
ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

CURRICULUM STATEMENT





CURRICULUM INTENT

Our Vision & Ethos

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, our vision is that we will 'Positively affect the life and future of every child.' We want our children to leave our environment as children who are happy with who they are, confident in their abilities, resilient in the face of challenge and respectful and welcoming of diversity. We want children to be compassionate and empathetic, ambitious for the next steps on their life journey, which they will approach with high aspirations, have strong moral values centred on our faith, and above all, be a living embodiment of Gospel values.

Through our curriculum, we intend to promote British Values, (Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs) framed within the Catholic faith, ensuring that children are aware of their rights and responsibilities as a UK citizen for when they leave St Thomas More Catholic Primary School.

Faith in our curriculum

As a thriving outstanding, Catholic school, the fundamentals of Catholic education remain at our core. This includes the pursuit of excellence and preparing our children as world citizens of the 21st century so that they have the knowledge and necessary skills beyond the curriculum itself. In order for this to be achieved, our children need high levels of competency in English and Mathematics. We recognise Religious Education as a core subject and also recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators of the faith.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is linked to the Primary National Curriculum and aims to provide a highly inclusive environment where learners enjoy their education. It is designed to give all learners, including the disadvantaged and SEND the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. We are fully committed to providing a relevant, broad, balanced and continuous curriculum to develop inquisitive thinkers and learners who have respect for themselves and others.

Our school is fortunate to have an abundance of outdoor space for children to learn and play. Embedded within our curriculum is Forest School, enabling the children to learn new skills outside of the classroom.

As a school we have recently enrolled in the OPAL (outdoor play and learning) programme. Our intent is to develop core skills that are best accrued by children through play and learning outside. These skills include co-operation; to develop a rich language that is used in context; to problem solve and negotiate; to be creative and support mental and physical well-being. Ultimately, our curriculum aims to support our children to be independent and well-adjusted citizens who are equipped and prepared for the world beyond school.

Our School Curriculum Drivers

At St Thomas More our five drivers underpin and drive the delivery of our curriculum.

STM Curriculum Drivers



High Aspirations

Enable our children to have high aspirations and be aware of all future possibilities

Culture & Arts

Empower our children to be socially mobile with wider horizons by having a broad exposure to culture and the arts

Moral Values

Ensure our children develop strong moral values around the core of Catholic faith

Sporting Opportunities & Physical Health

Engage our children with a wide variety of sporting opportunities for both enjoyment and physical health

Emotional & Mental Well-Being

Equip our children with the tools and ability to recognise, understand and manage their emotions to allow them to achieve and maintain good mental health

Reading & Writing

We believe reading is the key to independence and communication. Our aim is to promote the love of reading, both at school and at home; whilst exposing our children to a variety of literature, genres and authors. Reading is an integral part of our curriculum; teaching children to be phonologically aware, fluent, and develop a deeper contextual understanding. As a school, we are fully committed to supporting reading beyond the classroom; to ensure disadvantaged and SEND children can also flourish.

The phonics programme, which follows *Twinkl*, offers a coherently planned sequence of lessons that supports the effective teaching of Phonics within EYFS, KS1 and where appropriate, KS2. Our aim is to build the children's confidence in phonics so all children have the ability to recognise phonics for reading and use the correct grapheme within their writing; starting with recognising environmental sounds and progressing through the Phases. Recap and revision is key and children have reading books that match their phonetic ability.

The curriculum is sequenced to deliver a deeper knowledge of narrative techniques and structures and a wider vocabulary which they aim to embed within their own writing. Our aim is to expose children to a range of literature that inspires them to be authors, writing for a range of purposes and audiences. We want our children to develop the confidence to edit, improve and review their work.

Across Key Stage 1 and 2, reading sessions focus on a VIPERS approach within whole class reading sessions, where there is a high level of interaction between teachers and children. VIPERS is an acronym to aid the recall of the 6 reading domains as part of the National Curriculum for English (2014). They are the key areas which children need to know and understand in order to improve their comprehension of texts. VIPERS stands for: vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval, sequence or summarise. The 6 domains focus on the comprehension aspect of reading and not the mechanics: decoding, fluency, prosody etc. As such, VIPERS is not a reading scheme but rather a method of ensuring that teachers ask, and students are familiar with, a range of questions and develop specific reading skills.

Maths

We believe that every child should be an inquisitive thinker, that every child should be curious and become independent in their approach to solving problems enabling them to become flexible and efficient mathematicians with a secure mathematical foundation. Through our teaching of mathematics, we aim to embed conceptual understanding through carefully sequenced lessons that develop an understanding of the interconnections within mathematics and build upon mathematical fluency, reasoning and problem solving.

