



Policy on Curriculum

The Federation of St Joseph's Catholic Junior, Infant and Nursery Schools

Our ambitious vision

To encourage and empower children and young people to recognise and realise their God-given potential. To ensure we are ambitious for our children. To strive to provide them with opportunities to develop their physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual gifts. We help them to aspire to a sense of personal dignity and responsibility, to learn the correct use of freedom, and to participate actively in their communities.

Curriculum Rationale:

- That all pupils are provided with outstanding learning experiences that lead to consistently outstanding levels of pupil achievement by maintaining high expectations for every child.
- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum that challenges all children, regardless of ability, at all stages of their learning and development.
- To develop every child to become resilient, independent, reflective, positive and motivated learners.
- To develop happy, tolerant and sociable children.
- To encourage children to have a life-long love of learning
- To develop an engaging and challenging curriculum that develops the child holistically.
- To create, embed and sustain learning environments that are conducive to learning, supporting children's physical, academic and mental well-being
- To provide all children with rich, purposeful first hand experiences that are memorable and support effective, engaging learners.
- To ensure that all children feel safe, valued and challenged, regardless of their starting points.
- We are continually reviewing and improving the curriculum we offer to our children. Our curriculum is evolving according to the needs of our children and to the aspirations of the staff and community.

Wherever possible, we strive to make meaningful connections across subjects, ensuring learning is delivered in meaningful contexts preparing children effectively for the future. The school expects everyone to develop and show a sense of responsibility and pride whether alone, together, at work or at play, and to support policies on equal opportunities. We actively promote British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs to prepare our pupils for life in modern day Britain.

Developing the holistic child is of utmost importance and, with this in mind, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum which encompasses academic subjects, sport, music and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education. We are particularly proud of the respect and care that our children show for one another, the environment and the community around us.

Our pupils are offered a very wide range of experiences to extend their understanding of themselves and the world in which they live. Skills, attitudes and values are developed to prepare the children for the next stage of learning (key stage 1 and 2 ready and secondary ready), and enable them to be successful in the community.



The Role of the Subject Leader

It is the role of each subject leader to keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level. They review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each subject leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and that progression is planned into schemes of work.

They must:

- Provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
- Support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- Monitor pupil progress in that subject area;
- Provide efficient resource management for the subject.
- Complete action plans and Subject Evaluation Forms, to prioritise areas of development to maximise impact in terms of learning and teaching within their subjects.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. Our assessments are rigorous and robust and provide formative, summative and diagnostic feedback. Formative assessment takes place in our daily teaching and informs short term planning. The principles and practice of AFL are firmly embedded within the school. Summative assessment takes place at intervals throughout the year. Results are analysed carefully and used to track pupils' progress, inform planning and identify intervention groups. We use '**Early Excellence**' in the EYFS to track all our pupils and in Years 1 – 6 our own assessment management system, **Assessment Journey**, to track progress both for individuals and cohorts. (For further details see the Assessment Policy and Marking and Feedback Policy)

EYFS Curriculum

The Nursery and Reception follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception curriculum map can be viewed on the school website.

The EYFS is based upon four principles:

- every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured;
- children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships;
- children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers;
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The EYFS framework includes seven areas of learning and development, all of which are seen as important and interconnected but three areas are seen as particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn and form relationships and thrive (DfE 2014: 1.3), they support children's learning in all other areas, they are known as the prime areas.

The prime areas are:

Communication and Language – Listening and Attention, Understanding and Speaking
Physical Development – Moving and Handling and Self-care



Personal, Social and Emotional Development – Making relationships, Managing feelings and behaviour and Self-confidence and Self-awareness.

The specific areas of learning develop essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

Literacy – Reading and Writing

Mathematics – Numbers and Space, Shape and Measures

Understanding the World – People and communities, The World and Technology

Expressive Arts and Design – Exploring and using media and materials and Being Imaginative

Mathematics

At St Joseph's we chose to use the **Maths no Problem** scheme across the entire federation. We decided to use this scheme as it adopts the fundamental style of the Singapore style teaching approach with great emphasis on the concrete-pictorial-abstract. The scheme ensures that all the learning objectives for the new curriculum for all year groups are covered. Each lesson deals with the microscopic progression of the skills to ensure that all new learning is fully embedded.

