

CURRICULUM POLICY



St. James' Church of England Primary Academy

Approved By: Local Governing Body

Date: September 2025

Next Review Date: September 2027



CURRICULUM POLICY

All our policies are written with the objective of continuously improving our school in our aim of realising St. James' vision, which is to create a community that reaches their full potential:

"He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

Matthew 13: 31-32

We believe a small act of kindness and an act of faith can have a huge impact on another's life.

Our Governors, leaders and staff uphold the vision of

'We grow together, through God we are Giving, Loving and are Honest'

At St. James' Church of England Primary Academy, we believe that all children are 'a gift from God, a real blessing' Psalm 127:3 as each child is precious and unique. Through our curriculum, underpinned by our Christian values, we aim to nurture and challenge our children to flourish and be the best they can be.

We provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that focuses on the academic achievement and personal development essential for pupils to become well-rounded, confident individuals, who are ready to make the most of their future opportunities.

Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by our shared values that influence all aspects of school life. The curriculum is the means by which the school achieves its objective of educating children in the knowledge, skills and understanding that they need in order to lead fulfilling and productive lives.

Aims and Objectives

We strive to prepare all our children to successfully aspire to a wealth of opportunities with curiosity and resilience embedded in all they do.

The aims of our school curriculum is:

- To provide a happy, caring and safe environment where great importance is placed on building self-esteem and where individuals believe they can make a difference for the better.
- To provide our pupils with rich, enjoyable and exciting learning experiences which will motivate and inspire them to become lifelong learners.
- To give our pupils a relevant and meaningful curriculum which builds on their strengths, interests and experiences to enable them to set their own targets for learning, which allows them to make the best possible progress.
- To equip our pupils with the essential learning skills to enable them to think creatively and critically be independent when responding to challenges in all areas of the curriculum.
- To encourage our children to have a positive outlook and to pursue a healthy lifestyle through an understanding of the importance of physical activity, emotional well-being and informed choices.
- To develop in each individual the knowledge and understanding of their own needs, beliefs and culture and a respect for those of others and an understanding of fundamental British Values.
- Promote the learning and development of our youngest children to ensure they are ready for Key Stage 1.

- To encourage our children to learn more about the Christian faith in all its traditions and to gain insight into other faiths so that positive attitudes and tolerance can be developed about belief within a caring community.

Intent

We strive to deliver these objectives fully in order that they encompass the requirements set out by the Government to be broad and balanced but also promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of children, as well as prepare children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We have fully embraced these expectations and have devised our own units of work for each subject area so that we can ensure a sound progression of learning. At St. James' we believe the children learn best when they are excited about their learning and for this reason, we teach a themed approach where possible. By making strong links across curriculum areas, children begin to make connections with the consequence that the learning experience is much richer.

Implementation

In addition to everyday learning, we have a range of learning opportunities that further enhance the curriculum. Along with speakers who visit our school, the children visit a range of museums, galleries and centres of learning where they will often take part in workshops led by the staff at the venue e.g. the National History Museum, zoos and the Rochester Guildhall Museum, to name but a few. At the heart of our beliefs, we have provided a learning experience that is designed with the knowledge that each child is unique and special.

As a Church of England Primary School, we place our Christian Values at the heart of everything we do and, with this in mind, we endeavour to live by our school values, which are to be Giving, Loving and Honest. We teach the Diocese programme of study for religious education and also place Worship very firmly in our day-to-day lives. During Worship, children learn from the stories in the Bible, the result being that they understand how they can use these as examples in leading their own lives - attending Church frequently consolidates these messages.

Every day, at the forefront of our minds, is the aim to fulfil our vision of 'We grow together, through God we are Giving, Loving and are Honest'. This message encourages the whole development of each and every child as a person made in God's image and reaffirms the knowledge that they are deeply loved by their Maker.

Impact

We prepare all our children to successfully aspire to a wealth of opportunities with curiosity and resilience embedded in all they do, with God supporting them on their journey.

Curriculum Coherence, Organisation and Planning

A whole school curriculum overview is in place and is regularly reviewed by school leaders, subject leaders, classroom practitioners and stakeholders. This overview indicates what will be taught in each term, which subjects are linked by a theme or project, and enrichment activities.

It is important that our curriculum for Key Stage 1 builds on the child-initiated ethos of the Early Years Foundation Stage principles.

Careful attention is paid to how the material to be studied in each subject is organised. The key knowledge, concepts and skills taught in each subject are clear. Any cross-curricular links within projects are meaningful, ensuring that there is a clear account of necessary prior knowledge when introducing new content. This takes place by children taking part in 'I know, I wonder' activities at the beginning of each theme to determine the specific programme of learning for each class. Objectives can be covered in a different order, or a different way; skills and knowledge can be applied across different curriculum areas. Importantly this gives us some freedom to respond to pupil interest or things that happen in the news or our local area etc.

