

**ST ETHELBERT’S CATHOLIC**

**PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY**

**Curriculum Statement**

St Ethelbert’s Catholic Primary School follows the National Curriculum from Year 1 to Year 6. Our curriculum design is based upon the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills with clear progression through the year groups. Links between subjects are made where these will enhance pupils’ understanding, but most subjects are taught in discrete units. A full list of topics and content is shared with parents each term, and are available on the website.

**RE**

RE is a Core subject in our Catholic school with 10% of the timetable dedicated to the teaching of it using the Come and See scheme. Pupils’ understanding of key religious rituals, ceremonies and what this means in terms of their own lives are explored. The links between RE as an academic subject and the Catholic life of the school are made explicit. Children develop an understanding of the liturgical calendar and key Bible readings through the weekly Gospel assembly and the teaching of key scripture in RE lessons. Two weeks per year are devoted to the teaching of other religions: Judaism and Islam; pupils respect and are interested in the teachings of other faiths. Links with local faith schools allow pupils to appreciate and value faiths other than that of our school.

In Early Years children begin to explore the world of religion in terms of special people and special books, times and objects. They listen to and talk about stories from the Bible. They are introduced to religious words where appropriate. They reflect on their own feelings and explore using their imagination and curiosity to develop their appreciation and wonder of the world they live in. Children visit Holy Redeemer church at least once, participate in collective worship in class daily and a child-led class worship in class once a week.

**English**

English reading and writing are taught daily.

Pupils in Nursery hear daily stories and rhymes, they are encouraged to respond to these in their own way, and have access to a range of picture books which they can take home. Nursery pupils have many opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills and to begin to make their first writing marks. Many Nursery children will read and write their own name by the time they are ready for Reception. The emphasis in Nursery is enjoyment of stories, developing a personal response through listening and independent play, and the early development of the physicality of pen holding and mark making.

In Reception the children are taught synthetic phonics using the ‘Read Write Inc. Phonics’ scheme in a highly systematic way for 45 minutes each day, learning to say, read and write sounds, or ‘phonemes’ that they learn to blend together to form words. Children are taught in flexible groups that are assessed regularly. The expectation is that the children learn the sounds quickly and progress to reading words and sentences in a structured programme. Children take home a reading book that is matched to the sounds they have learnt. Parents are supported with a series of videos and resources that they can use to help their child practise at home. During the 45-minute phonics lesson, children learn to write the sounds and begin to generate and write simple sentences. Pupils who are not progressing at the expected rate will be given individual tuition to help them catch up.

In Year 1 and the first term of Year 2, pupils continue to be taught using Read Write Inc. Phonics with one hour of the day spent on reading and writing using synthetic phonics. The children move through the scheme until they are secure with all the sounds and can blend and segment words securely. The highly structured lessons enable children to generate and record sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation.

From Year 2 onwards, children progress to whole-class reading lessons where high quality texts are used and skills of retrieval, inference, prediction and summarising are further developed. In writing, a text is used as a stimulus and children follow a three-week cycle of drafting and planning writing that has a strong focus on sentence construction, grammar and punctuation.

Throughout Key Stage 2, separate whole-class reading and writing lessons are delivered, building on the learning from Key Stage 1. A focus on vocabulary development is threaded through all lessons with termly reading and writing targets linked to National Curriculum objectives. Pupils are encouraged to write for purpose and an audience, using their knowledge of grammar and punctuation to plan, draft and edit interesting pieces of writing with the reader in mind. Links are made to other curriculum areas where these are appropriate and meaningful. Reading for pleasure is prioritised with teachers reading high quality texts to their classes regularly and reading opportunities maximized across the curriculum.

All children visit the school library each week and every child has a reading book to take home that they can change regularly. Books that present positive role models, are inclusive, and are representative of our school cohort are an integral component of the reading offer available to pupils. Pupils have the opportunity to read in other classes weekly during ‘buddy reading’ sessions.

**Maths**

Children from Reception to Year 6 are taught maths using the White Rose Maths scheme. This structured scheme takes a mastery approach to teaching and learning, making use of concrete materials, pictorial representation and finally abstract representation when new concepts are introduced. For example, pupils might count physical objects, then draw sets of objects, before finally tackling written ‘sums’ or word problems when learning about addition. Bar modelling is a useful pictorial representation that all children are taught.

