



Curriculum Policy

1. Introduction

The curriculum is all the planned activities that we organise in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. It includes not only the formal requirements of the National Curriculum, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. It also includes the 'hidden curriculum', or what the children learn from the way they are treated and expected to behave. We aim to teach children how to grow into positive, responsible people, who can work and co-operate with others while developing knowledge and skills, so that they achieve their true potential.

2. Values

Our school curriculum is underpinned by the values that we hold dear at our school. 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 lives.

Our school is in full agreement with the values statement included in the introduction to The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England. These are the main values of our school, upon which we have based our curriculum:

- developing a loving, caring community which recognises and celebrates the unique, God-given nature of each individual;
- valuing every member of the school community and developing the potential of each individual;
- creating an educational environment in which we are all encouraged to enjoy our work whilst aspiring to the highest standards of achievement and behaviour;
- giving children, families and staff the experience of being part of an active Catholic community.

3. Aims and objectives

The aims of our school curriculum are:

- to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability;
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- to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- to teach children the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology (IT);
- to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- to teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time;
- to help children understand Britain's cultural heritage;
- to enable children to be positive citizens in society;
- to fulfil all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education;
- to teach children to have an awareness of their own spiritual development, and to understand right from wrong;
- to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- to enable children to have respect for themselves and high self-esteem, and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others.

4. Organisation and planning

We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each key stage. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children. We review our long-term plan on an annual basis.

With our medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic. As we have adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for our school, we take our medium-term planning directly from the guidance documents. Other foundation subjects are based on skills development and we make use of national schemes of work for much of our medium-term planning in the foundation subjects.

Our short-term plans are those that our teachers write on a weekly or daily basis. We use these to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities we are going to use in the lesson.

In the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning. We plan the curriculum carefully, so that there is coherence and full coverage of all aspects of the National Curriculum and early learning goals, and there is planned progression in all curriculum areas. (See Foundation Stage Policy)

Core subjects are a focus for both KS1 and KS2 with Foundation subjects integrated through Topics. In Year 1, particularly in the Autumn Term, there is a focus on transition from Foundation Stage to the National Curriculum. Learning opportunities and curriculum design is play based with children having a broad and varied curriculum to develop skills. Topics are designed carefully to give breadth and balance ensuring all subjects are covered through the year.

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5. Children with special needs

The curriculum in our school is designed to provide access and opportunity for all children who attend the school. If we think it necessary to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of individual children, then we do so only after the parents of the child have been consulted.

If a child has a special need, our school does all it can to meet these individual needs. We comply with the requirements set out in the SEN Code of Practice in providing for children with special needs. If a child displays signs of having special needs, his/her teacher makes an assessment of this need. In most instances the teacher is able to provide resources and educational opportunities which meet the child's needs within the normal class organisation. If a child's need is more severe, we if necessary, use the support provided by Learning Support Assistants, and we involve the appropriate external agencies

5.3 The school provides an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each of the children who are on the special needs register. This sets out the nature of the special need, and outlines how the schools will aim to address the need. It also sets out targets for improvement, so that we can review and monitor the progress of each child at regular intervals.

6. The Foundation Stage

The curriculum that we teach in the reception class meets the requirements set out in the revised National Curriculum at Foundation Stage. Our curriculum planning focuses on the Early Learning Goals and on developing children's skills and experiences, as set out in this document.

Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned structured activities. Teaching in the reception class builds on the experiences of the children in their pre-school learning. We do all we can to build positive partnerships with the variety of nurseries and other pre-school providers in the area.

During the children's first term in the reception class, their teacher begins to record the skills of each child on entry to the school. This assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child. The Foundation Stage Profile is used to assess children's progress during the year. Those children in the Nursery (FS1) have learning opportunities so that children can meet the Early Learning goals. The teachers plan together so that opportunities have progression and challenge from the FS1 to FS2.