Our intent is to provide our children access to a high quality maths curriculum that is both challenging and enjoyable. In doing so, we will provide our children with rich mathematical opportunities, which will enable them to make the connections between mathematical areas and concepts. This will lead to children accessing mathematical concepts at a greater depth. Therefore, our children will be confident and flexible mathematicians that are not afraid to take risks.

SEND and Disadvantaged

St Thomas More is a diverse and inclusive school that aims to provide a secure and accessible environment for all our children so that they can flourish, progress and achieve to the best of their ability. Our aim is to make our SEND and Disadvantaged children feel valued and included, and to have high aspirations. Inclusion is embedded in our practise and teachers regularly review and reflect upon their own practice to ensure progress is made. Teachers and Learning Support staff are aware of and sensitive to the needs of all pupils and are confident in teaching children in a way that is most appropriate to their individual needs. Adaptive teaching is fully embedded and implemented discretely into every lesson.

Sporting and well-being provisions are made available beyond the classroom to target children with specific areas of need. St Thomas More families are an integral part of our school and we value and encourage their contributions to make St Thomas More a fully inclusive community.

Our Learning Principles

Our curriculum has been uniquely designed as a whole school to meet the specific needs of all our children and give them the opportunities, ambition and aspiration, as well as the skills knowledge and understanding, to fulfil their potential and enable them to make a positive contribution to future society. We recognise the wide spiritual, moral, social, cultural and economic backgrounds of our families including sports, physical health and mental well-being (as recognised through our Nurture Accreditation Award) and draw upon the skills delivered through training, delivered by a Trauma Informed Practitioner, to ensure children's well-being is always at the heart of our curriculum. In addition, our curriculum enables teachers to draw upon teaching theories such as Bruner's spiral curriculum, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Vygotsky's scaffolding and Piaget's theories of cognitive development to support the concept of knowing more and remembering more.

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Curriculum

We ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but meets the needs of all children giving them the skills, knowledge and understanding to prepare for their future lives and to enable them to make a positive contribution to future society.

Our curriculum is delivered through our mission statement and vision and, allows the children to explore different subject areas which are relevant, stimulating allowing the children to pursue their own ideas, have high aspirations, make progress through the requirements of the National Curriculum and beyond and to enhance children's enjoyment in learning by not only focusing on the appropriate subject specific knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the National Curriculum, but by including a range of additional opportunities woven through the curriculum to enrich learning experiences. Enabling children to experience and understand the complexities and possibilities of the wider world, we support the development of outward looking children who have high expectations of themselves.

The national, and school, requirements are mapped out as a whole school with a themed approach. Each individual year group plans their curriculum accordingly so that learning is planned for in a sequential way, building on prior learning. Teachers use skills ladders and curriculum maps to ensure connections between and within subjects, revisiting information and mastering the basics through a structured curriculum which allows for sustained knowledge and deep and critical thinking to develop which allows the children to be able to know more and remember more.

For further information *with regards the National Curriculum, please visit:*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>

We expect all our leaders to be have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and monitor the delivery of our curriculum. This will include: quality assurance of work and lesson plans; delivery of lessons to monitor teaching standards; collaborative moderation with other schools and in school moderation between year groups. Each leader is provided with allocated curriculum time to fulfil their role.

Reading, Phonics & Writing

St Thomas More have three key leads within English. Each lead has a focused area: Reading, Writing and Phonics. Leaders meet regularly to monitor the standards, which track attainment and progress closely, ensuring a tailored reading and writing curriculum that meets the needs of the children.

Reading is a fundamental part of the school curriculum. Regardless of the children's background, ability or additional needs, St Thomas More children will become fluent and confident readers by

the time they leave year 6. We teach the skills they need to decode unknown words using their phonological knowledge and decoding skills. Children take home reading books to match their ability and are exposed to a variety of genres and texts; providing breath, knowledge and a wealth of literature.

We use the *Twinkl* phonics programme. This programme structure enables teachers to teach the progressive phases, which are regularly revisited and recapped through daily phonics lessons and spelling workshop. This cycle supports the retention of knowledge, allowing the children time to process, apply and consolidate their learning. KS 1 follow a sequence of daily phonics lessons which is designed to support both reading and writing. Each year group progress through the phases, starting with environmental sounds and progressing through to phase 6.

In Foundation Stage and Year 1, children have access to a range of reading books to ensure that de-coding and comprehension skills are developed at a pace to suit each child. Teachers use a range of big books and texts on the Interactive White Board. Teachers model fluent reading; this allows them to explore a rich vocabulary and teach the key reading skills.

Children from Year 2 to Year 6 use Accelerated Reader (AR), which is a reading management and monitoring programme that aims to foster independent reading. Teachers dedicate at least two sessions per week to AR, either as a stand-alone session or as part of other curriculum subjects. In Year 2, children are assessed using Accelerated Reader to indicate their readiness to begin the programme. Some children will continue to develop their reading fluency with phonetically decodable books, which are carefully matched to the child's phonic phase and are used alongside books which encourage other reading cues such as context and grammar.