There is an emphasis on independent use of support materials such as number lines and squares, and fluency in basic operations such as number bonds and multiplication and division facts. Children are encouraged to talk fluently about their mathematical reasoning and to ask questions.

The school’s calculation policy sets out calculation methods for all year groups and is available on the website.

Pupils in Early Years follow the White Rose Maths planning structure and much emphasis is placed on acquiring solid foundations of understanding number. Much of the teaching and child-centred learning in early maths will use concrete resources and make use of indoor and outdoor spaces in a range of contexts. Spatial awareness is promoted through use of puzzles, 3D resources and indoor and outdoor play such as construction and creative building tasks.

**Wider Curriculum**

**Science**

Pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 follow the National Curriculum. Lessons are planned using our Trust overview with an emphasis on knowledge and scientific curiosity. Links are made to maths and geography where these are appropriate in supporting children’s learning. Substantive and disciplinary knowledge are incorporated into planning to ensure that children connect ideas and make links.

Pupils in Early Years explore their curiosity about the natural world through a series of topics such as growing and change. Children plant and grow vegetables and observe the life cycle of a butterfly. Links to design and technology are made through activities such as selecting materials to build a house. Outdoor play offers opportunities to learn about materials, forces and movement. A clear focus on vocabulary allows pupils to acquire language and experiences that feed into the KS1 and KS2 curriculum.

**History**

Children’s knowledge of the past is developed through the teaching of history. The equivalent of one hour of teaching per week is delivered and the curriculum has been designed to incorporate both substantive and disciplinary knowledge.

Children learn about a key focus in significant periods in history, such as the settlement of the Anglo Saxons, or the development of the city state in Ancient Greece, as well as the disciplinary aspects of studying history such as chronology, change and continuity, similarity and difference, and use of sources and interpretation.

Local history units focus on the development of familiar areas such as Windsor Castle, Herschel Park, Slough station and the railways and the trading estate. Children learn how their local area has changed over time and the significance of local features.

Children in Early Years are encouraged to think about changes within their own experience by comparing photographs of themselves as a baby to the current day, or identifying if something is old or new. Stories help children build a sense of things that have happened in the past.

**Geography**

The teaching of geography helps children understand about places near and far, how and where people live and the impact that we have had on the world. Our curriculum follows the National Curriculum and aims to build understanding of place, spatial knowledge of the world, its countries and continents, and factors that have impacted on the way our Earth has been formed and how we use it. Children learn about issues that cause challenges such as pollution and climate change. Substantive and disciplinary knowledge are incorporated into lessons, and cross curricular links are made where appropriate.

In Early Years, children learn positional vocabulary such as near and far, behind and in front and begin to understand the concept of relational positioning that will later help them to understand compass directions. They learn words that are relevant to human geography that will feed into the KS1 curriculum and beyond, and have an understanding of the features of their local area and that these may be different to other places that exist. Stories are used extensively to build a sense of place and different places. Children draw maps of simple routes and compare Slough to the Amazon rainforest.

**Art**

Children are taught art for one hour per week every other term. The St Ethelbert’s art curriculum focuses on developing children’s skills in and knowledge of art. The curriculum has been designed to allow children to:

* Explore a wide range of mediums for mark making and materials for creating three dimensional objects
* Develop the skills of observation
* Understand the importance of composition and viewpoints
* Understand the impact of perspective and proportion
* Understand how to mix and create colour and how colours work together
* Understand shape and form in 3D objects

Children study artists and their lives and influences. Where appropriate, links are made across the curriculum. A range of cultures and times are represented, with some of the key movements in art, such as Impressionism, taught. Pupils are encouraged to make their own personal responses to the art they experience, and to develop their own creativity in the pieces they produce.

In Early Years, children have ample opportunity for creative expression, developing the early skills of painting, drawing, modelling and printing. They are encouraged to talk about their work and to develop the vocabulary of colours and shapes and to ask questions about artwork they encounter.

