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Marlborough St Mary's CE VC Primary School



MARLBOROUGH
ST MARY'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Teaching and Learning Policy

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Introduction

We want everyone to share our excitement about learning at Marlborough St Mary's, and our expectation is that every school day will deliver amazing learning opportunities for our pupils. The vision statement for our school drives our teaching and learning and all the efforts of the staff and governors are focussed on making learning inspirational and relevant to help every child develop and achieve their potential.

Vision

Within a loving, nurturing, community based Christian environment, we aspire to the highest standards.

We value individuality, searching out every child's unique talent so that each can be supported, flourish and grow; seeking to send out of our school bright, confident, responsible young global citizens.

How do we achieve our vision?

- A growth mindset is promoted throughout the school. Teachers ensure that their language and behavior endorses this and is reflected in everything they do: we all know we can achieve!
- Pupils are encouraged to identify the key attributes they need for learning.
- All staff have a positive attitude which adopts a resilient, solution focused approach to challenges in all aspects of school life.
- Professional development for teaching staff is considered a priority.
- Dedicated school leaders and governors support teaching and learning at all levels.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is broad and balanced focusing on depth of learning and mastery of content.

We recognise that our school's curriculum has two elements:

- The planned curriculum- structured learning experiences which are relevant, varied and memorable.
- The informal curriculum- messages and values transmitted by the school through its ethos, relationships and role models. We provide stability, opportunities and responsibilities in a supportive and stimulating environment. We take children's feelings and friendships seriously and actively teach emotional well-being.

What is the rationale behind our curriculum?

The curriculum is used to teach a set of skills and is not an end in itself.

- Our curriculum consists of a rolling programme of stimulating and engaging topics which link children's learning across subject areas, meet the National Curriculum criteria and ensure that learning is vibrant, real and stimulating.

- Our work is learning focussed rather than content focussed and exciting whole school themes provide a context for the children to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need as 21st Century citizens.
- Exciting learning opportunities are linked to each topic. Sometimes called “essential learning experiences” these activities take a variety of forms e.g. trips, assemblies, displays, visits and visitors or themed lunches.
- The curriculum builds on what our pupils most want to learn or investigate about a topic and allows our teachers to share their passions.
- Our curriculum reflects the distinctive character of our school. We take full advantage of our geographical position in the heart of Marlborough and the consistent support we receive from our families and the wider community.
- Topics reflect local, national or international events and celebrate the cycle of the church year.
- Different subject areas drive themes to ensure breadth of learning.
- Children present their learning through a variety of media e.g. exhibition, play, film, museum, assembly, parade, art, music, dance, drama or writing.
- We give our pupils opportunities to work in depth, to reflect, consolidate and transfer their knowledge, skills and attitudes across their learning experiences.

Teaching

We teach the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum, the Early Years Foundation Stage and the agreed Religious Syllabus through a range of activities and schemes of work. Teachers have the professional freedom to decide how to arrange learning in the school timetable. We aim to make learning as coherent as possible and make links when there are obvious connections. Subjects can be taught discretely or they can be taught through themes or projects. Sufficient time must be given to embed the essential skills of English, Mathematics and ICT.

Tasks need not always follow the standard format of daily lessons but are planned to be flexible and appropriate for their particular objective e.g. blocked work for a Design and Technology project.

- Teachers at Marlborough St Mary’s recognise themselves as life-long learners. They are all highly qualified and passionate about every child’s potential to learn.
- Teachers plan together weekly to ensure the most stimulating learning opportunities possible. Plans are adapted as necessary in response to previous work and to suit the individuals within teachers own classes.
- Every opportunity is taken to ensure that lessons are planned and delivered to engage the pupils as active learners.
- A clear learning objective (skills based and not task led) and success criteria are shared with the children for every lesson.
- Discrete teaching of co-operative group working skills is taught across the curriculum. The teacher also has a key role in modelling how to work with a partner, a group or the whole class. Pupils are given opportunities to regularly work as individuals, in groups of various sizes and in whole classes.
- Learning partners are used extensively across the school. This is done so that thoughts can be explored, rehearsed and then shared with a wider audience.
- We use speaking and listening extensively to develop learning. When teaching through dialogue, teachers encourage children to listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternatives; to build on their own and others ideas to develop coherent thinking; to express their ideas fully and to help each other reach common understandings.