Planning gives clear guidance on the objectives, teaching strategies, key knowledge, skills and vocabulary that we cover when teaching each subject.

This ensures progression in learning and provides children with many opportunities to consolidate learning and develop mastery. Fluency activities feature across the curriculum to further support the commitment of key knowledge to long-term memory.

The plans provide a sequence of learning intentions so that the needs of the children are fully met in terms of challenge and support. Flexibility and creativity are encouraged so that children are engaged and inspired to learn.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The curriculum that we teach in the reception class meets the requirements set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework.

Our curriculum planning focuses on developing children's knowledge, understanding and skills, as set out in the Framework document. Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through engaging in well-planned structured activities along with opportunities to apply and deepen their learning through play. Teaching in the EYFS class builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Essential Skills and Attributes

Personal Effectiveness

- Self-improvement (including through constructive self-reflection, seeking and utilising constructive feedback and effective goal setting).
- Resilience (including self-motivation, perseverance and adaptability).
- Self-regulation (including promotion of a positive growth mind-set and managing strong emotions and impulses).
- Self-organisation (including time management).
- Strategies for identifying and accessing appropriate help and support.
- Clarifying own values (including reflection on the origins of personal values and beliefs) and re-evaluating values and beliefs in the light of new learning experiences and evidence.
- Recalling and applying knowledge creatively and in new situations.
- Developing and maintaining a healthy self-concept (including self-confidence, realistic self-image, self-worth, assertiveness, self-advocacy and self-respect).

Interpersonal and Social Effectiveness

- Empathy and compassion (including impact on decision-making and behaviour).
- Respect of others' right to their own beliefs, values and opinions.
- Discernment in evaluating the argument and opinions of others.
- Skills for employability including:
 - Active listening and communication (including assertiveness skills)
 - Team working
 - Negotiation (including flexibility, self-advocacy and compromise within an awareness of personal boundaries)
 - Leadership skills
 - Presentation skills

- Enterprise skills and attributes (e.g. aspiration, creativity, goal setting, identifying opportunities, taking positive risks).
- Valuing and respecting diversity.
- Using these skills and attributes to build and maintain healthy relationships of all kinds.

Managing Risk and Decision-Making (integral to personal, interpersonal and social effectiveness)

- Identification, assessment (including prediction) and management of positive and negative risk to self and others.
- Formulating questions (as part of an enquiring approach to learning and to assess the value of information).
- Analysis (including separate fact and reasoned argument from rumour, speculation and opinion).
- Assessing the validity and reliability of information.
- Identifying links between values and beliefs, decisions and actions.
- Making decisions.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (including British Values)

Across the curriculum, pupils have opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and skills.

The Spiritual Development of children is shown by their:

- Ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings, values and faiths.
- Sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible.
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning.
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences.

The Moral Development of children is shown by their:

- Ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, and their readiness to apply this understanding in their own lives. To have respect for the civil and criminal law of England.
- Understanding of the consequences of their behaviour.
- Interest in investigating, and offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues. Able to accept, respect and appreciate that others may have a different viewpoint.

The Social Development of children is shown by their:

- Use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperate well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively.
- Willingness to volunteer.
- Interest in, and understanding of the way communities and societies function at a variety of levels.
- Acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, respect and tolerance of those with differing faiths and beliefs. Their attitudes towards these British values allows the children to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

The Cultural Development of children is shown by their:

- Willingness to participate in, and respond to, for example, artistic, musical, sporting, mathematical, technological, scientific and cultural opportunities.
- Understanding of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain.
- Interest in exploring, understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity.

Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEN
- Pupils with disabilities
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons are planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEND Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Governing Body will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets.
- The school is teaching a 'broad and balanced curriculum' and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement.
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEND).

The Headteacher and Curriculum Lead

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual pupils will be met.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the Governing Body.
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate.
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.
- The Governing Body is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions.

- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN.

Subject Leaders (*Overseen by the Curriculum Lead*)

- To provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject.
- To ensure curriculum coverage and progression in the subject.
- To support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject.
- To monitor pupil progress in that subject area.
- To provide efficient resource management for the subject.

St. James' gives subject leaders' non-contact time as necessary, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. 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.

Monitoring Arrangements

Our Governing Body is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented and ensuring the curriculum is broad and balanced. Governors review each subject area and meet with the subject leaders.

The Headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The Headteacher and senior staff monitor the objectives for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum.

Subject leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school. They also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.