

# St Mark's C of E Primary School

## Learning and Teaching Policy



*Growing and Learning Together in God's Love*

We believe that our Christian ethos at St. Mark's underpins our high quality teaching which allows learning to be a rewarding and enjoyable experience, enabling all children to learn effectively and make strong progress. We want children to take pride in their achievements, have a desire to succeed, embracing our core Christian values of Faith, Forgiveness, Hope and Love and to become well rounded citizens, being aware of core British values. We also want our pupils to develop strong learning behaviours so that they have what it takes to be life-long learners.

### Aims

We aim to provide a high quality education that will enable children to:

- nurture a positive and enthusiastic attitude to learning, becoming life long learners
- develop and maintain an enquiring mind
- develop initiative, independence and self motivation in their learning.
- access high quality teaching and learning regardless of ability, gender, ethnic, cultural and religious background
- become responsible citizens upholding Christian values and RR principles which foster tolerance, sensitivity and respect for the rights, views and property of others

The purpose of this Learning and Teaching Policy is to ensure that all children learn effectively and make substantial progress in their learning. We have developed our 'High Fives' of effective teaching to make it clear what quality teaching looks like.

### What effective teaching looks like at St Mark's:

#### High Five



1. Challenge for every child, not just GDS
2. Effective modelling
3. Split/differentiated inputs and teaching of groups.
4. Clear objectives, mini-plenaries
5. Purposeful and reactive AfL

#### Low Five



1. Teacher talk / whole class teaching (at length, regular)
2. Lots of practice questions
3. Wandering adults
4. Powerpoints / Twinkle
5. Passive children, unproductive noise

High Five	What this means
1. Challenge for every child, not just GDS	All children are challenged, and we have high expectations for every single child, regardless of apparent ability.
2. Effective modelling	Teachers are able to clearly and effectively demonstrate the learning in a variety to ways.
3. Split/differentiated inputs and teaching of groups.	Not all children need to learn the same idea, or are at the same stage. Split inputs and teaching of groups enables the teacher to work with multiple groups on different ideas/concepts.
4. Clear objectives, mini-plenaries	It is imperative that clear objectives are set for the class or groups of learners, and that checks are carried out throughout the lesson to support the learning.
5. Purposeful and reactive AfL	The adult's time is purposeful, looking for misconceptions or next steps. They realise that every moment counts and use their time effectively to support learning. Assessment is a continual, active process.

## How will our staff support our pupils? Our Roles and Responsibilities

<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• become responsible citizens</li> <li>• uphold Christian values</li> <li>• develop their understanding of Christianity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make links within all areas of the curriculum with our Christian values</li> <li>• lead Christian worships</li> <li>• model, promote and challenge the views, beliefs and actions of all stakeholders</li> <li>• when appropriate teachers will seek assistance from the Parish Priest.</li> <li>• Promote fundamental British values (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs)</li> </ul>
<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have positive feedback on their work</li> <li>• learn to make realistic judgements about their own work and that of others in a constructive way</li> <li>• see achievements celebrated</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess pupils' work thoroughly and constructively and use assessment to inform planning</li> <li>• encourage pupils to use self and peer assessment.</li> <li>• celebrate achievement in worships and in class</li> </ul>
<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have access to a challenging, stimulating and high quality curriculum</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have an excellent understanding of the subjects and age ranges they teach</li> <li>• keep up to date with current initiatives</li> </ul>
<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquire knowledge, skills and understanding and be able to apply these to new situations</li> <li>• learn to work independently</li> <li>• work at challenging tasks that are appropriate to age, interest and ability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have high expectations of all pupils and set high but achievable targets and challenges</li> <li>• plan effectively to provide a broad, balanced and creative curriculum which is relevant to all pupils</li> <li>• carry out rigorous monitoring and assessment</li> </ul>
<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop responsibility for their own learning</li> <li>• select and use a range of resources</li> <li>• have faith in their own learning and abilities</li> <li>• embrace challenges and learn from criticism</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a well organised, structured environment which is stimulating and purposeful</li> <li>• use constructive and clear marking</li> <li>• develop pupils' understanding that intelligence is expandable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learn by doing, listening, watching, communicating and reflecting</li> <li>• work in a variety of situations and groups</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employ a range of teaching methods and organisational strategies which match curriculum objectives</li> </ul>
<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work productively and at an effective pace</li> <li>• work creatively and make decisions concerning their work</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use time and resources effectively</li> <li>• plan opportunities for extended and sustained thinking</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have opportunities to solve problems and take measured risks</li> </ul>	
<p><b>To enable pupils to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work in a calm, ordered and supportive environment</li> <li>• work co-operatively and collaboratively</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure children are aware of the principles of RR and Christian values</li> <li>• manage children with respect, achieving high standards of discipline</li> <li>• embed the RR values throughout the curriculum</li> </ul>