- We aim to develop critical thinking skills through actively teaching logic and reasoning skills e.g. planning, comparing, classifying, deducing, and hypothesising.
- We value originality and new ideas and the children are aware of the importance the school places on creativity and original thinking.

Personalised Learning

Within our termly themes we aim to foster children's personal involvement through:

- A curriculum that is flexible and will respond to children's interests.
- Beginning each theme by exploring and recording children's existing knowledge and understanding.
- Open ended tasks which encourage children to pose and answer their own questions about each theme.
- A carefully considered mix of research and recording tasks.
- Assessment activities which include children presenting their own learning.
- Acknowledging that children learn in many different ways and adapting our planning and teaching strategies accordingly.
- Giving due regard to information and targets contained in support plans and one page pupil profiles.
- Our marking; which celebrates successes and gives pupils insights into their errors, misconceptions and how to move their learning forward.

Assessment

- Teachers are aware of the crucial role of assessment to ensure that the appropriate level of challenge is given to all children.
- Teachers employ a range of assessment for learning techniques in the classroom to ensure all pupils are engaged with their learning throughout the session.
- Differentiation is carefully thought through so that the most able and the least able are supported to move their learning forward in every lesson. In KS2 pupils are developed and guided so that they can successfully pick their own level of challenge e.g. chilli challenge. Children with SEND, and those causing concern, may be involved in producing a personal Support Plan or One Page Profile to support their learning.
- Teachers' questioning skills are outstanding – enabling them to dig deeply into children's thinking and discern their level of understanding in all areas.
- Clear feedback is given both verbally and in work books.

Tracking progress and attainment

Children's individual progress is tracked and discussed at regular pupil progress meetings. Support is quickly put in place to help children who are falling behind.

We evaluate teaching and learning throughout the school by:

- Monitoring of planning to ensure continuity and progression
- Termly formal tracking of progress and attainment through the SIMS system
- Analysis of Foundation Stage tracking, Year 1 phonics and KS 1 and 2 SATs results
- Classroom observations/learning walks
- Sampling pupil's work to inform standards and the quality and effectiveness of marking
- Moderating work with colleagues

- Discussion and feedback from pupils and families
- Feedback from SIA, Ofsted, SIAMS.

Use of Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants work with different ability groups and individuals; they are actively involved in teaching small groups within lessons or in providing intervention sessions. They are alert to spotting misconceptions and gaps in learning and take responsibility for assessing pupils in their groups, they help identify the next steps and plan subsequent activities with their class teachers. Our Teaching Assistants are particularly effective in identifying and supporting personal problems that present barriers to learning and work alongside teachers to feedback on learning and progress.

Involvement of Parents and Carers

Parents are a key contributor to the success of their child's learning.

- Termly curriculum newsletters to parents explain what their children will be learning and how parents and carers can help them at home.
- Relevant, well planned homework is set and marked to support the learning in class and to enhance children's progress.
- Parent meetings and "My Child" meetings ensure that teachers and parents can work together with our children to move them to success. Parents are supported to agree a target for their child and given resources to support the achievement of that target where appropriate. These targets reflect the school's vision of the value of the whole child and can be wider than reading, writing and maths academic targets.

What do we expect outstanding teaching and learning to look like in our school?

- Pupils are excited about their learning and regularly want to continue their learning past the lesson at home or at school.
- Pupils can talk confidently about what they have achieved in a lesson and what they can do to be even better learners.
- Pupils can happily explain how they learn from their mistakes.
- Pupils are proud of their work and learning. Their books reflect the pride they have in their work.
- Pupils are excited about and enjoy being given responsibility across the school.
- Children leave school with a love of learning; ready and enthusiastic about moving on to the next stage of their education
- The environment created by the teacher allows risk taking and "having a go" is the norm. Children are intrigued by investigating and making observations and hungry to learn.
- Lessons have pace and excitement – there is a buzz of learning (or thoughtful reflection) when you go into the classroom.
- Classes are bright stimulating environments that celebrate and support the children's learning. There is a reflection area for children and staff to pause and be mindful in order to support spirituality.
- There is agreement on behaviours expected to ensure effective learning and children recognise their need to take part and be active. Teachers and TAs expect pupils to be alert, active and ready to learn.