Curriculum Statement 2026-2027

Growing together as a family

Rooted in God's love



The Curriculum at St John's

At St John's we provide our children with a rich and stimulating curriculum that encourages creativity, promotes independence and engages our pupils in the wider world around them. As a Catholic school we reflect the example of Jesus through the Gospel Values which underpin all aspects of school life and are shared with all through our mission statement. We have close links with the church and the spiritual development of the children is nurtured in all aspects of the curriculum

St John's is a Forest School and we are very proud to have achieved the Gold mark awarded by the Council for Learning outside the Curriculum. This award acknowledges our commitment to delivering quality learning experiences that offer challenge and excitement using the outdoors environment as much as possible. We believe strongly in giving children the opportunity to develop core life skills such as resilience, independence, cooperation.

We plan using topics to encourage pupils and develop inquisitive minds and enthusiastic learners. We are committed to developing the whole of the child and acknowledge that children learn in different ways and shine in different areas. As a result, our curriculum is full of opportunities for pupils to excel across all subjects through well planned, meaningful, class based and outdoor learning experiences that promote a deeper understanding of the curriculum.

In addition to the extensive curriculum offered, our children also enjoy a wealth of lessons delivered by subject specialists and over time, we have nurtured strong relationships within our local area so that all of our children are aware of their responsibilities as a member of the community and that a strong sense of citizenship is developed.

Intent

- Pupils are able to communicate orally and in writing, using increasingly complex and technical language.
- Children are able to read fluently and for pleasure.
- Children develop inquisitive minds, are creative and make links between subjects.
- Through access to a broad curriculum, including extra-curricular activities, talents are nurtured and children acquire understanding of the substantive and disciplinary knowledge associated with different subjects.
- A sense of awe and wonder in the natural world is fostered and opportunities to work outside the classroom foster personal and social development, including risk management, team work, problem-solving and resilience
- Children are well-prepared for the next phase of their education.
- Children develop socially, morally, spiritually and culturally, enabling them to construct meaning and become reflective and responsible citizens.
- All children, regardless of their ability, race, culture, gender or socio economic circumstances are given equal opportunities to access a full curriculum.

How the curriculum is organised

We are a small school with four classes:

- Class 1 – Reception children
- Class 2 – Year 1 and Year 2 children
- Class 3 – Year 3 and Year 4 children
- Class 4 – Year 5 and Year 6 children.

As we have mixed age classes, our curriculum works on a two year cycle.

The curriculum for each class can be viewed on our Long term curriculum maps. These maps are shared on our website for parents to view.

The core curriculum – How we plan and assess

RE

We are using the 'To Know You More Clearly' programme from the new Religious Education Directory prescribed by the Archdiocese of Liverpool. This is being rolled out across the whole school over a two year cycle.

For those already engaged in the journey of faith, RE will be a catechesis, and for some children, RE will be evangelisation, the first opportunity to hear the Good News of the Gospel.

Through our programme, our pupils are offered the opportunity to explore scripture as it is there, in the authoritative teaching of the Church, that we meet God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word. Our pupils are taught through Knowledge Lenses of Hear, Believe, Celebrate and Live. These divide the content of the programme of study into four subsections for the study of Catholicism. For the study of other religions and world views we use the Knowledge Lenses of Dialogue and Encounter. Through these lenses. St. John's children will come and see the wonder of all that is within them and beyond them.

We assess a child's attainment in RE every term through a specified learning focus. A sample of work is then brought to a moderation meeting during which staff clarify judgements and progress in recorded on the paper based year group tracker. This information is then transferred by the subject leader onto the long term electronic tracker for each class so that a formal judgement can be made at the end of the academic year.

Maths

At St John's Catholic Primary School we use the Pearson Power Maths scheme which follows the mastery approach to learning and has been recommended by the Department for Education.

Power Maths has been designed for UK schools based on research and extensive experience of teaching and learning around the world and here in the UK. It has been designed to support and challenge all pupils, and is built on the belief that all children can achieve.

Power Maths is structured around a whole class interactive teaching model that focuses on helping all children to build a deep understanding of concepts. The philosophy behind Power Maths is that being successful is not just about rote-learning procedures and methods, but is instead about problem solving, thinking and discussing. Power Maths includes practice questions to help children develop fluent recall and develop their conceptual understanding. Power Maths uses growth mindset characters to prompt, encourage and question children. They spark curiosity, engage reasoning, secure understanding and deepen learning for all.

For each year group the curriculum strands are broken down into core concepts. These are taught in blocks of lessons giving sufficient time to develop a deep and sustainable understanding of core maths concepts. Each concept is broken down into lessons. Each lesson and concept builds on prior knowledge to help children build a robust and deep understanding of the concept before moving on.

Opportunities are provided for same day intervention if necessary and also for deepening activities if pupils master the concept.

Each lesson is divided up into:

- A **Power Up** activity designed to support fluency in all key number facts.
- **Discover and Share** activity where children can share, reason and learn. This is often a real-life example, sometimes a puzzle or a game. These are engaging and fun, and designed to get all children thinking. The class shares their ideas and compares different ways to solve the problem, explaining their reasoning with hands-on resources and drawings to make their ideas clear.
- **Think together.** In this section Power Maths takes the approach "I do, we do, you do", as children apply the knowledge they have just learned in a series of problems that continue to encourage thinking throughout.
- **Practice** where the skills learnt and used to build fluency and develop deeper understanding of concepts. Challenge questions link to other units encourage children to take their understanding to a greater level of depth.
- **Reflect** which allows children to review their learning while reasoning.

