

Teaching and Learning Policy

OUR CORE VALUES

In 2008 the staff and representative governors revisited the school aims. This was in order to ensure that new and existing staff were fully aware of the fundamental values and central aims of the school.

Our vision is shared with pupils and parents along with any others who work with/support St. Mary's.

It is our overbidding aim that all pupils will achieve to their potential.

St. Mary's is a school that is committed to raising standards of achievement and attainment for its pupils. We understand that this is an issue of equal opportunities and that as a consequence of this staff should have appropriately high expectations.

It is this vision that underpins all learning and teaching at St. Mary's school. This policy will set out how the vision will be practically realised by all staff, pupils and parents within the school generally and in the classrooms particularly.

In the Autumn of 2009 all school staff working with the key rights and responsibilities identified by St. Mary's pupils agreed the following five 'key' beliefs of St. Mary's. These 5 'beliefs' reflect our core values and commitment to be a Rights Respecting School and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

St. Mary's 5 Key beliefs

At St. Mary's we believe in ...

... being truthful because we have a right to be trusted.

(UNCRC Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's human dignity. Wealthy countries must help poorer countries achieve this.)

... being kind and safe because we have a right to feel safe and cared for.

(UNCRC Articles 15 - Every child has the right to meet with other children and young people and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights. UNCRC Article 36 - Governments must protect children from all other forms of exploitation that might harm them.)

... looking after the places we work and play in because we have a right to a nice environment.

(UNCRC Article 24 - Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.)

... learning to the best of our abilities because we have a right to be well taught.

(UNCRC Article 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.)

... respecting what others say because we have a right to be listened to.

(UNCRC Article 12) - Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.)

NEW VISION STATEMENT

St. Mary's is a caring Rights Respecting Christian School. We are an aspirational school which seeks to:

- To provide a learning environment that will enable each child to reach their full potential.
- To encourage all children to feel confident in the work they do and the resilience to tackle and preserve with new learning.
- To promote and inspire a love of learning which is lifelong.
- To promote development of self-worth and self-esteem, whilst ensuring equality of opportunity regardless of age, gender, ethnic or cultural background.
- To provide a safe, stimulating and happy school environment and to encourage children to be aware of their links to school and other communities (town, local, national and global)
- To establish links with families, Church and the wider community which foster a sense of belonging and engender a desire to be committed and useful members of society.

CHILDREN'S LEARNING

At St. Mary's we believe that we should meet our children's 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters together with their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development to the best of our abilities.

At St. Mary's we appreciate that children will need to be able to understand and manage their feelings, work co-operatively with others, motivate themselves and demonstrate resilience in the face of setbacks in order to become successful learners.

(UNCRC Article 3 - The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children.)

Therefore children will only learn at their best when:

- They feel valued, secure and confident.
- They are clear about expectations placed on them.
- Learning is staged and developed logically.
- Where there is a calm, ordered and consistent environment.
- There is an atmosphere of mutual co-operation.
- Challenges are set which raise their expectations.

- Praise rather than punishment is appropriately used.
- The receive feedback about their performance.

We aspire to consistently create for our children 'outstanding' learning experiences which will enable our pupils to make 'exceptional' progress. In order to achieve this we have outlined the practice we expect to see in our lessons, classrooms and use of support staff.

LESSONS AT ST. MARY'S

- Is planned with clear objectives and success criteria which are shared with the pupils.
- Is well managed in terms of pace and direction.
- Uses other adults effectively in the classroom to enhance learning.
- Has appropriate and stimulating resources, (including new technology), materials and tools to hand, but allows children to choose these resources independently where possible.
- Encourages discussions and asking of questions.
- Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so.
- Is where teachers have a thorough understanding of the subjects taught and are able to challenge and inspire pupils to achieve their best.
- Encourages children to become independent and to take responsibility for their own learning and reflect on what they have learnt and need to do next.
- Provides examples of what a good piece of work looks like.
- Has an ethos of support so that pupils feel confident to ask for help from the teacher and each other.
- Has high expectations for all pupils with appropriate support for those with additional needs.
- Celebrates success, perseverance and resilience.
- Provide opportunities for Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) throughout the wider school curriculum.

CLASSROOMS IN ST. MARY'S

- Our classrooms will be a 'Rights Respecting' Classrooms.
- Be well organised, safe and stimulating.
- Have resource areas that are labelled, attractive and easily accessible.
- Have well presented displays that are relevant to the work and support children's learning (see 'Display' policy).
- Displays should be interactive and have labelling which engages the pupils.
- Be a multicultural classroom that appreciates other cultures and faiths.
- Have established routines and systems in place that are understood by all pupils.
- Celebrate the success and resilience through a variety of mechanisms, but particularly celebrating learning and the success of pupils within their work. (e.g. House points, class certificates and pupils of the day/week)
- Have well paced lessons that maximise learning. Teachers to set timescales for pupils and use times/clocks to add pace to lessons.
- Use the school marking policy in a consistent fashion to improve attainment.
- Be places where children take pride within their work and show an enthusiasm for learning.
- Have teachers who will be explicit with their expectations of quantity and quality of the work output.

- Have workbooks which contain targets for Literacy and Numeracy for the appropriate range of NC levels, set inside the back cover. These targets will be regularly updated and children will know them and work towards them.
- Have success criteria for different subjects displayed and referred to often within lessons so that children are clear about what they are learning and what their next steps are. Children in Key Stage 2 should become more adept at writing their own success criteria.
- These success criteria may be written, pictorial, or verbal (depending on the age of the child).

ROLE OF SUPPORT STAFF AT ST. MARY'S

- To support pupil learning
- To support the teacher in the delivery of the curriculum through 1:1, small group, larger group or whole class tracking (Higher Level Teaching Assistants).
- To enable the smooth and safe running of the school
- To engage pupils in activities and to encourage and praise.
- To work alongside teaching staff and share in planning, marking, resources and development.
- To support the teacher in developing displays in the classroom and across the school.
- To be aware of and support the school's vision.
- To continue to develop themselves professionally through relevant training.

- **This policy was adopted by the Governing Body in December 2009 and reviewed Summer 2010.**
- **It will be reviewed bi-annually in Summer Term. (review to begin in June 2010 by Staff and Governors together with pupil views (school council) (UNCRC Article 12))**
- **The next review due Summer 2012.**
- **Person Responsible: Advanced Skills Teacher**