**The Senior Leadership Team will support learning and teaching by**

- verbalising their vision to all stakeholders and promoting the Christian ethos of the school and fundamental British values.
- providing opportunities for staff to observe one another’s teaching and to share good practice
- undertaking classroom observations and learning walks in order to further develop good practice
- being committed to the professional development of all staff, particularly where linked to performance management
- providing opportunities for parents to share and understand their children’s learning
- creating performance management targets closely linked to pupil achievement

**The Governors will support learning and teaching by**

- having an understanding of specific areas of the curriculum and how the Christian values underpin each one
- having an involvement in policies, and being aware of programme of study, for curriculum subjects
- regularly visiting the school and classes to see the teaching and learning in action
- discussing learning and teaching with the staff
- talking to children about their learning
- setting statutory targets and reviewing with the headteacher and relevant staff
- being aware of the enrichment activities that are undertaken within the school and how these enhance the curriculum
- ensuring their work reflects the necessary focus on learning and teaching
- taking responsibility for their own development and training as governors
- supporting the Christian ethos of the school and attending important events in the Christian calendar

**We will support parents in their understanding of the learning and teaching happening within our school by**

- holding curriculum evenings for parents to explain the curriculum of that specific year group
- sending information home regularly, keeping parents up to date with what is being taught
- keeping parents informed via the newsletter and website
- reporting to parents in which we clearly explain the attainment based against ARE made by each child and indicate how their child can improve further
- having an open door policy
- by working in unity for each child
- directing them towards external help eg. Parenting courses, Early Help Hub

**We would like parents to support the learning and teaching by**

- attending parents’ evenings, review meetings and other curriculum events including Christian celebrations where possible
- ensuring their child has attendance of 97%+
- ensuring their child is well rested and fit for school each morning

- informing the school of any problems or difficulties there may be at home which may affect their child
- promoting a positive attitude to school and to learning
- ensuring their child completes and returns homework on time and to an acceptable standard of presentation

## Learning Behaviours

To support academic achievement, personal growth in SMSC and life-long learning, we believe it is vital for pupils to understand what it means to be a good learner, and to develop the skills required. There needs to be a common vocabulary around which learning itself can be discussed. We have 8 behaviours that we believe are vital to success in this area. They are show below, with the animal which is associated with the behaviour.



We aim for all pupils to learn the words and animals of our 8 behaviours as quickly as possible, and then to go on developing each one throughout their time in our school.

## Expectations

It is our experience that children will rise to and thrive upon the high expectations set for them by their teachers. We expect high achievement in all areas of school life and will not be limited by a ceiling of low expectation.

## Framework for Learning and Teaching

Teaching and learning is our main activity. To make this as effective as possible it is delivered within a framework of what we believe excellent practice to be. We describe this under the following main headings:

1. Relationships
2. Teaching, learning and assessment
3. The curriculum
4. Attainment and progress
5. The environment for learning.

### 1. Relationships

The effectiveness of any school is dependent upon the quality of the relationships amongst those working in it on a day to day basis. Positive, caring relationships existing between children, parents, teachers, support staff and governors help make our school strong, and we take great care to nurture those relationships. Communication is a vital element of this.

A hierarchy of support and sanctions exists to help teachers and other adults maintain positive attitudes and good behaviour at all times, but the greatest aid to this is good, engaging and interesting teaching and learning. Therefore:

- All staff have consistent expectations of children's attitudes and behaviour and take corporate responsibility for ensuring these around the school.
- We treat everyone with the respect that we would wish to receive ourselves, taking an active role in praising, complementing, and thanking others.
- Good manners and social skills are be modelled by all.
- Children are helped to develop self-respect and independence.
- We build and maintain positive relationships with pupils, staff, parents, governors, and community
- It is important to know the value of others and of being part of a team.
- Good systems of rewards and incentives are in place for all staff to use; this should not negatively affect highly expectations.
- Everyone is aware of their rights and the responsibilities that go with them.

## **2. Teaching, learning and assessment**

Every child has the right to be taught well and deserves to make at least good progress. To ensure that we are able to intervene effectively where children may not be achieving their best, we follow and predict their progress. Children need to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Good and intelligent assessment in order to plan and evaluate learning effectively is a constant activity and happens both formally and informally, formatively and summatively. We particularly recognise the power of many of the Assessment for Learning methods.

The most effective assessment is conducted as an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

Planning a lesson is well thought through. When planning lessons, the staff at St Mark's think about the following questions:

- Is there differentiation in learning between the various ability groups?
- How is this managed to ensure children are not listening or taking part in learning that is not appropriate to them?
- What about the very able pupils? SEN pupils? EAL pupils? FSM/PP pupils? Vulnerable pupils?
- What scaffolding is being used to support different groups of children?
- What might be next for this group of children?
- What key questions would/could be asked?
- What key vocabulary will be shared?
- What modelling will be used to show the children how to improve?
- How long will the children be sat down? Working? Listening?
- How will the teacher and/or LSA rotate around different groups?
- What if the children already know what is being taught?
- How are the adults utilised in the classroom?
- Is it interesting for the children?
- How will the lesson end?