<u>English</u>

<u>Writing , spelling, punctuation and grammar</u>

We have a two year cycle in place to ensure that all children have the experience of writing across a range of genres. Where possible, these genres will be planned to link with the main theme being covered in order to encourage quality cross curricular writing that builds on and enhances the pupils understanding of the theme. Opportunities for grammar are embedded within the weekly planning as relevant to the genre studied.

We have opportunities during the half term for the children to complete several unaided, independent pieces of writing. These pieces are recorded into the pupil's 'Golden Books' and form a bank of evidence that we use to assess writing. We assess the quality of a piece of writing by highlighting the interim statements for each child and use terms 'Working towards the standard', Working at the expected standard', or 'Greater depth to indicate the achievement of the child. When making a judgement on the level at which a child is working we look for a range of evidence showing the quality of writing across all subjects, not just in English books.

At the end of every term the head teacher holds a pupil progress meeting with each class teacher, in which progress is discussed, during this meeting those children requiring extra support/intervention are identified, similarly children who show evidence of being gifted and talented are discussed and appropriate support is planned for within the provision map for that cohort. From these meetings, pupil grades for reading and writing are inputted onto the electronic tracker which we use to monitor progress over time and through the key stage. At the end of the year, following the final assessment, we make a judgement regarding the level of attainment achieved by each child, this information is recorded onto the electronic tracker and shared with parents as part of their end of year report.

We use Read Write, Inc as the main phonics programme and intervention programmes such as IDL and Literacy Gold

Reading

We have daily guided reading sessions in which the children work on a carousel of reading related activities whilst the teacher focuses on a smaller group for reading focus. Within that the group, the children will have the opportunity to explore an extract or novel in more detail, discussing likes/dislikes and personal responses to the text. Using the interim statements for reading, the teacher makes informal notes and observations on the progress of each group rather than individual records. Children are expected to learn and recite poetry regularly.

All children have a reading book, from EYFS to Y4 all children have a reading book allocated to them by book bands. They are given a yellow reading record, in KS1 and LKS2, the teacher, teaching assistant, parent are expected to use this to record comments about the level of ability and progress that a child is making. In UKS2, the child is also expected to record their own feedback about reading alongside comments made by other adults. Comments made in school are also recorded in the teachers record book.

All classes have a class novel which is read to them by the teacher, this may link to the class topic or be a standalone novel.

The Foundation subjects – How we plan and assess

We subscribe to the Cornerstones curriculum and use the topics from this as the basis of our planning. Our curriculum runs on a two year cycle and the curriculum is mapped out so that every child will have accessed to full National Curriculum content by the end of each key stage. We teach all foundation subjects through the class topic where links can be made – if not, a subject will be taught discretely – tenuous links will not be made just for the sake of it. Throughout the year, we have themed days or weeks in response to local and global events, or to commemorate/celebrate special occasions.

Science, Computing, Music, MFL, PSHE, PE are taught continuously throughout each topic, whereas Art rotates with Design Technology as does Geography with History. PE is taught by specialist teachers as part our involvement with the West Lancs Sports Partnership.

As lessons are taught, teachers annotate their plans with notes and reflections on the lesson as well as pupil achievement. At the end of each topic the class teacher uses his/her annotated plans and informal assessments to make a judgement regarding the attainment of the child, this is recorded within the planning document using the words ‘working towards’, ‘expected’, or ‘greater depth’. At the end of each topic a copy of this is then given to the head teacher and subject leader. At the end of the year this information is then used by the class teacher to make judgements on a child’s achievement within each foundation subject, this is then recorded onto the electronic tracker so that progress throughout the key stage can be measured.

We have a gifted and talented register in place for children across all subjects, where possible we look for opportunities to offer enhancements within the curriculum and to support and encourage progress and enrichment for all our G&T pupils

Forest School

At St John's, we believe that learning is a process of which children should be an active part and we work hard to foster independence and promote children taking responsibility for their own learning. In addition to this, we understand that children need an imaginative and creative curriculum and aim to deliver a rich and stimulating journey of learning that will engage pupils of all abilities, excite them and make them thirsty for learning. The philosophy of Forest Schools is to encourage and inspire individuals of any age through positive outdoor experiences. Activities are designed to promote a range of life skills such as independence, perseverance, problem solving and developing team-work. Forest Schools has demonstrated success with children of all ages who visit the same local woodlands on a regular basis and through play, who have the opportunity to learn about the natural environment, how to handle risks and most importantly to use their own initiative to solve problems and co-operate with others. Forest School programmes run throughout the year, going to the woods in all weathers (except for high winds). Children use full sized tools, play, learn boundaries of behaviour; both physical and social, establish and grow in confidence, self-esteem and become self motivated.

Forest School activities are always planned for and may link to a topic that is being covered in class e.g. Science, Art or English. It may be a skills based activity such as using tools or developing natural techniques such as weaving.

At different times of the year, we also run organised sessions such as:

- Tree felling
- Mini Mammals
- Willow Sculpture
- Fungal Innoculation
- Bird Ringing
- Advent Wreaths