



# Learning and Teaching Policy

St Mark's CofE Primary School



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.



We want children to see themselves reflected in the curriculum and to learn about others across the curriculum. We are eager for children to see themselves as agents of change, able to be advocates for others and themselves, and to make a difference in our world. We also want our pupils to develop strong learning behaviours so that they have what it takes to be life-long learners.

We desire our children to experience a full, rich and interconnected curriculum which is irresistible for all children to learn and irresistible for all teachers to teach. We believe that excellent learning experiences, underpinned by high quality teaching set in a highly nurturing environment, are essential for children to achieve and develop well in all areas.

## 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.
- Build and connect knowledge to develop their understanding.
- 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 have equal opportunities to learn effectively, develop knowledge and make substantial progress in their learning.

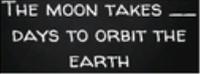
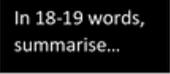
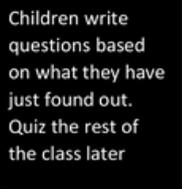
## Core approach

	What this means
1. Challenge for every child	All children are challenged, and we have high expectations for every single child, regardless of apparent ability. There is no glass ceiling!
2. Effective modelling	Teachers are able to clearly and effectively demonstrate the learning in a variety of ways to build knowledge and understanding.
3. Progression	Knowledge develops over time and is planned for, building on prior learning throughout each unit, year and key stage.
4. Knowledge and retrieval <i>'sticky knowledge'</i> and <i>'not forgetting managers'</i>	Our curriculum is carefully planned to develop key substantive knowledge for our children. Our teachers become <i>'not forgetting managers'</i> by using retrieval practice to secure this key <i>'sticky knowledge'</i> , so that knowledge can be built on across the curriculum.
5. Responsive teaching throughout	Children are given clear, direct & quick feedback to move their learning on to make better progress.

We recognise that being able to retrieve prior learning and build on and connect knowledge within curriculum subjects and across the curriculum is key to supporting and developing lifelong learners. With this in mind, staff have been trained in retrieval practice and principles.

## Our retrieval principles

Key principles				
Knowledge organised in meticulous detail	Low effort, high impact	Thinking hard about things encodes them in memory	No scaffolds	Mix it up

Retrieval techniques						
<b>Multiple choice questions</b> 	<b>Missing word questions</b> 	<b>Take a photo of a previous lesson</b>  <i>What is the story? What happened? What tips would you give?</i>	<b>Cops and Robbers</b> 	<b>Knowledge Organisers (Peer Quiz)</b> 	<b>Address a misconception</b> 	<b>Summarise</b> 
<b>Retrieval Relay</b> 	<b>Verbal tennis</b> 	<b>Vocabulary</b> Definition Sentence Question Picture Other words linked Example Non-example	<b>Walkabout bingo</b> 	<b>Picture prompt – how does this connect to the topic?</b> 	<b>Label the image</b> 	<b>Retrieval basket</b> 

## 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>● see themselves as agents of change</li> <li>● uphold Christian values</li> <li>● develop their understanding of Christianity</li> <li>● enable them to have strategies to support their own wellbeing</li> <li>● learn how to keep themselves and others safe (including cyber safety)</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, learning behaviours and Heart smarts</li> <li>● lead Christian worships which encourage children to see themselves as advocates, able to speak out and enable change for themselves and others</li> <li>● model, promote and challenge the views, beliefs and actions of all stakeholders</li> <li>● build and maintain links with the church and wider community</li> <li>● Promote diversity and inclusion</li> <li>● Uphold a safeguarding culture and provide children with the understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe through our PSHE and Natterhub curriculum</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 which is irresistible to teach and learn</li> <li>● to acquire key '<i>sticky knowledge</i>'</li> </ul>	<p><b>Staff will</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● work with subject leads to plan progressive sequences of lessons that build in knowledge over time</li> <li>● decide on key '<i>sticky knowledge</i>' to be acquired</li> <li>● become '<i>not forgetting</i>' managers</li> <li>● Build retrieval practices into lessons to help children to remember and use prior learning to support their current and future learning</li> <li>● have an excellent understanding of the subjects and age ranges they teach</li> <li>● keep up to date with current initiatives and share these with staff</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>● have faith in their own learning and abilities</li> <li>● embrace challenges and learn from constructive criticism</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>● develop a well organised, structured environment which is stimulating and purposeful</li> <li>● use AfL and summative assessment to inform planning</li> <li>● use constructive marking and feedback (including verbal feedback)</li> <li>● develop pupils' understanding that intelligence is expandable and that we can take risks and can learn from our mistakes</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>● work in a calm, ordered and supportive environment</li> <li>● work cooperatively 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 Christian values and our Christian ethos.</li> <li>● manage children with respect, achieving high standards of discipline embed our ethos throughout the curriculum</li> </ul>

