determine, support, monitor and review the school policies and curriculum. In particular they:

- Delegate responsibility to the Head Teacher for the day to day curriculum, teaching and learning.
- Support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively.
- Ensure the buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning.
- Monitor the teaching and learning in school by conducting termly ‘Governor Learning Walks’.
- Monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning in terms of raising pupil attainment.
- Ensure that Performance Management and staff development promote quality teaching and learning.
- Participate in the School Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation process.

The Role of the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team

8.2 The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team will:

- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Monitor the performance of teachers against the National Standards for Teachers and Performance Management objectives.
- Provide opportunities for professional development and training.
- Monitor the performance of pupils by analysing data and discussion with class teachers.
- Assess the impact on consistency of the teaching and learning experience across the whole school.
- Report to Governors on the effectiveness and impact of the teaching and learning policy.

The Role of the Parents

8.3 We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn, it needs to be a partnership. Parents will:

- Have access to this teaching and learning policy via the school website.
- Be encouraged to support their child and engage with school.
- Be encouraged to work as a volunteer in school.
- Be asked to participate in surveys and questionnaires to help with school improvement.
- Ensure regular and punctual attendance.
- Not take holidays in term time.
- Encourage effort and achievement.
- Encourage the completion of homework and return it to school.
- Support the school Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy by signing the Home School Agreement.
- Ensure the school uniform policy is supported, including the rule regarding fashion hairstyles.
- Be encouraged to take an active part in the life of the school by attending;
 - School and Parish Masses
 - Parents consultation evenings and open evening
 - Class assemblies
 - School concerts
 - Social and fundraising events

The Role of the Pupils

8.4 St. Nicholas pupils will be encouraged to be effective learners by being:

- Enthusiastic, attentive and responsive
- Confident
- Knowledgeable about their learning
- Aware of their achievements and targets necessary for improvement.

8.5 The pupils at St. Nicholas have a voice, which is listened to and valued, through the School Council and they will be involved in:

- School Improvement initiatives and ideas.
- Organising meetings to discuss the effectiveness of the teaching and learning within the school.
- Collecting the thoughts of their class mates on ways in which to improve the school.

9.0 TEACHING & LEARNING PRINCIPLES

9.1 As a staff, school and governing body we have discussed what principles we want to see when we go into the classrooms at St. Nicholas Catholic Primary School, and this is what we decided.

A Teacher must be...	A Pupil needs to...
Explicit about the learning objective of the lesson activity and know where it fits into the overall scheme of work.	Have a clear understanding of the learning purpose of the lesson task and how it fits with the rest of his/her work.
Clear about the whole range of activities with which the child is to engage.	Know what to do after the task is completed.
Ensure that appropriate resources and equipment are available.	Have easy access to all necessary materials and equipment.
Explicit about how materials are organised, maintained, distributed and stored.	Know the established routines for collecting and returning equipment.
Clear about his/her expectation about behaviour, pace of work, involvement and presentation.	Understand the teacher's expectations, respect them and respond to them.
Giving regular feedback to pupils before, during and after learning tasks.	See feedback as a normal part of their daily routine and as a helpful way of helping them improve their future work.
Creating challenging opportunities to support, extend or consolidate learning, enabling children to develop confidence and personal responsibility.	Accept challenge as a tool for improving learning and work collaboratively or independently without interfering with others' work and learning.
Confident in the questioning techniques that are open ended and probe for a deeper level of understanding.	Think carefully about what the questions are asking and have the courage to respond.
Encouraging discussion between partners and groups to engage pupils and assess their level of understanding.	Engage in discussion opportunities with partners and groups to enable the pace of learning to increase.
Clear that occasional failure is necessary to help move the learning forward. Encourage the confidence to fail.	Be willing to have a go and be resilient enough to cope with occasional failure but be able to learn from it.