Our aim as a school is that all children become competent mathematicians, the Singapore method of teaching mathematics develops pupils' mathematical ability and confidence without having to resort to memorising procedures to pass tests - making mathematics more engaging and interesting. The concept of teaching mathematics to mastery is to ensure that topics are well developed. Pupils will spend enough time to fully explore a concept before moving on to a different topic. As an idea is well formed they are reinforced by ample practice. New knowledge is then used in subsequent lessons so that all ideas build on top of each other and pupils have ample opportunity to develop relationships between the topics. Ideas are revisited in a spiral as pupils' progress through the years, each time at a higher level. Alongside this scheme, we will use further challenges and reasoning activities to stretch and deepen them.

Lessons follow a typical format. To start a lesson an anchor task will be displayed and the children are given an opportunity on their tables to discuss and think of ways that they could answer the question. They are then given an opportunity to explain how they choose to answer it and discuss the method. Children will then be encouraged to solve the anchor task using concrete resources, pictorially and finally abstract. As a class, they then move through a selection of similar problems and teachers use this opportunity to assess the learning. Children are also encouraged to self-assess themselves. Emphasis is placed on children clearly explaining what they are doing and why.

English

At St Joseph's our writing is based around high quality, challenging and engaging class texts which have been carefully chosen by year group teachers. Our English sessions always start with a creative hook which engages and excites the class about the text and enables children to have discussions and explore questions or thoughts they have with their peers. Every English lesson starts with a creative activity which focusses on phonics, spelling, punctuation and grammar or vocabulary. These activities focus on the SPaG related objectives linked to the text as well as the objectives within the national curriculum or they focus on enhancing and exploring children's vocabulary. Within English lessons we focus on exploring the text and the text type looking at what we enjoy about the text, the similarities and differences with other texts as well as looking at the text structure, the language the author has used and the grammatical features we can identify. Children are encouraged to use personal magpie books which they can use to record interesting and exciting vocabulary and phrases to use in their own writing. This gives the children the opportunity to work in pairs or as a group to discuss



their idea, extend their knowledge and understanding whilst practicing their spoken language skills. Children are given opportunities to fully embed themselves in the class text through a variety of activities including: oral storytelling and actions, role play and performances as well as other creative activities. Through this text based learning and quality teacher modelled writing with class input children are improving the quality of their writing. Working walls and washing lines which incorporate our class learning and children's ideas as well as the class planning and modelled text support our children with their own writing.

Within our school children produce independent extended pieces of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Throughout the writing process, children are encouraged to share their ideas with the class to add to the working wall or for children to add ideas and vocabulary to their magpie books for use at a later date. Our most able pupils are continuously being encouraged to progress within their writing through challenge tasks and activities which will help children to independently enhance their piece of writing. We also ensure children are given the time to independently edit their work as well as taking on board and responding to peer or teacher suggestions and marking to improve the content of their writing in purple pens. Children are also given two short sessions a week to work on improving their handwriting both within independent sessions as well as within their writing in their extended writing books. The high quality of teaching and writing produced by children in English sessions is an expectation that can be seen across all subjects we teach at our school. RE and Learning challenge lessons also follow the same routines, teaching and structures as English lessons to ensure writing is of a high quality across all subjects.

Within our school, we create excitement and enthusiasm for reading by ensuring our book corners are engaging and inviting, all classes have a class story which is introduced to the children through class door displays which initially entices questions and discussions about what the story is. Class teachers read to children daily either by reading their class books or stories within their English, RE or learning challenge lessons. In EYFS and year one, guided reading sessions take place daily. These sessions adopt a structured approach to reading a book in groups using texts that are suitably challenging for their reading ability. The pupils will, in the space of a week: experience reading with their teacher, follow up reading directed by the teacher, questioning and answering in an increasingly more detailed structure through an analysis of what they have read and finally, have the opportunity to read for pleasure. In years 2 – 6, guided reading sessions are completed twice a week through an extended whole class approach. Guided reading sessions begin with creative starters focussing on reading and vocabulary skills where children will work independently, in pairs or in a group using white boards, completing activities or creating vocabulary tables. Interesting and challenges texts are introduced by the class teacher and explored by the children in pairs or as a group. Children will analyse the text pulling out vocabulary, grammatical use, content and meaning as well as forming opinions of their own. These sessions encourage discussion of findings as well as ideas and opinions which are shared within groups and then as a whole class. Children will then complete differentiated tasks and answer questions based on the text they have explored. Extension tasks and challenges are part of every guided reading session to ensure children have high expectations of themselves and are always thriving to extend their own learning.

