

St Mark's CE Primary School

Ramslye Road
Tunbridge Wells
TN4 8LN



Teaching and Learning Policy

Headteacher: Simon Bird
Chair of Governors: David Hill

Our Vision

St Mark's CEP School is committed to developing children who are flourishing, building strong foundations, making excellent all-round progress and reaching their potential. We Aspire, Believe, Succeed

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Website -yes

Signed by Chair of Governors: _____

Date: _____

At St Mark's we want to ensure that every child in our care is given the opportunity to develop personally, socially, academically and spiritually to the best of their ability. This can be achieved by providing a caring and supportive environment where different learning styles are recognised and promoted.

Aims

We aim to develop the highest possible standards in our learning environment. We plan an interesting and stimulating curriculum that challenges our pupils, developing their natural curiosity while encouraging them to work independently and progress at an appropriate pace.

Practice

As teachers, we will ensure that we provide a curriculum which meets legal requirements and enables both children and staff to grow to their full potential.

The minimum expectation for the quality of provision in each class is good, management action including coaching and individual support will be offered to staff working below this level of provision.

As teachers we will do this by:

- having a secure understanding of the curriculum we are teaching
- planning with clear lesson objectives and steps to success which are shared with pupils and other adults working in the classroom
- differentiating/adapting the curriculum appropriately for groups and individuals
- providing challenging work and having high expectations of the pupils linked to prior assessment
- using a variety of teaching approaches/metacognitive approaches
- using time and resources effectively
- using a range of questioning techniques
- ensuring pupils have time to respond to marking comments
- setting challenging but achievable targets with their pupils and ensure pupils know and understand both their targets and what they need to do to achieve them
- ensuring parents and carers are updated on progress and produce written reports sharing this information 2x a year
- reviewing the children's work with them, setting appropriate targets for improvement.
- using assessment and tracking to inform teaching
- planning and marking homework in line with the school policy
- meeting the expectations set out in the behaviour policy and feedback policy

Our expectation is that provision at St Mark's CE Primary School is consistently good. Through the identification of needs in our School Development Plan and the Performance Management process we shall ensure that teacher expertise is being improved towards this. We shall build on the strengths of the school and address areas that need development in a positive and constructive manner. We shall ensure that every child, regardless of gender, race or ability has equal access to the whole curriculum.

Our curriculum

St Mark's vision states that "St Mark's CEP School is committed to developing children who are flourishing, building strong foundations, making excellent all-round progress and reaching their potential. We Aspire, Believe, Succeed"

We open up horizons of hope and aspiration, nurturing and guiding pupils to fulfilment. We develop the skills, relationships and qualities of character for a changing society'-This is the fundamental principle that underpins the design, implementation and ongoing review of the St Mark's curriculum. It is at the very core of our 'why' and defines us as a school.

Intent

The intent of our curriculum goes far beyond the outcomes seen at the end of Year 6. We have thoughtfully constructed a curriculum framework which focuses not solely on academia but on shaping our pupils into confident, passionate, life-long learners. We want our pupils to continue their journey with a secure foundation of knowledge, skills, ideas and most importantly-a relentless curiosity about the world around them. Thus, when designing this curriculum, we endeavoured to ensure it was broad, complimented by a wide range of experiences and provided pupils with far more than just academic achievement.

In our pursuit of providing St Mark's pupils with a balanced and rich education, we have crafted a curriculum based on four key constructs:

1) Knowledge

Recent research in the field of cognitive psychology has had huge implications in what we know about what makes effective teaching and learning. One such area of research is that which has explored the importance of a rich knowledge base in developing critical thinking. Critical thinking is a crucial life skill not only in careers but in day-to-day life. The idea that a rich base of factual knowledge helps pupils to make connections and exponentially leads to further learning is at the heart of the design of each unit through the years. The framework for each year group details explicitly the knowledge that will be learnt and how this knowledge develops cumulatively throughout the unit.

2) Skills

Once pupils have a broad knowledge base, they need to explore, practice and master skills to allow them to apply this knowledge in a meaningful way. The St Mark's curriculum highlights these key skills and demonstrates how these are applicable in real life contexts. It is of crucial importance to us that our pupils are clear on how content relates to real life. This is integral to pupils' developing positive learning attitudes from the earliest stages of their education.