We are well aware that all children need the support of parents and teachers to make good progress in school. We strive to build positive links with the parents of each child by keeping them informed about the way in which the children are being taught and how well each child is progressing.' Learning Journey' books are kept as a record of the children's learning achievements and this is shared with Parents and Carers.

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7. Key skills

The following skills have been deemed 'key skills' in the revised National Curriculum: In our curriculum planning we plan to help children develop these skills, so that the children's progress can be identified and monitored.

- communication;
- application of number;
- information technology;
- working with others;
- improving own learning and performance;
- problem-solving.

All subject areas contribute to a child's progress in these skills. Our school believes that all children need to make good progress in these skill areas in order to develop to their true potential.

8. Curriculum enrichment

The school endeavours to provide an outstanding curriculum by enriching learning opportunities so that children's learning is memorable. Visits are carefully planned throughout the Key Stages so that a child gets rich and varied additional opportunities. Visitors are also invited into school to bring learning to life. Music is supported by the partnership with the Milton Keynes music service offering instrumental teaching from Year 2. Classes in Years 3 and 4 have opportunities to learn instruments as a class and in Years 5 and 6 this specialist instrument teaching continues.

In Year 3 pupils have the opportunity to learn by visiting the Milton Keynes 'Forest School' provision. Every other week groups of pupils attend the Forest School and learn in an outdoor environment, integrating science knowledge with real living examples.

Pupils also have the opportunity to choose from a variety of after school opportunities such as football, basketball, badminton, Karate, cross country, cheer leading, choir and athletics.

9. The role of the subject leader

The role of the subject leader is to:

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

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time during the year, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. It is the role of each subject

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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 into schemes of work. The subject leader may also keep a portfolio of children's work, which s/he uses to show the achievements of children at each key stage and to give examples of expectations of attainment.

10. Monitoring and review

Our governing body's curriculum committee is responsible for monitoring the way the school curriculum is implemented. This committee reviews each subject area according to the policy review timetable.

We have named governors for all areas of the curriculum. The governors liaise with the subject leaders of these areas, and monitor closely the way the school teaches these subjects.

The headteacher is responsible for the day to day organisation of the curriculum. The headteacher and senior staff monitor the lesson plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular with a different focus taken from the school's priorities.

10.4 Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

The Curriculum in St. Bernadette's

"Come and See" is the Religious Education (RE) programme recommended by the Bishops of England and Wales and will provide the basis for RE lessons throughout the school. This curriculum is a new and fresh approach, only launched in September 2012. It gives children a lively and engaging curriculum where they are able to learn through a variety of experiences and activities.

Besides the formal RE syllabus, every opportunity will be taken to ensure the message of the Gospel is in all the work of the school. Each fortnight we have a "Statement to live by" which links our RE topics with PSHCE.

Religious Education plays a central and vital part in the life of faith in our Catholic school. It is the foundation for all learning and as such is the core subject in our

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school. We believe firmly that RE permeates every aspect of our curriculum, as, by helping children to understand more fully the world around them, they will come to a deeper understanding of God and of their fellow human beings. This vision shapes the daily life of our school as a community.

Although you are entitled to withdraw your child from religious education and worship we encourage all children to participate in RE lessons, assemblies and daily acts of worship. We firmly believe we are a school community and would hope all children would want to participate in the life of the school. If arrangements were required this could be discussed with the Headteacher.

Masses and liturgies are celebrated through the year in partnership with our local parish. Fr. James supports our liturgies and is our School Chaplain.

When children join us at 3+ or 4+ (Foundation Stage 1; Nursery and Foundation Stage 2; Reception) they follow the Foundation Stage Curriculum. (EYFS new for September 2012)

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, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers; and
- children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social and emotional development.

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We also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design.

We are very proud of our exciting provision and high quality resources for both the Nursery and Foundation Stage Classes. Our children make good progress from their starting points and leave ready for the next stage of their journey. We believe that our provision helps your children to be healthy, happy, communicative, sociable, curious, active and ready for their next phase of life and learning.

