



ST. MARY'S  
ACADEMY TRUST

# St Mary's Academy Trust

## Curriculum Policy

**Date agreed by Performance and Standards committee:** November 2021

**Date to be reviewed:** November 2023

### **Principles**

St. Mary's Academy Trust's schools each offer a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant and meets the needs of all of our 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 schools are expected to deliver a personalised curriculum designed to meet the needs of their current pupils and context of the school, providing them with a wide range of relevant, challenging and stimulating learning experiences. All staff must follow and implement the Curriculum Policy.

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 curriculum to life. Wherever possible, we aim to engage parents and carers 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, lifelong 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. Our schools' curriculums 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.

### **Policy Aims**

- To ensure that all schools within St. Mary's Academy Trust design and implement a curriculum that follows the curriculum principles outlined below.
- To ensure that all pupils receive a high quality education that supports and challenges them to achieve their very best in all areas of the curriculum.
- To provide a clear framework and set of expectations for schools and all staff for the delivery and assessment of the curriculum.
- To provide all parents and carers with a clear outline of the intent and implementation of their child's curriculum therefore ensuring that they feel part of the school and know how to support their children in their educational development at home.

#### **This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

- Early Years Foundation Stage policy
- Assessment policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Relationships and Sex Education policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability policy
- Teaching and Learning principles

### **Legislation and Guidance**

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the Academies Act 2010.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010, and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing bodies set out in the Department for Education's Governance Handbook.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

In addition, this policy acknowledges the requirements for promoting the learning and development of children set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework alongside the SMAT Early Years Foundation Stage Policy.

### **Curriculum Principles**

All schools within St. Mary's Academy Trust should design their own curriculum in line with the following 'Curriculum Principles' to ensure that they are meeting the educational, personal, social and emotional needs of all pupils within their school.

All schools will:

- Have a clear vision for their own school's curriculum which allows them to meet the needs of their school, pupils and local community, including identifying a set of key drivers which will be embedded within the planning, teaching and outcomes of all subjects.
- Ensure all stakeholders of the school have a clear and common understanding of the school's curriculum intent, its implementation and how it will evidence impact.

All schools should design and implement a curriculum which:

- Reflects St. Mary's Academy Trust's ethos of excellence and high ambitions for every single pupil in their care.
- Ensures that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum which is not narrowed at any year group for any individual or group of pupils.
- Broadly follows the contents of the National Curriculum and is enhanced and enriched with additional content and experiences which are tailored to the needs of the pupils and context of the school as the school sees fit.
- Is progressively more challenging in both knowledge and skills, being carefully sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build upon what has been taught before and working towards clearly defined end points which they wish pupils to meet by the end of each year group.
- Allows pupils to gain new knowledge and skills; transfer key knowledge to long-term memory; and apply knowledge and skills in a range of contexts independently.
- Enables all pupils to be successful and achieve, including quickly addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, enabling the vast majority of pupils to catch up and meet their end of year milestones.
- All pupils can access, including successfully adapting the curriculum where necessary to ensure that it caters for the needs of all pupils and is fully inclusive, including for our most

## Curriculum Policy

disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, giving all pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they require to be successful in life.

- Has a rigorous and sequential reading curriculum, which includes the teaching of synthetic phonics. The reading curriculum should ensure that the vast majority of pupils become fluent readers in Key Stage 1, enabling them to access and understand a full range of subjects at Key Stage 2. They also ensure that any pupils who are not fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1 receive effective intervention which enables them to close the gap quickly to their peers.
- Develops the essential skills of reading, writing and mathematics and ensures that pupils have opportunities to apply these skills in a variety of different contexts, including reading age-appropriate texts across the curriculum at each stage of their education.
- Ensures that all pupils have a solid foundation and preparation for the next phase of their education and development.
- Promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them for life as effective, responsible and active citizens and enables them to respond positively to the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world.
- Enables pupils to make a highly positive and tangible contribution towards life, their local and wider community
- Allows pupils to develop a deep understanding of fundamental British values: their understanding of the importance of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society.
- Allows pupils to develop as enthusiastic learners with a positive attitude and commitment towards their education.
- Develops resilient, confident and independent learners.
- Enables pupils to develop an understanding of how to stay safe and stay healthy, both physically and mentally.
- Provides an ambitious wider curriculum offer, including providing pupils with a rich and varied range of extra-curricular activities and learning experiences, which all pupils are able to access.