Learning is best when children:

- Take part in activities that are appropriate to their level of learning.
- Are able to be independent in their learning, knowing how to seek support before asking the teacher, and how well they are doing without guidance from the teacher.
- Are given time to respond to marking

- Are aware of and involved in assessment of their progress, including knowing what they are working towards.
- Feel confident to take risks and make mistakes

Learning is best when teachers ensure that:

- Teaching is interesting, inventive, relevant, differentiated and personalised.
- They use cut away groups in lessons to support differentiation.
- Assessment forms part of a cyclical process, and should inform the current and next lesson
- There are clear learning objectives, and success criteria.
- Assessment is relevant and manageable and informs planning.
- Marking is child-friendly, related to learning objectives and informs children how to improve their work.
- They are able to respond to situations that arise and able to use their expertise.

On occasion children learn best if they are working with children of a similar ability. This means that the teacher can get a very close match between what the children already know and what they need to learn next. This ability grouping happens in two ways: firstly, within a class where the teacher puts all the children into groups based on their ability and secondly, across year groups where children from different classes are put into groups according to ability. This is called a focus group. We expect children to move in and out of these groups, according to need.

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If it is necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so usually in consultation with their parents. This may include children who have special needs, children with English as an additional language or children who are gifted or talented in some way.

If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice. If a child displays signs of having special needs, his/her teacher consults with the school's special needs co-ordinator who will make an assessment of this need. In most instances, by differentiating the curriculum, the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, we consider the child for a statement of special needs, and we involve the appropriate external agencies when making this assessment. We always provide additional resources and support for children with special needs either through specialist resources, support from learning support assistants or a modified curriculum.

We provide an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each of the children who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the school will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

### **3. The Curriculum**

Primary education is a critical stage in children's development – it shapes them for life. As well as giving them the essential tools for learning, primary education is about children experiencing the joy of discovery, solving problems, being creative, developing their self-confidence as learners and maturing socially and emotionally.

Exciting learning leads to high standards. Children have the chance to learn in a range of different ways – but all of the learning and teaching is of a high quality and is planned and managed so that every child is supported and challenged.

Children learn best when their learning experiences are connected and there is a context that is relevant to them. Subjects are taught around a central topic or project, which begins with a hook to engage the children in a project. National Curriculum subjects are taught within this project where relevant. An outcome, or celebration of the project, allows our pupils to demonstrate their learning to others.

Well thought out planning and preparation is essential for effective teaching. A good teacher, however, is also a creative and imaginative teacher who will seize upon unplanned learning opportunities that may arise during a lesson and who can make productive links to other curriculum areas where appropriate. We make good use of strong cross-curricular links in planning so that learning is experienced as integrated and complementary rather than being compartmentalised. This will support deeper learning.

Activities outside of lesson times are a vital part of our curriculum. We deliver an exciting range of after school clubs that challenge and give new opportunities to our pupils. Further, trips to local and national places of interest provide essential opportunities for learning and discovery.

We adhere to the requirements of the National Curriculum.

#### **4. Attainment and Progress**

If relationships and teaching and learning within an exciting and well planned curriculum are good, then we would expect all children's progress to normally be at least good. Pupils' attainment and progress will be measured towards the end of each term, although informal assessments will take place more frequently.

As a result of this assessment and tracking process:

- All children make good progress in order to meet their individual potential
- Children are keen to achieve their next step in their learning
- Children are aware of how they are achieving and how they can improve or develop
- Good attainment and progress is rewarded and celebrated.
- Provide information to parents at least three times a year on the progress of their child
- Progress targets are personalised to include out-of-school circumstances as well as in-school help where appropriate
- Targeted children have strategies in place to support them
- Intervention programmes are used swiftly and effectively

#### **5. Environment for learning**

It is vital to instil a sense of worth and confidence in all children. Displaying children's work in a careful and sensitive way values their work and shows that we take genuine pride in it.

Our classrooms:

- Are stimulating, inspiring, organised and motivating environments which celebrate learning.
- Display work by all children displayed, regardless of ability
- Have interactive displays covering different subjects and areas of learning which include aids to scaffold learning
- Have child initiated displays and environment
- Children involved in and taking pride in their learning environment
- Use the wider community and expertise to support learning
- Use the outdoor classroom and locality as part of the curriculum
- Are an environment which promotes equality

**Approved by Governing Body:** Spring Term 2014

**Review date:** Spring Term 2020