

Teaching & Learning Policy

Our Schools' Curriculum Aim:

The staff of St. Cuthbert's and St. Sebastian's will work to give each child full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, relevant for our school community and the diverse experiences of our children, encouraging in each individual a sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Introduction

At St Cuthbert's and St Sebastian's we believe that all pupils regardless of ability, ethnicity or cultural background have the right to achieve their full potential in school.

We aim to help them achieve this by creating a school community where:

- Pupils are stimulated and motivated.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to flourish and achieve.
- Pupils' independence and responsibility are fostered.
- Everyone is valued and respected.

Statement of Intent:

Staff will strive to:

Provide a stimulating environment in which each child can flourish and develop according to his/her own needs, aptitude and ability, having full access to our new "Creative Challenge Curriculum" devised, planned and produced by the staff of our Federation.

Safe Guarding

Our schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and expect all staff, parents and visitors to share this commitment.

Creative Challenge Curriculum

Staff of the Federation has collaborated closely to devise a new and inspiring Creative Challenge Curriculum. This creative curriculum has been implemented

Teaching & Learning Policy

with a view to improving further the quality of our teaching and learning. We endeavour to ensure our children are motivated and inspired to want to learn by providing a broad and balanced curriculum with sound stimulating cross curricular links and skill based learning with an emphasis on progression.

Equal Opportunities

At our schools we will strongly promote self-respect for all in our school irrespective of race, creed or gender. Our school communities have zero tolerance towards discrimination or prejudice of any kind (homophobia, biphobia or transphobia). Care will be taken to ensure that Creative Challenge Curriculum planning, resources and workshops do not present stereo-typical images, rather role models from diverse backgrounds and cultures reflecting the multi-ethnic nature of our society.

S.E.N.D

Assessment determines planning and teaching objectives will be directed specifically towards the needs of all children. Pupil Profiles are made available to address children identified as having particular Special Educational Needs & Disabilities. These plans are shared with parents, ensuring that they are informed of specific objectives.

Able, Gifted and Talented

Able, Gifted and Talented children are those who have one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group, (or with the potential to develop these abilities). In England the term 'gifted' refers to those pupils who are capable of excelling in academic subjects, 'talented' refers to those pupils who may excel in areas requiring visio-spatial skills or practical abilities such as games and PE, drama or art. Some gifted and talented pupils may be intellectually able and also appear on the SEND register for behavioural, literacy or physical difficulties.

The provision for A, G and T pupils as with all pupils is a question of equity; they have a right to an education which is suited to their practical needs and abilities. They need to be presented with work which challenges, stretches and excites them on a daily basis, in an environment that celebrates excellence and is supportive of those who may in years to come break the boundaries of what we know and understand. The Creative Challenge Curriculum has been devised by

teachers to ensure that ALL children have extensive opportunities for self challenge.

Exceptional Education Profiles (EEPs) are devised for a very small minority of pupils who are considered to be in the top 2% nationally in any particular area. Criteria are hard to define, as there are such a wide range of talents, we therefore use our rigorous teacher assessment in order to inform the process of compilation.

Computing

As a Federation we are committed to enhancing our Creative Challenge Curriculum by providing and maintaining a seamless provision of computing across all curriculum areas. We aim to equip all teaching staff with up to date, relevant and inspiring resources as a means through which the quality of our children's learning will be enriched and extended. We are gradually initiating the use of apps on our newly purchased ipads.

The role of the Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinators for the Creative Challenge Curriculum & Teaching & Learning will be responsible for monitoring whether the policy is carried out and any additional responsibilities this role brings. In consultation with staff the co-ordinators will maintain an accurate record of the Federations Creative Challenge Curriculum, T&L monitoring / Learning Walks assessing the impact on pupils being encouraged to achieve their potential. The co-ordinators will liaise with the school Governor responsible to take an active role for both the Creative Challenge Curriculum and T&L and report to the appropriate committee at least twice a year.

The Co-ordinators will actively seek courses for Staff Development, which will enable teachers to be:

- clear about what constitutes high level performance;
- familiar with higher-order thinking skills and how to develop them in different contexts; and
- able to set tasks which challenge A,G&T learners.
- acquiring expertise in NC14 initiatives

SDP 2015-2016: In light of Governmental initiatives and reflecting the schools priorities, the co-ordinators are continuing to drive priorities within the three distinct "Working Parties":

1. Pupil Premium
2. Teaching & Learning
3. Creative Challenge Curriculum

What has been learned is more important than what has been taught.