Phonics

At St Joseph's our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the *Read Write Inc.* Phonics programme. The programme has now been used at our school for many years and has proved to be successful. Reading results have improved and are always in line or exceeding the National average.

All year groups from Nursery to Year 2 use the scheme. This provides consistency of phonics teaching throughout the school. The programme is lively and robust and children of all abilities can access the programme albeit at their own pace.



In *Read Write Inc.* Pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or segmenting to spell words.

RE

At St Joseph's we have chosen to use the scheme **The Way, The Truth, The Life** as the aim of the scheme is to support teachers in Catholic schools and in the wider Christian community in their daily task of unfolding for pupils the mystery of God, the teaching of the Church and its application in daily life. The scheme ensures progression throughout year groups and key stages to ensure that a wide range of aspects of the Catholic faith are covered with recognition and teaching of the Church's liturgical calendar.

The scheme incorporates learning about the Catholic faith and learning from the Catholic faith. Teachers are supported with clear learning objectives for each unit and theological reflections to enrich the teacher's understanding of the content they are about to teach. The scheme supports children in understanding that God created each person and that he loves everyone. Also, that he sends his son, Jesus, to show us the way to lead a good life that will bring happiness, how he teaches the truth about what is really important for this life and life eternal and that he gives us the promise of everlasting life through his own death and resurrection.

Teachers further enrich the Religious Education curriculum with a range of bespoke resources and the school uses a separate scheme of work to ensure that other faiths are taught in a clear, appropriate and progressive manner in Key Stages One and Two. The experiences of children in Religious Education are further enhanced by visits to places of religious importance and guest speakers.

RSE

At St Joseph's we have chosen to use the scheme **God's Loving Plan** as it provides guidance to Primary school teachers on how children can be helped to develop healthy and respectful attitudes to their bodies and to relationships with families and friends. This resource connects children's learning about who they are and how they relate to others, to their learning about God and their relationship in faith. It helps children to understand how love can be at the heart of their lives and what the Church's vision is of Marriage as the ultimate expression of love between man and woman.

God's Loving Plan encourages teachers to work closely with parents and carers to ensure that young people are supported as they grow, particularly when coming to deal with the physical and emotional impact of puberty. Good communication between home and school is encouraged to ensure that the more intimate aspects of children's growth are dealt with sensitively and skillfully by parents and teachers working together.



The planning framework in **God's Loving Plan** connects learning in Religious Education to aspects of Health & Wellbeing from Early Years, through Key Stage One and throughout Key Stage Two. The learning is organised under four **THEMES**, dealing with God as the source of all life who is delighted when we use our unique talents (including our bodies) for good, who calls us to be loving people and who guides us to make choices that are good and responsible.

SEND

At St Joseph's every child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum, followed at their own level and pace, and we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils, whatever their needs or abilities. We have the same high expectations for our educational aims for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as we do for all children in school, and we ensure we meet the learning needs of all our pupils through our excellent teaching and learning, providing differentiated work and a personalised approach. All pupils receive quality first teaching whereby a range of teaching and learning styles are used and appropriate objectives are set. Where appropriate, modifications to the curriculum may be implemented including differentiated activities and materials, access to resources and ICT, flexible groupings and additional support from the teacher or teaching assistant.

For those pupils who require further support to help them meet age-related expectation, additional help may be provided through group or individual interventions, tailored to their individual needs. All of our SEND pupils also have an Individual Support Plan outlining specific, personalised targets which are addressed through everyday practice in the classroom. (For further information, please refer to the SEND and Inclusion Policy.)