Following the Foundation Stage, children spend two years in Key Stage 1 (5+ and 6+ Years 1 and 2) and then a further four years in Key Stage 2 (7+ to 10+ Years 3-6) where we implement the National Curriculum and make meaningful cross-curricular links wherever appropriate to ensure a creative, holistic curriculum.

- Art and Design
- Design Technology
- English
- Geography
- History
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Mathematics
 - Modern Foreign Language (Year 6 German only)
 - Music
 - PE
 - Personal, Social and Health Education, and Citizenship (PSHCE)
 - Science

The school has developed an exciting and challenging curriculum founded on basic skills which will unlock a child's capacity to access learning. Subjects are brought alive by 'WOW' opportunities which excite children and enhance learning. These include visits, visitors or interactive theme days. Here is a summary of what we aim to provide.

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Speaking and Listening

We aim to enable children to become confident, independent communicators with a wide vocabulary. They are given the opportunity to share and explore their ideas with others in a wide range of contexts, including discussion, role-play, drama and class and school presentations. We encourage them to listen carefully to others and speak clearly and confidently in class discussions. The school promotes talk through our 'talk homeworks' and this supports our 'Big Writing' opportunities where children can use their talking skills to improve the quality of their writing. Through Drama, singing and regular opportunities to perform our children enhance their oral skills.

Reading

We aim to develop a love of books, so that children can read for pleasure, interest and information. We ensure that children are offered a wide range of stimulating texts. We encourage children to become critical readers, to read individually and in large or small groups. We teach reading through phonic work, sight vocabulary and using picture and context clues. We follow a scheme called 'Read, write, inc.' and more information about this can be found on our website. You can follow this link.

http://www.stbernadettesschool.com/read_write_inc.htm

Children take books home every week and we encourage parents to support their children by reading with them every day. We have a superb well stocked library, which supports all aspects of the curriculum.

Writing

We aim to develop in children the ability to write for a wide range of purposes, for example, stories, letters, poems and reports. They also learn how to write for different audiences. We encourage children to be creative and imaginative using good examples from children's literature as a starting point. We teach children how to spell words which occur frequently in their writing and which have common spelling patterns. We encourage children to "have a go" at spelling and value their attempts. We enable children to gain an understanding of English grammar and punctuation through reading and writing. We teach children to write in a well formed fluent handwriting style. The phonics programme provides structured writing sessions

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giving letter formation practice from a very early age. The children thoroughly enjoy our weekly 'Big Writing' session in which the whole school writes at length in a quiet and peaceful classroom environment. Through exciting and interesting topic work children are eager to develop writing skills as a means to communicate.

Mathematics

We believe that mathematics is a creative and essential part of the curriculum. Mathematics is a critical means of communication, a powerful tool enabling us to find answers to problems and puzzles. Our aim is for children to be confident and competent mathematicians through practical learning and enthusiastic teaching. All classes will use work based on the National Curriculum (or Early Years Foundation Stage). We aim to develop an appreciation of number, space and pattern and develop an awareness of the basic structure of mathematics. Most of all we ensure that learning mathematics is fun. Teachers carefully plan work to match the needs of the children so that wherever your child is they can make those crucial steps forward. In Key Stage 2 children are taught in 'sets' matched to the levels of attainment that they are working at. This provides high quality and challenging teaching to meet the needs of your child. Children can complete Maths home learning activities on-line, via 'My Maths', which has proved very popular. Follow the link below to access calculation policies and additional guidance on the mathematics strategies taught in the school.

Science

In Science children build their knowledge about living things, materials and physical processes in the world around them. Using resources relevant to their everyday lives they observe explore and carry out problem solving activities. Pupils are encouraged to develop their scientific investigative skills in which they ask questions and undertake simple tasks. They test their ideas and communicate their findings to others in their group. The school has beautiful and extensive grounds to use to learn about scientific processes and living things. Our Eco Lodge provides an outdoor/indoor space in which children can bring their discoveries inside for closer scientific observation and a new greenhouse and planting beds involves the children in growing vegetables and flowers. In Year 3 your child will attend the Forest School. This is an outdoor learning experience that takes place throughout the year with one quarter of a class visiting the Forest fortnightly.