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

- Sharing their vision with all stakeholders and promoting the Christian ethos of the school, which includes diversity and inclusion.
- Providing opportunities for staff to observe one another's teaching and to share good practice.
- Undertaking learning walks in order to further develop good practice.
- Being committed to the professional development of all staff, particularly where linked to performance management and subject leadership.
- Providing opportunities for parents to share and understand their children's learning.
- Creating performance management targets closely linked to pupil achievement and best teaching practice.

### **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 programmes of study, for curriculum subjects.
- 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 life of the school and in the Christian calendar.

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

- Holding curriculum sessions for parents to explain the curriculum of a specific year group.
- Sending information home e.g. knowledge organisers, topic webs and updates regularly, keeping parents up to date with what is being taught.
- Keeping parents informed via the newsletter and website.
- Reporting to parents, about their child's wellbeing, progress and attainment through termly reports and parents' evenings.
- Having an open door policy.
- By working in unity for each child.
- Directing them towards external help where required e.g. 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 performances and 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. We have a common vocabulary around which we approach our learning. This is through our eight behaviours that we believe are vital to success in this area. These are illustrated below, with the animal that is associated with the behaviour.



We aim for all pupils to learn the words and animals of our eight 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 a firm belief that all children will succeed.

## 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 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 progress. Children need to know how well they are doing and what they need to improve.

Good and intelligent assessment in order to plan and evaluate learning effectively is a constant activity and happens both formally, informally, formatively and summatively. We focus on using assessment to inform planning and to help us to be responsive to the needs of learners.

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:

- Why this? Why now? How will this build on the learning that has gone before? How will it fit with the learning that is to come?
- What key knowledge or '*sticky knowledge*' do the children need to acquire?
- Is scaffolding needed to support the learning of all children or groups of children?
- How can we ensure all children are active in their learning?
- What about the very able pupils? SEN pupils? EAL pupils? FSM/PP pupils? Vulnerable pupils?
- 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 the class or 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, or be linked to further learning?

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 know how well they are doing without guidance from the teacher.
- Are given feedback within the lesson or time to respond to marking within the lesson.
- 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.
- 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 and feedback 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 are 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 groups children within the classroom according to their ability or learning need, and secondly, across year groups where children from different classes are put into groups according to ability. This is called a focus group. Where they exist, we expect children to move in and out of these groups, according to need. An example of this is our RWI groups.

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, their 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 or scaffolding learning, 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 a Learning Plan (LP) 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 build on prior learning. Subjects are carefully planned across the school with subject leads and teachers working to ensure that children acquire the 'sticky knowledge' that they need for each subject. Subjects often begin with a hook to engage the children and can culminate in an outcome, or celebration of the project, allowing 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. 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.

Our curriculum model and vision is shown below or can be viewed [online here](#).

