Curriculum Policy - Intent, Implementation & Impact

Intent

At St. Mary’s Primary School we aim to develop the heart and mind of every child. Every child in our school is recognised as individual and unique. The ability to learn is underpinned in curriculum subject areas by the teaching of basic skills, knowledge, concepts and vocabulary. There are clear, identified end points in each phase of learning which build upon what has been taught before and gives pupils the required knowledge and skills for their next stage of learning. Our curriculum at St. Mary’s is not solely focused on academic subjects and achievement. We provide pupils with rich learning experiences, educational visits, residentials, extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities. We want children to have fun at school and talk about their primary school years as being full of great memories.

Our vision is to provide an overall education which prepares each pupil with the tools and strategies needed to cope with the challenges currently posed in modern day Britain e.g. social media, health and relationships and finance. We also aim to ensure that our pupils know how to make a positive contribution to their community and wider society. The village of Chipping has a very close community and we want our pupils to recognise this and play an active part in contributing to the character of the village.

Alongside the teaching of knowledge, skills and vocabulary, here at St. Mary’s Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our school community including, staff, pupils and families. We pursue this aim using both universal and whole school approaches as well as specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. Pupils are encouraged to talk openly about their mental well-being and access support as and when required. We aim to provide pupils will the tools and strategies needed to cope when faced with challenges within school or home life.

We are very fortunate at St. Mary’s to have extensive school grounds. We value the role that outdoor education has in a child’s development and aim to incorporate as much outdoor learning as possible into our broad and balanced curriculum. We find that increasingly more pupils are spending a lot of time in the ‘electronic’ world. We intend to give pupils a love and excitement for being outdoors and playing in their outdoor environment.

Implementation

The role of the subject leader is pivotal in the successful implementation of our curriculum. We aim for all subject leaders to have the knowledge, expertise and practical skill to be able to lead their areas effectively. Each curriculum subject has a dedicated subject leader with clear roles and responsibilities. They are responsible for the curriculum design, delivery and impact in their own curriculum area. Subject leaders and leaders at all levels, including Governors regularly review and quality assure the subject areas to ensure that is being implemented well and coverage and breadth and balance is adequate.

In order for us to be able to deliver the best and most up to date curriculum we provide staff with high quality CPD in their subject specific areas of leadership or teaching role. Following CPD, staff feedback to each other about what they have learnt and we then discuss the impact of this on a class teacher, subject leader and whole school strategic level. We aim to give staff the expert knowledge required to deliver the subjects that they teach. Ongoing professional development and training is available for staff to ensure that our challenging curriculum requirements can be met.

As St. Mary’s is a small school subject leaders have more than one subject area to lead and subject leadership roles can change frequently. Because of this leaders enable curriculum expertise to develop across the school and teaching staff. Early career teachers shadow a subject leader in their first year of teaching as part of their CPD to ensure that when they take on a curriculum leader role in school they fully understand the expectations and roles and responsibilities of the job.

The curriculum at St. Mary’s is carefully mapped out to ensure that pupils acquire knowledge, vocabulary and skills in a well-thought out and progressive manner in every curriculum subject ensuring sufficient coverage across each subject over time. New learning is based upon what has been taught before and prepares pupils for what they will learn next. There are clear end points which pupils work towards on their learning journey. We know that if our pupils are learning our curriculum, they are making progress and are being prepared for the next stage of their educational journey.

The teaching and acquisition of reading skills is prioritised at St. Mary’s to allow pupils to access the full curriculum. We use the Read, Write Inc programme for the teaching of early reading skills. Pupils in the nursery class begin learning initial sounds and then this is built upon in the Reception and Year 1 class. Where a pupil has been identified as not on track to achieve this target, intervention is put in place and 1:1 reading support to enable them to catch up and achieve in line with their peers. Pupils that do not pass the phonics screening test in Year 1 are also supported to ensure that they pass by the end of Year 2. Pupils are able to access a range of reading resources and texts in the school library.

Assessment at St. Mary’s is designed thoughtfully to shape future learning. It is not excessive or onerous as is part of the day to day working practices of the classroom. Teachers ensure that pupils embed key concepts in their long term memory. Key skills and objectives for curriculum areas are revisited throughout the year and applied in different contexts. Pupils revisit prior learning in their work books as an introduction to their new learning and this provides a context upon which pupils can integrate their ‘new knowledge’ into a wider context.

Curriculum Impact

A curriculum subject leader is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of their own subject area. The information from the monitoring and evaluation then forms the basis of the impact assessment for that curriculum area.

The headteacher has overall leadership for assessing the intent, implementation and impact of the whole curriculum that we offer here at St. Mary’s. She has overall vision of the monitoring and evaluation and will guide staff in their roles and responsibilities each week.

Judgements on the impact of the curriculum on pupils is based upon a triangulation of different monitoring and evaluation activities within school. Work and book scrutiny, pupil voice discussions, outcomes of assessments and quality of teaching and learning are all used as tools to help assess the impact of the curriculum.

Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress across the curriculum in line with their own progress measures. Assessment of these pupils is in much smaller and achievable steps. We are proud of the life-skills curriculum that we provide for our pupils including our SEND pupils. Essential skills such as first aid, money awareness, internet safety, healthy eating and basic life skills such as tying shoe laces, using knives and forks correctly, telling the time are all part of what we consider to be necessary skills for our pupils to succeed in life and are key parts of our teaching in school. There is a bespoke plan for life-skills teaching and emotionally health awareness. Although these skills may not be assessed numerically or with a grade, we still feel that being able to achieve these life-skills will enable pupils to fully access life in modern day Britain.

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