In Whole Class Reading, there is a high level of interaction between teachers and children. Children are exposed to high-quality texts and discussion in an immersive environment. The reading VIPERS are key reading skills supporting the delivery of lessons; Vocabulary, Infer, Predict, Explain, Retrieve, and Summarise. In KS 1, Children read regularly to an adult and we target frequent readers in KS 2.

The love of reading is encourage through our school library and children have access to a range of genres and text to promote reading at home. Parents have access to parent phonic workshops and are encouraged to hear their children read regularly at home. This will enhance a child's love of reading and improve their writing too.

Children are formally assessed in phonics and reading at the end of each term so that attainment and progress is closely monitored to maximise standards. Provision and interventions are implemented to target the children who are not achieving the expected standard.

In KS2, children develop their spelling through daily Spelling Workshop sessions. These sessions develop children's phonic knowledge of graphemes and phonemes, as well as root words, prefixes, suffixes, homophones, spelling rules and exceptions. Alongside this, children will learn their year group spelling words and apply their understanding of spelling patterns to these.

Modelled writing is key to the delivery of our English lessons. We recognise that children benefit from both shared and guided modelled writing. Children are given clear expectations and the opportunity to observe and engage, whilst going through the process of putting ideas into a written form.

Maths

Our maths curriculum provides our children with the skills to become inquisitive thinkers and independent problem solvers. To support our children to know more and remember more, they are taught throughout FS, KS 1 and KS 2 children to be fluent with mental number facts and apply these facts to solve problems. Maths is taught daily; challenge is visible throughout the whole session, where children are asked to reason and prove their understanding at a deeper secure level.

Teachers develop the children's knowledge and understanding through a concrete, pictorial and abstract approach. The **concrete** 'doing' stage, uses objects to solve problems. It brings concepts to life by allowing children to handle physical objects themselves. Every new abstract concept is first taught with a 'concrete' or physical experience. The **Pictorial** stage 'pictures/models' makes it easier for children to grasp concepts they find more difficult, such as fractions, as it helps them visualise the problem and makes it more accessible. Once the children are secure in these stages, they can use **abstract** symbols to model and solve maths problems.

SEND and Disadvantaged

We aim to ensure that our children feel valued and included, have **high aspirations** and are given opportunities to develop confidence and self-esteem in their own abilities.

In order to do this we will implement:

- working closely in partnership with parents/ carers, pupils and relevant external agencies in order to provide for children's special educational needs and disabilities
- identify at the earliest opportunity, all children that need special consideration to support their needs (whether these are educational, social, physical or emotional)
- make suitable provision for children with SEND to fully develop their abilities, interests and aptitudes and gain maximum access to the curriculum
- ensure that all children with SEND are fully included in all activities of the school in order to promote the highest levels of achievement
- promote self-worth and enthusiasm by encouraging independence at all age and ability levels
- give every child the entitlement to a sense of achievement
- regularly review the policy and practice in order to achieve best practice

St Thomas More families are an integral part of our school and we value and encourage their contributions to ensure that St Thomas More continues to be a fully inclusive community.

Assessment

Assessment is consistent across the school and strategically used to meet individual's needs. High quality marking is constructive and communicated to help children improve where needed and to identify areas in which they have excelled. Teachers use systematic questioning to clarify and check learners understanding. Children self and peer assess with increasing frequency and effectiveness as they progress through the school. Children are formatively assessed using target statements for each subject area throughout the academic year. Through formative assessment, teachers plan next step lessons, adapt where necessary and target provisions. At the end of each term, a summative assessment is completed in Reading, Writing SPAG and Maths. Teachers provide teacher assessed levels three times a year.

Assessment informs provisions at all levels, gaps and next steps are identified as well as underperforming or coasting pupils through whole school and year group specific pupil progress

meetings. This enables teachers to implement rapid interventions and amendments within planning to ensure a continued high level of pupil performance. Provision mapping is regularly reviewed and adjusted according to the needs that are identified through assessments. The impact of interventions are routinely and regularly monitored enabling support for children, especially disadvantaged or those with SEN, to be adjusted accordingly so that all children make sustained progress.

Our Boxall Profiling assessment of SEMH needs and our carefully designed 'Provision Mapping' documents, enable staff to set Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timed targets to support children's learning further. Measuring impact of progress and attainment ensures that teaching is carefully tailored to meet all needs.

