



St John's Church of England Primary School

Curriculum Intention Statement

Specific subject intent statements available for all subject areas

Intent

Our curriculum is designed with three goals in mind:

- 1) To provide a carefully structured and knowledge-rich academic curriculum which is built around helping pupils to access wide ranging knowledge stored in their long term memory. We build our curriculum around key knowledge which changes pupils' perceptions and their understanding, as well as developing their values. We will ensure that pupils develop frameworks for gaining new knowledge which is embedded and retrieved easily, so that they can progress to expert outcomes and deepen their understanding.
- 2) To give pupils appropriate experiences to develop as caring, thoughtful and, responsible citizens by teaching and upholding the values of the Christian faith.
- 3) To provide a rich 'cultural capital' in the knowledge of the world which prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Through this, we develop the breadth of pupils' vocabulary so that they can express themselves maturely.

We teach the national curriculum. Our intentions for each subject area are defined by the purpose and aims of study of the national curriculum. The most important subject content is defined in our medium term plans through 'threshold concepts' which organise new knowledge systematically and ensure a logical progression to pupils' knowledge and understanding. We have defined end points through expected standards or milestones in learning by the end of each academic year, or in some subjects by the end of Year 2, Year 4 or Year 6. These milestones also assess the depth of understanding of the threshold concepts.

We prioritise reading across the curriculum by making sure that across all subjects pupils read texts which help them to broaden their vocabulary and deepen their understanding of the subject matter. We consider the ability to read with meaning as a basic and fundamental tool to ensure pupils' progress and to closing advantage gaps.

We have prioritised drivers to our curriculum breadth that shape our learning experiences, bring about the aims and values of our school, and to respond to the particular needs of our community. These are:

Spiritual Development: developing the character of each child through giving rich opportunities for spiritual reflection and understanding of the significance of faith. By developing pupils' empathy and compassion for others and an understanding of their own and others' beliefs.



Moral development: developing the character of each child by instilling Christian values of Love, Peace, Wisdom, Hope, Friendship and Honesty. Helping pupils distinguish right from wrong and make responsible judgements in accordance with their values and moral code.

Social development: developing the character of each child by teaching them respect for other people, living things, property and the environment. Helping pupils to work successfully as members of groups and teams and make a positive contribution to their community and society.

Cultural development: developing the character of each child by helping them to appreciate cultural diversity, including beliefs and achievements in cultures beyond their own experience. Helping pupils to challenge discrimination of any kind. Helping pupils to participate in and respond to the arts. Enabling pupils to understand the influences which have shaped their own cultural heritage.

Possibilities: helping pupils to build aspirations and know available possibilities for their future lives.

Implementation

Our curriculum is taught according to subject disciplinary knowledge, and making links between knowledge in subjects where appropriate. This helps us to focus on the most important and useful knowledge in each subject and to avoid distractions and irrelevances.

The curriculum breadth for each year group ensures each teacher has clarity as to what to cover. As well as providing the key knowledge within subjects it also provides for pupils' growing cultural capital and knowledge of the world.

We have identified in each subject the 'threshold concepts'. These are domain specific concepts which open up new ways of thinking about the subjects and help pupils to link new knowledge and commit it to their long term memories. We consider this to be the most powerful knowledge in each subject domain. Threshold concepts are the key disciplinary aspects of each subject. They are chosen to build conceptual understanding within subjects and are repeated many times in each topic. These concepts also help teachers to present new information clearly and build on what has been taught before.

We assess the depth of understanding and pupils' mastery to expertise in these concepts through milestones for learning. Each topic, each term, builds towards an expert outcome, or "POP" (proof of progress) task. These tasks check pupils' procedural knowledge, ie. their ability to apply and reason with knowledge. These assessments check the progression from novice to expert outcomes, called 'Basic, Advancing and Deep' outcomes. These assessments are used to provide teachers with information for future planning. This helps to inform their future retrieval



practice and the planning of tasks by identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge and their skill in the application of it.

Teachers provide plentiful opportunities for retrieval practice. Our short and medium term plans reflect the research of cognitive science, that progress means knowing more and remembering more. Therefore teachers use regular assessment in the form of recall, low and no stakes quizzes and spaced practice and repetition of fundamental knowledge. Teachers assess and improve pupils' sustained memory through these low stakes methods as well as plenaries and mini- plenaries in lessons. Assessment, therefore answers two main questions: 'How well are pupils coping with curriculum content?' and 'How well are they retaining previously taught content?'

Teachers use worked examples and break tasks into component steps to avoid overloading pupils' working memory. Teachers expect pupils to solve problems and transfer their knowledge to new contexts when pupils have remembered the knowledge sufficiently.

Vocabulary is how pupils conceptualise and express knowledge. Teachers' plans prioritise the acquisition of knowledge through 'expert' vocabulary. We prioritise reading through all curriculum plans, and building pupils' tier 2, or academic and literary vocabulary by access to challenging texts.

For pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities or those who need more time to embed fundamental knowledge, key knowledge deficits are identified and tasks planned which avoid overloading pupils' working memory. Retrieval and spaced practice of fundamental knowledge is a priority for these pupils. Teachers plan tasks where modelling and scaffolding of fundamental knowledge are additional provisions.

Impact

We know we are successful through the monitoring procedures we have in place:

The impact of the curriculum on pupils' long term memory is checked by our subject leaders who undertake pupil conferencing each term to identify what pupils have learnt and remembered in each year group.

In addition, subject leaders check pupils' work each term to determine their progress in curricular goals and their depth of understanding.

The impact of our curriculum is that by the end of each milestone, the vast majority of pupils have sustained mastery of the content, that is, they remember it all and are fluent in it, or have achieved an advancing stage of mastery.

Some pupils have a greater depth of understanding. We track these pupils carefully to ensure they are on track to reach the expectations of our curriculum and challenged further where appropriate.