All schools will:

- Use assessment effectively to support the teaching of the curriculum, including to inform teaching and learning, assess what pupils know and can do, and what they need to know and do next, informing next steps to learning for all pupils.



## Curriculum Policy

### Areas of Learning

#### **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' (September 2021).

Four guiding principles should shape practice in early years settings. These are:

- 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 with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates

The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

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.

The promotion and acquisition of language is a priority within the EYFS and there is careful planning of the vocabulary that will support and enhance children's learning and experiences in each topic taught.

St. Mary's Academy Trust believes that Early Years education is important in its own right and should

## Curriculum Policy

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 emphasise the importance of effective transition between these two phases of a child's education. This is carefully planned within curriculum plans.



## Curriculum Policy

### 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

#### Literacy:

The literacy curriculum comprises of:

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

#### 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 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 the teaching of British Values and Relationships Education

**Curriculum Implementation at (INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL)**

**Curriculum Vision**

**Our Key Drivers**

**Curriculum Delivery**

**Literacy:**

**Mathematics:**

**Science:**

**The Foundation Subjects:**

**Inclusion**

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils and deliver a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum 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 SEND
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will 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 will be 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 SEN policy and information report.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Headteacher:**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the intent, implementation and impact of their curriculum, including for the quality of curriculum delivery and outcomes for all pupils.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that their curriculum is designed to meet the above curriculum principles and the school's own curriculum drivers;
- Ensure the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board;
- Ensure the local governing body and Board of Trustees is fully involved in the decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum where appropriate;
- Ensure that the curriculum is implemented across school to a high standard;
- Be responsible, with support from St Mary's Academy Trust's educational team, for providing high quality continued professional development to all staff members to ensure high standards of teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- Ensure that the statutory information on the curriculum is available for all stakeholders to access on the school's website;
- Manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate;
- Ensure there is appropriate provision in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN.

#### **The Board of Trustees**

Through its Performance and Standards Committee the Board of Trustees will:

- Ensure that a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets;
- Ensure the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement;
- Ensure that it has a clear overview of the quality of curriculum design in each school;
- Ensure that it has a clear overview of the quality of curriculum implementation and holds each school accountable for the quality of its curriculum delivery, including through the Performance and Standards Committee or a school's local governing body where appropriate;

#### **The Local Governing Body**

The local governing body (or the school's Performance and Standards Committee where this is the case) will:

- Participate actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum;

## Curriculum Policy

- Monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy within school and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation;
- Ensure that enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the curriculum and other statutory requirements;
- Ensure through the headteacher and SENDCo that proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN);
- Ensure the school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements;
- Monitor the extra curricular and enrichment provision offered by the school, its uptake and impact upon pupils.

### Other Members of Staff

Curriculum Leaders will:

- Monitor the effectiveness and impact of curriculum delivery alongside the headteacher in order to ensure high standards in all year groups and for all pupils and report findings to the School Leadership Team (SLT) and local governing body as appropriate;
- Support the development of subject leaders, for example through coaching;
- Support the development of individual teachers, for example through coaching and team teaching;
- Evaluate the curriculum intent, the long term and medium term curriculum plans and adapt the curriculum offer as appropriate during the academic year but at least annually to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils.