Our Wider Curriculum

Our curriculum is motivating, engaging and taught with a strong emphasis on developing English in our diverse school community along with wider learning opportunities such as; Forest School, educational visits, assemblies, clubs, School Council/Eco Warrior meetings, visitors, fund raising events, parent workshops, parent events, sporting events, workshops, residential trips, hosting children from Hong Kong, for example, are all used to support the delivery of our curriculum here at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. By implementing an exciting and stimulating curriculum, in our diverse school community, we are deepening children's understanding of the wider world. Lessons are designed around the needs of the children; these include building links with the local community and developing the children's cultural understanding, exposing them to positive and diverse role models.

“. . . the joy of true education: of reading for the sake of a wonderful book rather than for an exam; of following a subject because it is fascinating rather than because it is on the syllabus; of watching a great teacher's eyes light up for sheer love of the subject.”

Professor Richard Dawkins

CPD

Our dedicated staff are proactive in developing their own knowledge and understanding through research and training in order to support the design of our curriculum. Our curriculum, which builds on prior learning from EYFS to the end of KS2, ensures consistency and progression across the whole school. Coordinators have implemented 'Skills, Knowledge and Understanding' ladders for their subject areas and 'Curriculum Maps' to ensure connections are apparent between and within subjects and across the year groups. In order to ensure that progression and balance is maintained, the detailed programmes of study and subject specific 'Intent, Implementation and Impact Statements', are then used to create medium term plans and short term plans where specific needs of learners such as those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs, are addressed.

CURRICULUM IMPACT

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to positively affect the life and future of every child here at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. Our children will leave with a love of learning which will last a lifetime, the knowledge, skills and understanding to be happy and confident, and be resilient in the face of challenge. Through our Christian ethos, they will be respectful and welcoming of diversity, be compassionate and empathetic, be healthy physically and mentally and ambitious for their next steps on their life journey and above all, be a living embodiment of Gospel values.

Our curriculum will develop the children's knowledge and skills through sequenced lessons, which are underpinned by our five drivers. Year R children leave EYFS with the skills and knowledge to transition successfully to year one. Our KS 1 results are consistently above National and children leave KS 1 ready with the skills and knowledge to transition to KS 2. Our end of KS 2 results are consistently above National for Age Related Expectation and above National for reaching the Higher Standard in Reading, Writing and Maths. Therefore, the impact being that they are ready for the next stage of learning and secondary ready.

Our five drivers underpin and measure the impact of our curriculum.

High aspirations – we enable our children to have high aspirations and be aware of all future possibilities.

At St Thomas More School children will leave with ambition and be highly motivated to continue their learning. They will be equipped with the right tools to be independent having experienced an enriched and broad learning curriculum and have an awareness of all possibilities on offer to them so they are ready for the wider world. All children will have been encouraged to work to a high standard and to continually challenge themselves. Teachers will have high aspirations for ALL children and drive them to be the best they can be.

Sporting opportunities and physical health – we engage our children with a wide variety of sporting opportunities for both enjoyment and physical health.

At St Thomas More our children are exposed to a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They will have had the experience of competition, team work, individual challenge and ambition. Sport allows children to be both physically and mentally strong and have an understanding of how to adapt to different situations. They will have an understanding of pride and self-worth, know what it is like to be part of a team and succeed, or even lose and know how to be gracious in defeat. The impact will be that children will have an understanding of how to keep physically healthy and why we should be maintain physical fitness and health for our own well-being.

Moral Values – we ensure our children develop strong moral values around the core of Catholic faith

Through our Catholic faith and moral teachings children will have a strong personal sense of morality. Our children will be resilient to the influence of others and have their own mind, sticking to the values that are important to them. Our children will be equipped for society and the wider world and make a difference in their own life and to the lives of others. The Catholic faith is at the core of our curriculum, teaching and preparing our children with the Catholic morals, values, spirituality and strength to succeed in life; whatever the challenge.

Emotional & Mental Well-Being - equip our children with the tools and ability to recognise, understand and manage their emotions to allow them to achieve and maintain good mental health.

Mental strength and well-being is essential for active and effective learning. Children will leave St Thomas being able to regulate their emotions and understand the techniques to maintain good mental health. Children will have been taught how to have a positive outlook and have the strategies for coping with upset and trauma. Our children will be independent and well-adjusted citizens who are equipped and prepared for the world beyond school.

Culture & Arts - empower our children to be socially mobile with wider horizons by having a broad exposure to culture and the arts.

Cultural understanding and exposure to the arts prepares our children for a world outside the classroom walls. Children will read, understand and talk about different genres of literature and poetry, discuss cultures from around the world and speak knowledgeably about life beyond the National Curriculum. It will create a new pathway for our disadvantaged families. It will allow all children to be culturally mature and ready for the next steps in their education and their chosen career path. It will open their eyes to a world outside their community and broaden their life experiences by exposing them to positive and diverse role models.

