

Learning Policy St Mary's R.C Primary



At St Mary's, we define learning as **"Learning is an active and continuous process in which making connections to new information results in growth and development socially, emotionally, and cognitively."** We recognise each pupil as a unique, self-aware individual and aim to support both personal growth and meaningful relationships.

Our pedagogy is based on collaborative research and draws on a range of learning theories embedded through the six strands of philosophical teaching and learning: enquiry, dialogue, concept co-construction, reasoning, reflection and development of intellectual and social virtues. These principles, alongside our school values, form the foundation of all teaching and learning. They shape how pupils engage with knowledge and how teachers design and deliver lessons, impacting not only classroom practice but the ethos of the entire school.

Our teaching is:

- Philosophical in purpose: it seeks to develop intellectual curiosity through deeper understanding and appreciation.
- Philosophical in process: engaging children to construct and analyse **concepts** through **inquiry, dialogue, reasoning, and reflection** within communities of enquiry.

These core elements provide opportunities for every child to experience challenging learning across all curriculum areas, with a clear focus on depth and understanding.

- **Concept-Construction**: deepens understanding by exploring big ideas, encouraging children to connect concepts and think expansively.
- **Reasoning & Inquiry**: promotes curiosity and critical thinking through purposeful questioning, argument-building, and active exploration.
- **Reflection & Dialogue**: supports learners in processing and articulating their thinking through structured reflection and use of Thinking Moves.
- **Virtue-Valuing**: encourages the development of intellectual and social virtues, such as empathy, resilience, and creativity to help children become thoughtful, self-aware learners.

Teachers blend explicit instruction with inquiry-based learning, using questioning that both supports and challenges children. Through this approach, children develop social and intellectual **virtues**, such as self-respect, optimism, courage, open-mindedness, and metacognition. They develop self-regulation, resilience, and the habits of mind needed to face challenges and embrace opportunities.

Inclusive and Empowering Learning

Our offer creates opportunities for all children to have equal access to a range of learning experiences, that promote independence and critical thinking. Using clear thinking strategies and a shared language of thinking, we scaffold learning to encourage challenge, reflection, and real-world connections.

St Mary's is a supportive and nurturing environment where children are empowered to understand themselves and grow into positive and contributing members of the community.

Planning for Learning

Long and medium planning is completed using the school's agreed proformas.

Weekly short-term planning is not required but can be sampled at the Headteacher's discretion.

The role of Education Support Officers

We have a number of SESOs/ESOs who play a central and specialised role in the learning process.

Key elements of their role are:

To support teaching, either through the direct delivery or enabling access, independence and engagement for all children.

Supporting a small group within the classroom.

Carrying out assessments to inform teaching.

Preparing learning resources for enhancing access to the learning environment.

Supporting children with PLP (Personalised Learning Plan)

Plan, Do, Review

We use a whole school approach to Plan, Do, Review in line with SIP priorities.

All reflection and monitoring is conducted in a supportive and professional and collaborative manner engaging all members of the school community to promote continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Equality

At St Mary's R.C. Primary School, in line with the 2017 Equality Act, we aim to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Policy read in conjunction with:

Curriculum policy

Feedback and marking policy

Positive relationship policy

Staff induction policy

Assessment policy

Inclusion policy

DESC Inclusion policy

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Signed:

Mrs Adrienne Burnett

Chair of Governors

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