Information Communication Technology

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We are privileged to be a new school and as a result our IT systems are modern and up to date. All classrooms have Interactive Whiteboards and Visualisers to support teaching. Children have access to laptops in every classroom as well as some workstations. We believe all pupils need to be equipped for life in our modern world and as such encourage ICT across the curriculum.

Art

Through Art, the children can learn to express their ideas and feelings visually. They observe and celebrate the world around them. They can develop an understanding of historical and cultural differences and learn to respect the work and talents of others. Pupils are encouraged to be critical and begin to appreciate the skills and techniques of artists and their artworks. We have a purpose built art/craft room for whole class activities.

Design Technology

In Design Technology pupils are encouraged to make their own designs and then choose suitable materials and methods to construct them. They are asked to evaluate their own work and suggest possible improvements.

Pupils are taught to use a range of simple tools, use them safely and develop skills and techniques. Projects vary from year to year however, they are linked to real life problems and made relevant for the children.

History

Our school's aim in the teaching of history is to introduce an understanding of the past whilst developing skills in historical research and enquiry. In Key Stage 1 the children learn about significant peoples' lives. They also learn about lifestyles and events that have happened in the past. We aim to bring history to life through stories, artifacts, drama and educational visits. Theme days ('WOW' days) immerse the pupils in an era bringing historical facts to life.

PE

Physical Education is a compulsory and important part of the National Curriculum. We are very proud of our achievements in Sport across Milton Keynes and invest in Sports Coaches to work with our teachers and run lunchtime and after school clubs. We aim to promote an enthusiastic attitude towards an active and healthy lifestyle. Physical Education provides opportunities for pupils to be creative, competitive and work as part of a team. All children will undertake a range of games skills, dance and gymnastics, movements, athletics and outdoor adventurous activities. Through PE, pupils will discover their own abilities and preferences and are encouraged to make choices about how to get involved in lifelong physical activity and healthy living. We work in partnership with our local secondary school to receive coaching support and

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our own Sports Assistant provides high quality coaching for games such as football, rugby and cricket. Swimming is part of the curriculum in Year 4 and all pupils are expected to participate. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools' Award.

Music

Throughout the year our pupils receive the opportunity to explore musical styles and develop their own musical skills within a structured musical environment. We aim to promote the enjoyment of class music with opportunities to play tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. The school works in close partnership with the Milton Keynes Music service which provides a wide range of opportunities for children to experience instrument playing at an early age. Lessons in Key Stage 2 are available for a range of instruments at an additional cost. In Year 2 children also have the opportunity to pay for string lessons.

Geography

Geography encourages interest and curiosity about people and places.

Pupils are encouraged to ask and answer questions about the natural and human world in which they live. They develop a sense of identity within their own community. We investigate our local area and compare it to a contrasting area in this country or abroad. Pupils investigate changes to the environment and consider how that environment could be improved. Developing geographical skills enables pupils to undertake studies using maps, reference books, field studies and surveys. Trips and local walks provide exciting enrichment to make the subject more relevant.

Modern Foreign Language

In Year 3-6 French is taught by the class teacher using Milton Keynes Primary support French materials. The weekly lessons build confidence and focus on active speaking and listening. We are proud of, and celebrate our school's rich language history and have many children who speak two or more languages fluently.

Learning and Teaching

Through an exciting and integrated curriculum we will be building the children's learning power to enable them to become learners who are:

- Resilient - ready, willing and able to lock onto learning
- Resourceful - ready, willing and able to learn in different ways
- Reflective - ready, willing and able to become more strategic about learning
- Reciprocal - ready, willing and able to learn alone and with other

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