<b>Curriculum Intentions</b>	<i>Growing &amp; Learning Together in God's Love</i>	<b>Hope</b>		<b>Love</b>		<b>Forgiveness</b>		<b>Faith</b>						
	<i>Learning for Life</i>													
	<i>Being Heart Smart</i>	No Way Through Isn't True		Don't Forget To Let Love In Too Much Selfie Isn't Healthy		Don't Hold On to What's Wrong		Fake Is A Mistake						
	<i>Vision of our curriculum</i>	A curriculum which is irresistible for ALL children to learn and irresistible for teachers to teach		Putting character before qualification to develop every child so they can experience life in all its fullness.		Delivering a full, knowledge-rich, rigorous and critically thinking curriculum, which equips our children to be life-long learners and become agents of change in our world.		Linking our learning with our family, local community, country & global world to build a more richly connected future for our children.						
<b>Teaching</b>	<i>Our 'High 5' of Learning</i>	<b>Challenge for All Learners</b>		<b>Modelling for Learning</b>		<b>Vocabulary for Learning</b>		<b>Purpose for Learning</b>		<b>Assessment for Learning</b>				
	<i>Classroom Application</i>	All children receive the same curriculum with scaffolds to support their learning.		Through high-quality modelling and explicit teaching, children understand their learning and can apply it in other situations.		Be immersed in quality texts as well as planned use of technical vocabulary across the curriculum.		Children know what they are learning and why. Learning has purpose, and children can see links.		Children are given clear, direct & quick feedback to move their learning on.				
<b>Knowledge</b>	<i>Knowledge is...</i>	<b>Powerful</b>		<b>Sequenced</b>		<b>Remembered</b>		<b>More than facts</b>		<b>Purposeful</b>				
	<i>Classroom Application</i>	Children acquire knowledge to help make sense of the world and see connections between and within subjects, concepts and ideas.		We have thought carefully about how our curriculum is structured, in order for children to build on prior learning.		We help children to remember what they have learned, and use strategies to help learning go into long-term memory.		Substantive & Declarative ('know that'), Procedural ('know how'), Disciplinary (specific to a domain), Prior (sequenced), Core (key), and Hinterland (the wider picture)		Children don't just do or learn history; they gain knowledge to become historians (for example). They can then apply their knowledge more successfully.				
<b>Organisation</b>	<i>Five elements which underpin the organisation of our curriculum</i>	<b>Big Questions</b>		<b>Spiritual Development</b>		<b>Agents of Change</b>		<b>Critical Thinking</b>		<b>Reading</b>				
	<i>Purposeful interactions</i>	Educational Visits & Activities		Visitors		Responding to local & world events		Community opportunities - serve and learn together		Indoor and Outdoor				
	<i>Years 1-6</i>	<b>Curriculum Drivers</b>			<b>Linked or Discrete Subjects</b>					<b>Well-being &amp; Spirituality</b>				
	<i>Year R</i>	English	Science	History	Geography	DT	Art	Computing	Music	Maths	PE	French	PSHE	RE & Worships
	<i>How we make our curriculum irresistible</i>	Engaging hook giving context to learning & purpose		One subject is a curriculum driver in each project. Other subjects may link where there is purpose, or alternatively be discrete.		Children love knowledge in all its forms, and love to become experts. We teach each subject as a discipline in its own right. Children 'become', not 'do'; e.g. we become historians, we don't 'do history'.		Whilst core subjects are important, so are other subjects		Christian values, Learning Behaviours and Heart Smart principles are brought to life through each project.		A purposeful outcome, often with a real audience, in every project. This may involve being agents of change in our world.		
<b>Impact</b>	<i>Impact on ...</i>	<b>Children's Lives</b>				<b>Children's Attainment &amp; Progress</b>				<b>Our community, and our world</b>				
	<i>Because of what we've done as a team in our school...</i>	Children are confident & successful learners. They think critically about their learning & ask deep & thought-provoking questions. They demonstrate the eight learning behaviours daily and show a deep and growing spirituality across their own lives. Children are engaged, keen to learn & see purpose in their learning. They become life-long learners who care about themselves and each other. They want to achieve more and live life in all its fullness.				Children make excellent individual progress in their learning from Year R and onwards. Their attainment is above or at least in line with national expectations & opportunities to achieve at greater depth are regular & consistently available. Teacher assessments show that knowledge & skills are embedded within our school. Those who are disadvantaged are well supported, given the 'lift' they need for equity of opportunity, and gaps close.				Children are able to link local, national & global contexts to their learning. They have a greater understanding of how our world is one large community, and they see themselves as part of that community. Through their knowledge, confidence, compassion and determination, they make a difference on the lives of their family and friends, those in their communities, and in the wider world. They are keen to share what they have learned.				



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

If relationships, teaching and learning within an exciting and well-planned curriculum are effective, 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 environments.
- 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, inclusion and equity.

**Review date:** Summer Term 2025