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# St. Joseph’s School & Nursery

**Curriculum Policy**

**Introduction**

The curriculum at St Joseph's is designed in accordance with the school's aims. We provide a positive, optimum environment which will develop the skills and attitudes required to be an effective lifelong learner. We have high expectations for every child at our school and offer innovative teaching in a stimulating environment. Through our Christian ethos we encourage everyone to love, respect and understand themselves, others and the multi-faith world in which they live.

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 and self-belief, so that they achieve their true potential.

**Regulatory statements**

At St Joseph’s we provide a curriculum where:

1. full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
2. subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of pupils, including those pupils with a statement;
3. pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
4. the principal language of instruction is a language other than English, lessons in written and spoken English, except that this matter does not apply in respect of a school which provides education for pupils who are all temporarily resident in England and which follows the curriculum of another country;
5. a pupil has a statement, education which fulfils its requirements;
6. personal, social and health education which reflects the school’s aim and ethos;
7. appropriate careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education;
8. the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;
9. the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;
   1. all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
10. adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

**Entitlement**

Pupils are entitled to:

* a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares them for the following academic year
* experience a wide range of enjoyable and effective teaching and learning experiences
* regular assessment that impacts on future learning
* differentiated work and support so it is inclusive for all
* develop their abilities by receiving high quality oral and written feedback
* have their achievements celebrated
* pupils with Special Educational Needs have an IEP that sets out how they will be supported to meet their specific needs

**Organisation and planning**

The curriculum is planned in three phases. We have a long-term plan for each year group. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term. Long term plans change on an annual basis. We also have expected objectives to be covered in each year group in the form of a programme of study for the core subjects.

Medium-term plans give clear guidance on the objectives and teaching strategies that we use when teaching each topic. These are taken from the National Curriculum objectives and published exemplar materials which are then modified and combined to suit the mixed year groups or to fit in with topics with strong cross-curricular links where this is possible. 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 Early Years 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.

At Key Stage 2 the curriculum at our school places a greater emphasis on the core and foundation subjects than it does at Key Stage 1, and we teach these subjects separately. This means that, for example, a child may concentrate in one half term on a history topic, and then switch to a greater emphasis on geography in the next half term.

Over the three terms of the academic year, each child has the opportunity to experience the full range of National Curriculum subjects. However we do emphasis the need for cross-curricular work which links into the creative curriculum approach and this is built in to the long, medium and short-term plans.

**Assessment**

Regular testing in the core subjects of English and Maths, reading and spelling is undertaken at three points in the year. Data is analysed in an excel spreadsheet and followed up with professional dialogue meetings with staff. These are known as Pupil Progress Meetings and their function is to ensure children are reaching their full potential. Photographs and other media are used to record formative assessment throughout the year. This and the fact that we have small class sizes and know our children incredibly well all informs our planning for teaching and learning. The teachers are able to identify the next steps for a child’s progression in any given subject. The children’s workbooks are also kept and as a record and to inform planning, this is particularly helpful in the Juniors.

**The New National Curriculum (September 2015)**

At St. Joseph’s we aim for a total curriculum; for excellence in all areas, allowing each child to reach his or her true potential.

We have therefore implemented an Independent Curriculum to ensure our pupils are encouraged to discover, apply and communicate their learning and understanding, to become independent thinkers, to grow in confidence whilst enjoying inspirational and creative teaching. This is underpinned by the governments new National Curriculum (September 2015) in order to benchmark our performance against national standards and allow children to perform to the best of their ability. We do not undertake national testing, but ensure our children can participate in such tests and confidently and successfully sit entrance exams for other independent schools as required.