**Design Technology**

Children are taught DT one hour a week every other half term. They design and make functional objects using a range of skills and techniques such as cooking, working with textiles and making objects with moving parts. Children follow a process of designing, making and evaluating their work. The school has a DT room where large groups can cook and bake.

In Early Years, pupils explore junk modelling, enjoy regular cooking opportunities and are encouraged to talk about the things they have made.

**Computing**

Children are taught for an hour each week in the IT suite with access to a desktop PC for every child in the class. The Trust IT curriculum is followed with progression in termly units of e-safety, digital art, communication, handling information, control and programming across each year group.

Tablets are available for pupils to use for cross-curricular work, such as research, in their classrooms.

In Early Years, children use a range of age-appropriate programs to develop early computing skills. E-safety is emphasized across the full age range at St Ethelbert’s.

**PE**

Specialist sports coaches teach PE for one hour a week, a second hour is taught by class teachers using the ‘Real PE’ scheme. In Year 6 the pupils focus on dance and creative movement. PE develops physical skills of agility, balance, co-ordination and fitness and is inclusive for all pupils. As many children as possible take part in tournaments, after school clubs and competitions, with an emphasis on participation and enjoyment. Year 4 and Year 5 pupils have weekly swimming lessons for one term.

In Early Years, physical development is promoted through active outdoor play. We have a large climbing frame that allows children to explore climbing and sharing space, weekly PE lessons develop body control, ball skills, balance and turn taking using Real PE.

**Music**

Music is taught using the Opus curriculum which teaches children the inter-related dimensions of music (pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure and appropriate musical notations).

In addition, music tuition is provided by the school for Years 3, 4 and 5 in drums, violin and recorders, respectively. Each half term a different musical genre is chosen to give children the opportunity to listen and respond to music from a range of periods and genres. Children sing in every assembly and opportunities to perform are given to every child at least once a year in end of term shows and performances.

**Modern foreign language**

Children in Key Stage 2 receive a weekly Spanish lesson focusing on simple grammar and vocabulary from topics that interest children such as weather, food and places.

**Curriculum enrichment**

Termly enrichment weeks focus on creative arts with art, drama and music events, visitors and performances. Parents are often invited to observe performances, and family art and DT projects have been successfully set as holiday homework. Pupils all enjoy regular visits from theatre groups and an annual pantomime, and trips and visits to places linked to their learning. Year 5 and Year 6 visit an art gallery and theatre, respectively.

The school has an all-weather sports pitch, an outdoor amphitheatre and a daily mile walking track that promote outdoor learning across a range of subjects and promote health and fitness.

Parents are involved in every aspect of their child’s learning: Termly curriculum newsletters are sent home to inform parents of the teaching content; regular curriculum workshops are held and weekly drop in sessions are held for parents each Tuesday morning to visit classrooms and look through their child’s books.

**Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development**

Pupils social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is enriched and developed through the Catholic ethos of the school. The Gospel values of peace, love, justice, mercy and forgiveness run as a thread through every aspect of school life, and the pupils are explicitly reminded of these through daily acts of collective worship. Regular visits to attend Mass at the parish church of Holy Redeemer provide experience of formal worship for the pupils.

Weekly PSHE lessons cover the statutory RSE (Relationships and sex education) and health education that must be taught to pupils. The school follows the PSHE association scheme with themes around keeping safe, including online; mental health; healthy relationships with family and friends; changing and growing; money and economic health. Lessons may be adapted to respond to identified needs in a cohort and children keep a journal of their learning.

British Values are explored through weekly lessons in PSHE using ‘Picture News’ which promotes discussion around the themes of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect using images and questions relevant to the age of our pupils.

The school has gained the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Bronze award and is working towards the Silver award. Children are aware of their rights and

Older pupils are given the opportunity to join a range of leadership teams: the Head Boy and Head Girl team; House Captains; a School Council; Faith Ambassadors; reading and maths ambassadors, playground peer mediators, and lunch duty monitors.

The Year 5 pupils visit a local university, and Year 6 participate in a residential trip to help prepare them for life beyond primary school. All pupils in all year groups participate in trips and visits that support their learning across the curriculum.

For further information or if you have any questions, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance.