



ST. MARY'S  
ACADEMY TRUST

# St Mary's Academy Trust

## Curriculum Policy

**Date agreed by Performance and Standards committee:** 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019

**Date to be reviewed:** October 2021

### **Principles**

St. Mary's Academy Trust offer a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant and meets the needs of all children whatever their ability. Our curriculum is comprised of The National Curriculum's core and foundation subjects and the wider school curriculum and meets all statutory requirements. All staff are expected to deliver a personalised curriculum designed to meet the needs of their current pupils, providing them with a wide range of relevant, challenging and stimulating learning experiences. All staff must follow and implement the Curriculum Policy.

Our curriculum is comprised of exciting and stimulating lessons and experiences which promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills based on their next steps for learning. We believe in the importance of helping our pupils develop as a whole person and aim to ensure that all of our pupils reach their full potential in all areas of the curriculum. We believe it is our duty and responsibility to provide them with as broad a range of experiences as possible, including through outdoor learning, use of the local and wider community, theme days, and educational visits and visitors that really bring our subjects and themes to life. Wherever possible, we aim to engage parents in the curriculum and their children's work, for example through termly curriculum meetings, homework tasks, work sharing assemblies and parents' evenings.

The curriculum we offer provides opportunities for children to develop as independent learners who are capable of collaborative learning, creative and critical thinking, problem solving and empathy for others and are beginning to develop an in-depth understanding of the world in which we live. The curriculum will help to prepare them for the next phase of their education and as learners of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and ensure that they grow into responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

### **Aims**

- To ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To ensure that all pupils receive a high quality education that supports and challenges them to achieve their best in all areas of the curriculum.
- To develop the essential skills of reading, writing and maths and ensure that pupils have opportunities to apply these skills in a variety of different contexts.
- To ensure that all pupils have a solid foundation and preparation for the next phase of their education and development.
- To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them for life as effective citizens and to enable them to respond positively to the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world.
- To provide a clear framework and set of expectations for schools and all staff for the delivery and assessment of the curriculum.
- To ensure that parents and carers feel part of the school and know how to support their children in their educational development at home.

### **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Teaching in the EYFS setting is delivered in accordance with the government's statutory document 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' (3rd April 2017). This document is a principled approach to Early Years education, bringing together children's welfare, learning and development requirements through four themes: 'A Unique Child', 'Positive Relationships', 'Enabling Environments' and 'Children Learn in Different Ways and at Different Rates'.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning:

The ways in which young children engage with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning and development across all areas of EYFS and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The curriculum is centred on 3 prime areas of learning:

- 1. Communication and Language*
- 2. Physical Development*
- 3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development*

Providers must also support activities through four specific areas which strengthen the prime areas.

These are:

- 1. Literacy*
- 2. Mathematics*
- 3. Understanding of the World*
- 4. Expressive Arts and Design*

All areas of learning are given equal weighting and value and no one area of the curriculum is more important than another. These areas of learning and development address young children's physical, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. No one aspect of development stands in isolation from the others as all the areas of learning are closely interlinked. This ensures the delivery of a holistic, child-centred curriculum which allows children to make links between what they are learning.

St. Mary's Academy Trust believes that Early Years education is important in its own right and should not be viewed simply as preparation for the next stage of children's education. The EYFS framework allows a natural progression into the National Curriculum at the beginning of Year 1 and we emphasize the importance of effective transition between these two phases of a child's education.

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### Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

#### Areas of Learning

St. Mary's Academy Trust follows the statutory Primary National Curriculum. At Key Stages 1 and 2 all schools must teach:

#### The Core Subjects:

English Mathematics  
Science

#### The Foundation Subjects:

Art and Design  
Computing  
Design and Technology  
Geography  
History Languages  
(KS2) Music  
Physical Education  
Religious Education  
Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education, including Sex and Relationships Education

#### Curriculum Delivery:

The core curriculum subjects of English and Mathematics are taught each day as discrete – stand-alone - subjects.

#### Literacy:

The literacy curriculum comprises of:

- Spoken language
- Reading
- Phonics
- Writing (spelling, handwriting and composition)
- Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation

Daily discrete synthetic phonics sessions are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, while any pupils in Key Stage 2 who require additional phonics support receive this through small group and one to one work. Reading is taught through the school's individual approach to reading which is outlined on each school's website. Spelling is taught through daily discrete spelling sessions following St. Mary's Academy Trust spelling scheme and assessments, while technical aspects of grammar and punctuation are taught within the context of a range of text types and applied in a variety of writing. All schools have their own handwriting policy which is taught across school from EYFS to Year 6. Handwriting is taught each week, as well as opportunities to practise and apply across the curriculum.



### **Mathematics:**

The mathematics curriculum comprises of:

- Number and place value
- Addition and Subtraction
- Multiplication and Division
- Fractions (including decimals and percentages)
- Algebra
- Measurement
- Geometry (properties of shapes; position and direction, motion)
- Statistics
- Ratio and proportion (Year 6)

The teaching of mathematics follows strategies based upon the 'Singapore Mathematics' approach. Such strategies include: the use of concrete materials in all year groups, particularly for the teaching of new mathematical concepts; the use of bar model method for the teaching of fractions and solving word problems; opportunities for the development of mathematical language, opportunities for explanation and reasoning; and an emphasis on collaborative learning. The teaching of mental mathematics skills including addition and subtraction facts; multiplication tables and corresponding division facts and standard calculation methods are set out for each year group in the long term plan for mathematics and Calculation Policy. There will be opportunities to apply mathematical learning in a range of different problems, investigations and contexts within maths lessons, as well as across the curriculum.

### **Science and Foundation Subjects:**

St. Mary's Academy Trust takes a thematic approach to the delivery of the science and foundation subjects to allow pupils to best see and explore links between different concepts. The thematic curriculum is based upon a set of Trust wide skills progression document which set out clear expectations of what we expect children to achieve at the expected for each year group in each subject. All pupils have opportunities to apply their basic literacy, maths and ICT skills across the curriculum in a variety of different contexts. We use Philosophy for Children, TASC days, Forest Schools and outdoor learning and the Arts (art, dance, music and drama) to enrich the curriculum for all pupils.

The Computing Curriculum is taught as a discrete subject through a number of topics throughout the year. Pupils also have opportunities to develop, practise and apply their ICT skills across all other subjects.

Physical Education (PE) lessons are delivered by our class teachers with the support of a Sports Leader where available. Throughout their primary education, pupils have opportunities to develop their skills and understanding in a range of competitive games, athletics, dance, gymnastics and outdoor pursuits. All of our pupils are also taught swimming and water safety in Key Stage 2. The PE curriculum is enriched through a range of after school sports clubs and inter-school Trust competitions which provide opportunities for competitive sport.

All community schools within St. Mary's Academy Trust will follow the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education identified by Barnsley Local Authority. All faith schools must follow the Agreed Syllabus for RE identified by their Diocese. There must also be provision for a daily act of collective worship in all schools.

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Each school can deliver its own agreed programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Although sex and relationship education (SRE) is not a statutory requirement until Key Stage 3, St. Mary's Academy Trust believes that this is an important aspect of the PHSE curriculum and is delivered in an age appropriate way in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Further details of the SRE curriculum can be found in our Sex and Relationships Education Policy. Aspects of both the PSHCE curriculum and SRE curriculum are closely linked to our Science based themes.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from sex and relationships education and / or Religious Education. Where parents choose to exercise this right, the school will discuss with them alternative work for the pupil.

The teaching of British values is integrated across our thematic curriculum, PHSE, RE and as part of SMSC development. Our aim is to help to protect children from extremist and violent views in the same ways that we help to safeguard children. Our purpose is to protect children from harm and to ensure that they are taught in a way that is consistent with the law and the country's values.

### **Progression and Differentiation:**

All lessons are tailored to the needs of individual pupils and based upon their prior learning. All curriculum planning completed by the class teacher should be carried out in accordance with the school's curriculum plans.

The Code of Practice for Pupils with SEN is followed and a register maintained. Where appropriate, Additional Education Plans called School Focused Plans (SFPs) are implemented, designed by the class teacher in conjunction with the Special Education Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo). It is the responsibility of the class teacher, with support from the SENDCo, to ensure that all pupils can access all subjects and lessons at an appropriate level.

### **Roles and Responsibilities and Monitoring of the Curriculum:**

The Headteacher is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the quality of curriculum delivery and outcomes for all pupils. The Headteacher will monitor (through a range of monitoring activities across the year) the impact of the wider curriculum, including ensuring all children regularly access and participate in wider curriculum lessons.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum. Each school, with support from St Marys Academy Trust's educational team, is responsible for providing continued professional development to all staff members to ensure high standards of teaching and learning across the curriculum.

St. Mary's Academy Trust moderates the judgements of each school on the effectiveness of their curriculum delivery each year through regular teaching and learning enquiries, scrutiny of standards of work and outcomes for pupils. This information is reported to Chief Executive of the Trust.

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### **Sharing of information:**

It is the responsibility of all schools to publish their school curriculum by subject and academic year online and make every attempt to inform and engage parents in childrens' learning through a wide range of strategies, including sharing pupils' work and progress on a termly basis.

## Curriculum Policy

### Glossary:

**EYFS** – Early Years Foundation Stage

**ICT** – Information and Communication Technologies

**KS1** – Key Stage 1

**KS2** – Key Stage 2

**PE** – Physical Education

**PSHCE** – Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education

**RE** – Religious Education

**SEN** – Special Education Needs

**SENDCo** – Special Education Needs and Disabilities Coordinator

**SMSC** – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

**SRE** – Sex and Relationships Education

**TASC Days** – Thinking Actively in a Social Context days