Learning Challenge

At St Joseph's we follow the **Learning Challenge** curriculum for Science, Humanities, Art & Design, DT and Music. The Learning Challenge concept is built around the principle of greater learner involvement in their work. It requires deep thinking and encourages learners to work using a question as the starting point. It requires teachers to think about what their curriculum needs to include to meet the needs of the children in their context – leading to high standards in all areas of the curriculum. It allows our pupils to make connections between subjects, practicing and applying the skills they learn across different subjects.

The key Drivers of the **Learning Challenge** approach are:

- Planned around the distinctive needs of our pupils
- Enquiry based to promote curiosity
- Outcomes driven to raise standards
- Embeds the application of basic skills
- Allows writing to be meaningfully embedded
- Cross-curricular (where meaningful)
- Interesting for the teacher as well as the children
- Integrates empowering learning ('learn to learn')
- Underpinned by latest thinking about quality learning and brain-based learning

Science

At St Joseph's, Science is taught as part of the **Learning Challenge** curriculum. It is taught once a week as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and is linked to our Topic work where appropriate. We encourage our pupils to be curious about natural phenomenon and to be excited by the process of the understanding of the world around them. We encourage and provide pupils with opportunities to plan and carry out their own ideas and investigations, make



relevant links to real life, particularly bringing clear links to English and Maths and provide enough challenge for more-able pupils.

Pupils will be able to carry out simple tests and investigations using equipment and to gather and record data, developing their investigations from teacher modelled, to independent investigations.

Pupils will be taught generic topics throughout their school years which include learning about Plants; Animals and Humans; Living things and their Habitats; Rock; States of matter; Light and Sound; Forces and Magnets; Electricity; Earth and Space; Evolution and Inheritance.

Children in YR1-6 are given the opportunity to engage in different types of enquiry such as observing over time, pattern seeking, identifying, classifying and grouping; comparative and fair testing (controlled investigations) and research using secondary sources which ensure a broad and balanced curriculum.

In the Early Years, we start to develop blocks of knowledge and concepts alongside the development of enquiry skills. Science is taught through the strand of 'Knowledge and Understanding of the World' which allows children to be creative and inquisitive and to find things out for themselves.

Furthermore, to enhance the delivery of our Science curriculum, we have close links with a local secondary school, the subject leader attends regular network meetings and the school is working towards the silver award of the PSQM.

Humanities

At St Joseph's the objectives for the Geography and History Curriculum are taught through the **Learning Challenge** curriculum. Explicit links are made to other subject areas, particularly core ones such as English and Maths. Learning activities are sequenced to ensure progression, as well as challenge, and are taught through a variety of approaches including outside speakers with the relevant experience and knowledge, fieldwork and first-hand experiences.

In History we encourage children to enjoy studying the past and to work as 'historical detectives' by using primary and secondary resources to develop the skills of inference and deduction. Teaching History through the learning challenge allows the children to have the opportunity to learn about their personal history, their community and local history, ancient civilizations and Britain's past.

The teaching of Geography through the **Learning Challenge** curriculum focuses on enquiry based learning. Children are given opportunities to develop their knowledge about the local area and the wider world. Each question allows for both independent and team work enquiry, discovery, research and investigation. Progression is planned within the **Learning Challenge** curriculum so that our children are increasingly challenged as they move up the school.

Art & Design

At St Joseph's Art & Design is taught through the **Learning Challenge** curriculum and key skills are taught on a 2-year rolling programme. We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to explore and develop skills and techniques through a variety of media and materials. Children will learn about artists and designers and explore their own creative talents. They are also given opportunities to understand and appreciate art in a variety of genres and styles from a variety of cultures, western and non-western.

In lessons children have the chance to observe, discuss and create. Time is also used for children to evaluate their own and other pupils' work. Children work individually, in partners



and collaboratively in groups. We have a yearly Arts Week where children are also given the opportunity to further enhance their skills.

Design & Technology

At St Joseph's Design & Technology is taught through the **Learning Challenge** curriculum. Children are given the opportunities they need to be creative and imaginative in a variety of contexts, ranging from design to problem solving. They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as Mathematics, Science, Engineering, Computing and Art through strong relevant cross curricular links.