Subject Coordinators (also may be referred to as subject champions or subject experts) will:

- Develop an expert knowledge of their area of the curriculum, including keeping up to date with any local and national changes in their subject area and developing professional links with specialists and relevant organisations;
- Conduct and disseminate research linked to their area of the curriculum;
- Provide CPD and, where appropriate, working alongside the Curriculum leader to provide individual support to teachers and other members of staff such as teaching assistants to support them in the delivery of the curriculum;
- To promote their subject within the school community and externally, including through maintaining the learning environment for their subject in shared central areas of school and through maintaining their subject area information of the school website and other social media;
- Ensure that members of staff have access to a range of high quality and age appropriate resources to support them in the delivery of the curriculum.
- Collate work portfolios and examples in order to set and evidence clear expectations of outcomes at each year group; setting standards

The SENDCo will:

- Ensure that proper provision is made for pupils with special educational needs (SEN), for example through learning walks, looking at outcomes in books and supporting individual teachers with the planning of appropriate provision for pupils with SEN.

## Curriculum Policy

Teachers will:

- Ensure that the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy;
- Plan, prepare and deliver series of lessons which meet the needs of all pupils;
- Share pupils' learning and successes in the school community;
- Assess pupils' learning across the curriculum.

### **Monitoring of the Curriculum:**

The Headteacher will monitor (through a range of monitoring activities across the year) the impact of both the curriculum and wider curriculum offer, including ensuring that all children regularly access and participate in wider curriculum lessons and activities.

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 the Chief Executive of the Trust and the Board of Trustees.

### **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 children's 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

**RSE** – Relationships and Sex Education

**SEN** – Special Education Needs

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

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

### Appendix 1

The following illustrates ways in which the Board of Trustees and Local Governing Bodies can monitor arrangements for the Curriculum. This is not an exclusive list and the Board and LGBs can request any additional documents or information as necessary:

#### The Board of Trustees

Ensure that a robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School self-evaluation</li><li>• School development plan</li><li>• Assessment data</li></ul>
Ensure the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, maths, and science, and enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the requirements of the funding agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reviews of teaching and learning, e.g. enquiries</li><li>• Headteacher reports on curriculum</li><li>• Curriculum information on school websites (e.g. Intent, Implementation)</li></ul>
Ensure that it has a clear overview of the quality of curriculum design in each school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enquiry report / external body reports (e.g. Diocese Educational advisor reviews)</li><li>• School's personalised section of curriculum policy</li><li>• Curriculum information on school website including intent and implementation statements</li><li>• Curriculum schemes (progression document, curriculum map)</li></ul>
Ensure that it has a clear overview of the quality of curriculum implementation and holds each school accountable for the quality of its curriculum delivery, including through the Performance and Standards Committee or a school's local governing body where appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enquiry report / external body reports (e.g. Diocese Educational advisor reviews)</li><li>• Assessment data</li><li>• Headteacher reports</li></ul>

## Curriculum Policy

### Local Governing Body

Participate actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum policy and additional policies that sit under this (e.g. RSE)</li> <li>• Curriculum schemes</li> <li>• Curriculum intent and implementation statements</li> </ul>
Monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy within school and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headteacher reports (e.g. impact statements, quality of standards of teaching, progression of curriculum)</li> <li>• Enquiry reports</li> </ul>
Ensure that enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the curriculum and other statutory requirements;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum timetables</li> <li>• Reports on quality and quantity of work – curriculum coverage reports</li> </ul>
Ensure through the headteacher and SENDCo that proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEN policy</li> <li>• SEN information report</li> <li>• Assessment data</li> <li>• SENDCo reports (e.g. on classroom observations, data and progress)</li> <li>• Enquiry reports</li> <li>• SEN reviews</li> </ul>
Ensure the school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring arrangements and reports from Trust educational team</li> <li>• Any LA monitoring reports</li> </ul>
Monitor the extra curricular and enrichment provision offered by the school, its uptake and impact upon pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on extra-curricular uptake</li> <li>• Headteacher report on impact (e.g. engagement of different groups; impact e.g. on pupil attendance, behaviour, social and emotional needs)</li> </ul>