

St Columba's Roman Catholic Primary School

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

At St Columba's we follow a creative based approach to the new National Curriculum, wherever possible, in order to provide our children with a broad and well-balanced curriculum. The focus will be on developing the skills that children need to learn whilst encouraging them to think creatively. Our school curriculum is carefully planned and reviewed to ensure that each one of our children is encouraged to be the best they can be.

Religious Education

Religious Education is a core subject. The primary purpose of Catholic Education is the step by step study the teaching of the Christ and the Church and its application in daily life, therefore the principle aims of the school in terms of the Religious Education which it provides are:

- to lead the children to a deepening knowledge and understanding of our Catholic Faith. ☑ to provide opportunities for the children to develop a loving relationship with God and their neighbours
- to encourage children to respect and be fully aware of the needs of others as equal members of God's creation

There are many opportunities for all children to explore their faith and deepen their relationship with Christ including daily acts of worship, weekly assemblies, regular classroom/parish based liturgies and celebration of Mass.

The children do learn about other world faiths during the year. This is usually done through a world faith week.

British Values

At St Columba's we support and educate the children in an understanding of the recognised British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We actively promote these values through a cross curricular approach which is upheld through our Catholic ethos of having Christ's example at the centre of our daily lives.

The children are given an understanding of a democratic system at an early age through encouraging them to be involved in decision making within their own classes and making sure their voices are heard. Mock elections are held for various purposes ranging from the creation of our own St Columba's School Council, to elections for class representatives for Chaplains.

The children are encouraged to respect and uphold rules and understand the reasons for them. All children are familiar with the School's Rules which form the basis of our Behaviour Policy and the Catholic ethos of the school gives them a firm bedrock of understanding right from wrong. We use a restorative justice approach when dealing with conflicts and encourage all children to articulate their view point and respect others. We have regular visits from the local community PCSO.

It is important for children to feel valued in order to flourish. At St Columba's we develop self-esteem and self-confidence by encouraging positive risk taking and creative thinking. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and we have a strong anti-bullying culture. Children are encouraged to voice any concerns and will always have their views listened to.

We help the children acquire understanding of different faiths through our Religious Education programme. Similarities and differences between groups of people are looked at naturally in cross curricular ways from a social, geographical, religious and historical perspective. We hold a Multi faith week in school each year.

EYFS

At St Columba's we recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and have their own learning styles. In Nursery and Reception there are 7 areas of learning and development that must shape educational provision. We value all areas of learning and development equally and understand that they are interconnected.

The 3 prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development.

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

Children are also supported in 4 specific areas, through which the 3 prime areas are strengthened and applied. These are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design.

All our children have access to a stimulating and challenging environment that has a strong emphasis on learning through play and first hand experiences. Our planning is based on the principle that children learn most effectively when they are interested and motivated by the activities they engage with. Therefore children's individual interests are used as a basis for our planning. A balance of planned adult-led activities and child- initiated activities ensures developmentally appropriate differentiation and challenge.

Key Stage 1 and 2

English is taught daily through cross-curricular approaches and also in discrete English lessons which focus on spoken language, reading and writing. Different genres are covered throughout the year to give the children exposure to all types of written materials. Phonics is taught on a daily basis in EYFS and KS1 using Read Write Inc. The reading scheme used in KS1 is varies to give the children variety and breadth. Guided reading concentrates developing both word recognition and comprehension skills.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) teaching is interwoven into English lessons and taught in a meaningful context with opportunities to apply learning across the curriculum.

Maths is taught daily to ensure coverage and progression. We ensure opportunities to use and apply what they have been learning in an open –ended cross-curricular way. Mental maths is an important part of our maths curriculum with weekly tests in KS2. We believe that in order for children to be

confident mathematicians, they need a firm foundation and concrete understanding of number and mental maths strategies.

Science is taught weekly focussing on both Scientific knowledge and Scientific skills. We try teach Science creatively, every lesson is led with a question and the children's aim is to gain the knowledge and skills to answer it. Science topics also provide a wonderful vehicle for children at our school to practise their basic skills in Maths and English.

Computing is taught weekly covering all areas of the curriculum. In addition to this E-safety and digital literacy are taught across the school. Opportunities are provided for the use of ICT in other curriculum areas with at least 2 timetabled lessons in the designated ICT suite and using our banks of ipads and lap tops.

History and Geography are subjects that are taught in a creative way, using other subjects such as Art and English to deliver. The children gain an understanding of the world in which they live both in the present day and the past. These subjects are backed up though real life experiences where possible.

Music is taught by class teachers in KS1 and we employ a specialist music teacher who teaches music in KS2. Within class lessons, pupils compare, perform and evaluate their work. We also have a school choir that practice weekly and regularly perform to parent audiences.

PE is taught by both the class teacher and specialist sports coaches providing the children with 2 hrs of PE each week. The curriculum covers a range of skills including dance, gymnastics, ball skills, athletics, team games and orienteering. Children learn to swim in yr 5. In addition to this, there are often extra opportunities for other sports delivered by external providers including rugby, netball, athletics, dance, and wrestling. The children are encouraged to take part in competitive inter-school competitions in a variety of fields.

Art and DT are taught to enable the children to express themselves but also have an understanding of the world in which they live.

Modern Foreign Language – French is introduced in Y1 and taught in Y3 upwards by a French speaking teacher. Continuing with French throughout the Primary school years enables children to achieve a good level of fluency and confidence in a foreign language.

A key aspect of learning at St Columba's school is the importance placed on outdoor learning. All aspects of the curriculum can be enhanced through the outside environment. We also have 'Forest School' staff members. We encourage the children to develop their environmental understanding by working towards making St Columba's a 'greener' school, we do have Eco School status. The children are encouraged to see their roles as Stewards of the world about them in relation to our Catholic Ethos.