At St Joseph's Design & Technology skills are taught on a 2-year rolling programme. The Learning Challenge curriculum encourages children to look at their environment in an explorative and questioning way. Each learning challenge focuses on the context of our children, their interest and what motivates them to learn. Through planning, designing, making and evaluating artefacts, our children experiment with different ideas and materials and begin to accumulate the knowledge and skills which ensures progression.

Computing

At St Joseph's Computing is taught throughout the curriculum. The pupils have discreet Computing lessons weekly and follow a Scheme of Work adapted for our school. The Scheme of work for Early Years has been created as a series of lesson Ideas, using the Areas of Learning and Development as starting points.

For Years 1-6 there are eight Computing areas of learning:

- Coding and Computational thinking
- Spreadsheets
- Internet and Email
- Art and Design
- Music
- Databases and graphing
- Writing and Presenting
- Communication and networks

Online Safety is a Unit focus at the beginning of year 1 and is then taught through all subjects where relevant throughout the school. We use a range of programs to support learning including Espresso, Purple Mash, Reading Eggs (Key stage 1), Mathletics (Key stage 2), online books (through Kindles) and The London Grid for Learning resources.

We are currently developing our Digital Leaders program. This promotes a whole school team approach to digital learning and gives pupils responsibilities and opportunities for developing their skills while supporting others.

French

At St Joseph's French is taught in a whole class setting by a language specialist (Year 3 – 6) supported by the class teacher. Lessons are designed to motivate children from the first moment and are mainly practical in focus. French teaching at St Joseph's is in line with the national curriculum and covers the following elements:

- Oracy
- Literacy
- Knowledge and understanding
- Intercultural understanding
- Language learning strategies



Each class has a timetabled session each week and there is a great emphasis within lessons on speaking and listening. Lessons have clear, achievable objectives and incorporate different learning styles.

Music

At St Joseph's music is taught through the **Learning Challenge** curriculum. Learning challenges are structured and matched appropriately for each lesson and the ability of our children. We ensure we give our pupils the opportunities to develop musical skills and knowledge by being actively engaged and responding to music through the following five areas of learning:

- Performing
- Composing
- Appraising
- Listening
- Singing

We encourage our pupils to participate in a variety of musical experiences through which we can build up the confidence of all children. Enrichment of the Music curriculum is provided through a school choir (Year 3 – 6), private tuition, a junior and senior orchestra, visits to the school by musicians and a weekly hymn practice.

PE

At St Joseph's we follow the national curriculum for PE. All pupils have two hours of PE timetabled each week to cover the six main areas of the national curriculum which are dance, gymnastics, games, swimming, athletics and outdoor/adventurous activities. Swimming is offered to our children in Key Stage 2. Alongside the curriculum, our children have the opportunity to participate in numerous before/after school sports clubs.

We place great emphasis on teaching children the importance of being fit and healthy. They are taught that engaging in a range of physical activities and sports is key to achieving this. Alongside physical exercise, children are taught about the need to eat healthily and make the right choices.

Our children have a range of opportunities to take part in competitive games within our school and the local community. Our pupils are also given several opportunities to take part in outdoor adventure activities including residential visits.

Team work is considered an essential part of developing a good sporting attitude and an essential life skill. Opportunities to compete in sport and other activities are encouraged at St Joseph's to help build character and to embed values such as fairness, respect, passion, determination, self-belief, team work and honesty.

PSHCE

At St Joseph's PSHCE or personal, social, health and citizenship education, is a planned programme of learning through which children and young people acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives. At St Joseph's we aim to support the development of the qualities and attributes children need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society. We aim to help them to connect and apply the knowledge and understanding they learn in all subjects to practical, real-life situations while helping them to feel safe and secure enough to fulfil their academic potential. We make children aware of



their rights and responsibilities and aim to develop global citizens who make connections between people and places.

We place great importance on developing an understanding of healthy living and keeping safe. The children are encouraged to regularly participate in a range of sporting activities as well as learning about keeping themselves and others safe in a variety of situations.

Years One–Six have timetabled PSHCE time which follow St Joseph's long term plans but we also encourage a cross-curricular approach to the development of PSHCE skills and understanding, embedded in our Catholic values.