



St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Where every child is special

Curriculum Policy

Policy compiled by:

Headteacher

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Spring 2020

The
CHILD



Nothing but
the **CHILD**

OUR SHARED VISION

Every child at St Thomas of Canterbury is special and will achieve their full potential academically, socially, spiritually and emotionally through the provision of a loving community and rich and varied learning opportunities and the highest quality teaching and learning.

Every staff member at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to provide the opportunities that we want for our children and to do so as part of a loving community which has the highest expectations of and for all.

Every Governor at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to act as a critical friend to the School and to be accountable for the School's strategy. They will play a visible role supporting all children, their parents and staff at School and in the wider community, to provide the best environment possible for learning and spiritual growth.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

God's love is at the heart of our Catholic School family.

We show this in our respect, kindness and love for others and by treating other people as we wish to be treated ourselves.

We will encourage everyone to be the best that we can be.

OUR AIMS

- *To guide our children to grow in the love of God and build relationships that will enable them to make a positive contribution to the School and society.*
- *To develop an exciting, challenging and creative curriculum that produces confident and successful learners who are the best that they can be.*
- *To develop high quality learning that enables every child to flourish, to discover their talents and be lifelong learners.*
- *To establish a teaching and learning environment that encourages everyone to enjoy, to achieve, to be inclusive, to be healthy, and to stay safe.*
- *To nurture a strong partnership between home and School.*
- *To have respect and understanding for our School, our community and our world, helping our children to become responsible citizens and good role models.*



OUR GOLDEN RULE

We treat others as we would like to be treated

All members of our school community have been involved in the discussion and composition of both our Mission Statement and also aims of our curriculum:

The Children have devised a poster which explains how these aims translate into practice in our school community:



The poster, designed by the children, is displayed in all classes.

Our Vision for learning

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School we aim to deliver a twenty first century education that will enable each and every one of our children to become successful and life-long learners. Our curriculum is delivered within the context of our Catholic community. We foster a cross-curricular and holistic approach to learning that is exciting, relevant and challenging. 'Curriculum' is defined as all the learning experiences that the children have, both planned and unplanned to promote learning and personal, spiritual and moral development.



These four strands define our vision for the curriculum. We want all members of our school community to be:

1. Confident and Successful learners
2. Responsible Role Models
3. Make a Positive Contribution
4. Safe and Healthy

Curriculum Design

Our curriculum design acknowledges:

- The core values of our Catholic Community ;
- That children must be taught the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be successful life-long learners;
- The pace of change is accelerating rapidly; Children need to be taught to deal with change;
- The world that children are being prepared for and the skills they will need as adults are uncertain. Consequently, children must learn to have the capacity to respond positively to new situations and the challenges life's journey will pose;
- Children need to develop an international perspective so that they can will be able to work with and relate to different cultures;
- Importance of pedagogy and research into learning; The theories of growth mindset, multiple intelligences, learning styles and emotional intelligence are shaping our approach to learning; We aim to discover children's talents and aim to make very child feel special;
- For children to achieve they need to enjoy their learning and have a range of experiences that are both exciting, challenging and memorable;

Our curriculum equips children:

- With the skills to manage themselves
- With the skills to work with others
- To develop the basic skills of Communication, Mathematics and Computing
- To develop essential learning and thinking skills

St Thomas' Learners

We have a very real focus on *how* to learn and the attitudes that can help make us all successful lifelong learners. This comes through the **St Thomas Learner** who makes **S=D+A+C+E** for their learning. We believe that **S**uccess in learning comes from a combination of **P**erseverance, a really positive, can-do, **A**ttitude, **C**onfidence and **E**ffort.

A Mastery Curriculum

The Mastery-learning model forms the basis of our approach to our curriculum. The National Curriculum is a mastery curriculum and we try to reflect this in all we do.

This means spending greater time going into depth about a subject as opposed to racing through the things that all children should know. Previously, racing through content as levelled objectives in the old curriculum, lead to some children having gaps in subject knowledge because the concept they had just learned was either too big or learned too quickly. As a primary school, it is our duty to ensure that all of our children have an absolutely solid, concrete understanding of subject knowledge and skills as well as being emotionally resilient for secondary school.

We take learning at a steadier and deeper pace, ensuring that no child is left behind, as well as providing deeper and richer experiences for children who are above the national expectation for



their age. We focus on all children achieving what is expected of their age group and not going beyond this but going deeper. Evidence shows that children need to be able to understand a concept, apply it in a range of situations and then be creative to really understand it. Simply going beyond their age group does not guarantee they understand something, it just means they have heard it.

At our school children will not be taught content from the year group above them, they will spend time becoming true masters of content; applying and being creative with new knowledge and skills in multiple ways.

In short, this means:

- **Teach less, learn more:** less teacher talk but more focussed discussion and intelligent practice following a coherent learning journey
- **No child left behind:** all children are enabled to keep up every day.
- **Space and time** to experience and apply, with all children entitled to additional support to ensure they do not fall behind or to go deeper
- **Understanding real life** applications wherever possible to make learning relevant and not abstract; nothing should be taught without a purpose.

This means that we are continuing to:

- Teach all children in class, together, most of the time (with some specific and proven interventions carrying on outside of the classroom when necessary to help close pre-existing gaps in the children's knowledge and understanding)
- Give lots of verbal feedback on the children's learning *during* lessons with work in books often self-marked and corrected
- Spend longer on one idea
- Giving children who need it, additional support over shorter, more intense periods (pre-teach and same-day interventions)

Our Mastery curriculum has been specifically developed by our teachers for our children. In our maths we have based our approach on the NCETM's (National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics) research into primary mathematics teaching in East Asian jurisdictions, especially Shanghai, and on the experience of English Primary schools, such as ourselves, involved in the China-England mathematics education research project. We are an active participant in the Surrey Plus Maths Hub.

Curriculum Delivery

To enable our children to enjoy, achieve and experience a creative and balanced curriculum, learning is organised, planned and delivered through:

- RE as a core subject;
- A thematic approach using a curriculum connector/theme which fosters cross-curricular links in all subjects and the teaching of transferable skills;
- Planning that ensures effective learning in the basic skills of communication, mathematics, science and computing;
- Delivering opportunities for first hand learning, a range of school visits and extra-curricular activities;
- Offering access to a range of services and activities which supports and motivates children to achieve their full potential;
- Enhanced AfL practice;
- Effective subject leadership and support;



- A policy of inclusion and equality of opportunity including effective provision for all groups of pupils, including SEN, EAL, disadvantaged and High attaining children;
- Specialist teaching in music throughout the school;
- Specialist teaching in PE throughout the school including a programme for swimming;
- A programme for MFL throughout the school focusing on French;
- Joint planning in Year Groups;
- Long, medium and short term planning ensuring the progression of skills and knowledge;
- Specific planning for subject specific skills;
- Appropriate differentiation as necessary to help close gaps in rates of progress and attainment.

Our curriculum ensures all statutory guidance relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum is fully implemented.

This policy of St Thomas of Canterbury School upholds the school's ethos and Mission Statement. It must be read in conjunction with and implemented in accordance to the school's policies for Health & Safety Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Safeguarding. Copies of these policies are available from the school website.