Our Curriculum

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we teach an ambitious, high quality, broad and balanced curriculum, with Christ at the centre. Our school is a happy and inclusive one, where all are able to work together to develop and nurture a love of learning.

We strongly believe that learning should be memorable, active, hands on and challenging. Through a combination of learning techniques, we ensure children enjoy learning and feel prepared for life after school. We offer our children new and exciting experiences through extra-curricular activities that are designed to build resilience, confidence and self-esteem. Children are supportively challenged in their schooling; learning from failures and celebrating successes. Our curriculum is empowering, enabling children to develop their interpersonal skills, creativity, resilience and independence.

At St. Mary's C.P. School, we place emphasis on high quality first teaching, which is underpinned by Catholic values and an effective approach to social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The curriculum takes into account children's own experiences and is designed to help prepare them for, and understand, the world in which they are growing up.

Based on the National Curriculum and Early Years Framework, our curriculum engages the children by:

- Enabling them to develop their own personal interests and developing a positive attitude towards learning, so that they enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning.

- Developing skills, knowledge and understanding to enable children to think and act spiritually and morally (good choices), engaging them in the culture in which they live as well as understand and appreciate the culture of others.
- Providing a rich, engaging and memorable programme of study, which is tailored to needs of our children and helps children overcome potential barriers to their learning (understanding that failure is sometimes the part of the road to success).
- Developing their subject specific knowledge, understanding and skills to inspire a love of learning aligned with national intent, so that they can flourish and achieve/ exceed their potential which directly impacts on their life chances and own future aspirations.
- Developing the behaviours they will need to succeed in the world, becoming responsible individuals, who contribute positively to the community and the environment in which they live.
- Inspiring them to learn with a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people.

- Enabling them to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others.
- Teaching them about the importance of forming healthy relationships with friends, family and peers.
- Enabling them to not only learn across the curriculum but also access numerous aspects of daily life; influencing the opportunities that they have available to them in the future.

Curriculum Design

Within the EYFS Department, through a caring, nurturing and enabling environment, both indoors and outdoors, we develop the following characteristics of effective learning:

- confident learners
- independent learners
- resilient learners
- active learners
- risk takers
- enquiring and inquisitive minds
- creative and critical thinkers
- friendships
- empathy
- trust
- respect
- time – time to reflect, practice, repeat and learn with no sense of failure

The EYFS staff aim to ensure that children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live through the seven areas of learning and development: Communication and Language, Physical Development, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design, plus RE. These experiences are planned and provided carefully through both child initiated and adult led activities.

The Key Stage One and Two curriculum builds on the characteristics of effective learning and the Early Years curriculum. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 and 2 is planned around the National Curriculum, with a shift to a more subject specific curriculum and covers all compulsory subjects. These are English, maths, science, history, geography, computing, languages (Key Stage 2), PE, art and design, music, design and technology and Relationships, Sex and Health Education. As a Catholic School Religious Education is taught for 10% of the timetable.

Our curriculum is carefully planned and organised to incorporate depth of learning. We strive for all children to make progress (a widening and deepening of essential knowledge, skills and understanding and learning behaviours). We ensure that children are not merely covering curriculum content but are achieving a depth to their learning which enables them to use their skills, understanding and knowledge in all areas of the curriculum (making links).

The careful curriculum design enables staff to plan and build in many opportunities for practice and repetition of essential knowledge, skills and understanding, in every subject. This ensures that children are able to revisit previous learning, which allows them to gradually develop a deeper understanding of the skills and processes within subjects, at their own pace and in the best way possible for each individual child.
The curriculum is designed, planned and organised to ensure that every child receives an appropriate mix of academic and personal development. We believe that every child should feel valued and experience the feeling of success in a wide range of curriculum areas. We understand that children will not be successful learners unless they are emotionally secure, therefore we have adopted a flexible approach to timetabling to ensure that we can meet and respond to any issues which may arise. Children's physical and mental well-being are as valued and as important as academic development. This balanced approach is not at the expense of high standards in core subjects as enabling children to reach national expectations and above is of vital importance if they are to succeed at the next stage of their education and go on to achieve full and happy lives and careers.

We would like children to remember their learning so provide them with memorable experiences: diverse and rich learning opportunities. The children's own community, its heritage and traditions are frequently used as a starting point for engaging interest. Children's' engagement with learning is supported through high quality visits and visitors into school. This includes the opportunities for residential visits, with activities linked to enhance the topics / themes studied in class. Regular visitors and visits provide first hand experiences for children to see their learning 'brought to life'.

Our curriculum is reviewed regularly to ensure it is effective, engaging and relevant. We welcome feedback from the whole school community. If you have any suggestions to include in future reviews please email head@kells-stmays.cumbria.sch.uk