3) Experiences

Pupil's experiences are of paramount importance in the delivery of the St Mark's curriculum. It is these experiences that provide meaningful context to learning. In other words, it makes the learning 'sticky' and gives something for pupils to pin their developing understanding to. The curriculum details experiences that enrich and complement each unit and offer teachers suggested educational visits that will ultimately enhance pupil understanding. These experiences also serve a different purpose- it allows our pupils, who come from differing backgrounds, equal opportunity to experience people and places that they may not have access to otherwise. Through these experiences, they will also develop key life skills that we too often take for granted- how to use transport systems, how to interact with others and how to conduct themselves in public- essential development of them as both student but more importantly as active citizens in our society.

4) Holistic Approach

In designing this curriculum, we have maximised opportunity for pupils to make connections in content both across units and across year groups. This holistic approach is incredibly important for two key reasons: (a) learning acts as a catalyst for further learning as mentioned previously e.g. learning about the events of WW1 allows a better appreciation of historical narratives such as 'Private Peaceful'. (b) It serves an important purpose for pupil's experience of their learning and their individual self-esteem. They are essentially able to 'hit the ground running' in subsequent learning and they develop a positive self-image as both learners and as individuals.

The curriculum covers all areas of the statutory National Curriculum and offers equal importance to all subjects - a move away from the more traditional focus on Reading, Writing and Maths. Rather, these 'core' subjects are interspersed in all subject areas to allow pupils to flourish across a range of areas and develop multiple interests and talents.

Implementation

The choice of the word 'framework' was highly deliberate. The St Mark's Curriculum has not been designed as a rigid structure that teachers must adhere to stringently but rather a framework of suggested content ready to be moulded and shaped by teachers and pupils alike. The knowledge base is key in terms of delivery but how this knowledge is explored and is extended upon is very much reflective of individual cohorts. The shifting demographic of our pupils has further highlighted the necessity of having a responsive curriculum in place which responds to pupils' individual starting points, existing knowledge and interests. The curriculum is therefore a continually evolving document. Both teaching staff and the leadership team have contributed, and we have made a commitment as a staff to continue to review and refine this year-on-year so that our pupils are offered an outstanding education of the very highest quality.

Measuring Impact

Impact of the curriculum will be measured by evaluating both qualitative and quantitative data. Attainment and progress will be monitored closely, and qualitative data will be collected from pupils and teachers to continually refine the curriculum. The impact will be seen from the KS2 SAT's data because, if successfully implemented, this holistic approach rooted in developing cultural capital will positively impact this data.

Monitoring

There will be regular monitoring of:

- a) the curriculum and its delivery through formal and informal lesson observation, drop ins, work (book looks) and planning scrutiny, data analysis, learning walks, pupil conferencing, discussion and agreement trialing
- b) the curriculum and policy documents by co-ordinators and senior staff

Summary

In our school each child needs to:

- feel secure, safe and valued by all
- feel they make a worthwhile contribution
- have a sense of achievement
- achieve their potential
- be challenged to be the best they can be
- listen to others
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In our school each member of staff needs to:

- feel happy, motivated and valued
- be positive and calm

- praise the children and each other
 - be punctual and show good time management as per the Code of Conduct
 - listen to others and behave in a professional manner as per the Code of Conduct
 - actively support the school behaviour policy through positive reinforcement
 - be provided with the opportunities for career and personal development
 - establish good relationships with parents and carers including welcoming them as helpers in the classroom and working alongside them in regards to their children's needs.
 - deliver consistently good provision to ensure good progress
 - be a good role model both in terms of appearance, manners and relationships as per the Code of Conduct
 - plan appropriately for children in their care
 - keep up to date with assessments and record keeping
- (Please see the Code of Conduct for all expectations of staff)

Teacher's planning needs to:

- be in line with the National Curriculum and school schemes as a framework
- be organised, thorough and differentiated/adapted to match the needs of all children
- provide for a range of teaching experiences
- show progression
- show thought for resources

Our learning environments need to:

- be friendly and purposeful
- be ordered, calm and predictable
- be clean, tidy, warm and comfortable
- be safe and secure
- be well resourced
- have displays that celebrate and support pupils learning (see display policy regarding expectations for displays)

Partnership with Parents/Carers

We aim to provide a relationship of trust and understanding, to be a place where children and parents feel valued and supported. Parents views and knowledge of their children is valued. Parents are welcome to discuss any concerns with the class teacher at an agreed time, usually at the end of the school day, either in person or via a telephone call/email exchange. Formal parent consultation meetings to discuss progress and targets will take place during the Autumn and Spring terms as well as more informal open classrooms across the year. Written communications regarding children's progress will happen twice a year through a Mid Year and End of Year report.

ALL relationships within the school need to be based upon trust, friendship, respect, support, fairness and high expectations of all.