INTRODUCTION

At St Cuthbert's & St Sebastian's we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone; it should be fun. Through our Creative Challenge Curriculum we aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to acquire the necessary skills for Lifelong Learning.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

We believe that children learn best in different ways. At our schools we aim to provide a rich and varied learning experience that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

Through our teaching we aim to:

- ✓ enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- ✓ foster children's self-esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- ✓ develop children's self-respect and encourage children to respect the ideas, attitudes, values and feelings of others;
- ✓ show respect for all cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;

Teaching & Learning Policy

- ✓ enable children to understand their community and help them feel valued as part of this community;
- ✓ support children in growing into reliable, independent and positive citizens with a strong emphasis on transition between Key Stages and into Year 7.

EFFECTIVE INCLUSIVE LEARNING

Through this policy we aim to ensure that children learn effectively. The characteristics of effective learning are when pupils make sustained and accelerated progress, respond well to challenging tasks and adjust well to working in different contexts. To be effective learners children need to work in a sustained manner with commitment and enjoyment, be confident in raising questions and have perseverance when answers are not readily available. Also, children need to be able to select appropriate methods, organise the resources they need effectively and then be able to constructively evaluate their own work. When appropriate, they also need to help each other developing skills of evaluation (self & peer).

In acquiring these characteristics, we acknowledge that children learn in many different ways and we recognize the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. The psychologist Howard Gardner identifies seven main areas of intelligence: linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal/group working, and interpersonal/reflective. We take into account these different forms of intelligence when planning teaching and learning styles.

We offer opportunities for children to learn in different ways. These include:

- ✓ investigation and problem solving;
- ✓ research and finding out;
- ✓ group work & pair work;
- ✓ independent work;
- ✓ whole-class work;
- ✓ asking and answering questions;
- ✓ use of the computing & programming;
- ✓ use of interactive resources & software;
- ✓ residential trips and visits to places of educational interest;
- ✓ creative challenge activities;
- ✓ responding to visual and audio stimuli (i.e. Visual Literacy);
- ✓ debates, role-plays and oral presentations;

Teaching & Learning Policy

- ✓ designing and making / constructing;
- ✓ participation in competitive and non-competitive sports or physical activity;
- ✓ strong commitment to cross curricular activities;
- ✓ Continued high profile of extra-curricular activities.

Through the Creative Challenge Curriculum, we encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way they learn, and to reflect on how they learn - what helps them learn and what makes it difficult for them to learn.

EFFECTIVE INCLUSIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

Effective teaching and learning is when teachers challenge and inspire pupils, expecting the most of them. Effective teachers have good / outstanding subject knowledge and are technically competent in teaching phonics and English / maths basic skills. Outstanding teachers will use a variety of methods to enable all pupils to learn effectively and will manage pupils well, insisting on high standards of behaviour. They will assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments to help and encourage pupils to overcome difficulties indicating 'Next Steps' for learning. Teachers plan effectively, setting clear objectives that pupils understand and they use time, support staff and other resources effectively.

At St Cuthbert's and St Sebastian's we base our teaching on our knowledge of the children's level of attainment. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of the children within a stimulating, enriching Creative Challenge Curriculum. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Pupil Profiles, Exceptional Education Profiles (EPPs) and Behaviour Profiles. We have high expectations of all children, and we believe that their work should always be of the highest possible standard.

According to revised Programmes of Study within the New Curriculum, we set whole school, group and individual targets for children in each term across the academic year and we share these targets with children and their parents. We review the progress of each child at the end of each term and set revised targets.

We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the New National Curriculum 2014 & Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). Our Creative Challenge Curriculum planning contains:

- ✓ Learning Objectives
- ✓ Tasks
- ✓ Extension Tasks
- ✓ Progression of Skills
- ✓ Assessment of & for learning

Teaching & Learning Policy

Both teaching and support staff contribute to the evaluation of all lessons, annotating planning so that we can modify and improve our teaching in the future.

All of our Teaching Teams follow the school behaviour policy with regards to behaviour and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct / class rules. We expect all children to comply with these rules that we jointly devise to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on exemplary behaviour at all times. When children misbehave we follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our school Behaviour Handbook.

We ensure that all tasks and activities that the children do are safe. Regular risk assessments are carried out. When we plan to take children off the school site, we follow the LA Guidelines for School Visits, a fully comprehensive risk assessment is always compiled and the Educational Visits Co-ordinator is then required to authorize the trip and where necessary seek LA approval.

We deploy teaching assistants and adults others than teachers (AOTTs) as effectively as possible depending on the need of the department, class or individual. Our Learning Support Practitioners work within 'Teaching Teams' within departments and their roles and responsibilities consist of implementing:

- ✓ One to One
- ✓ Small Group
- ✓ Interventions
- ✓ Booster Groups
- ✓ Extension Groups
- ✓ Teaching Whole Classes

All teachers reflect on their strengths and areas for development and plan their professional development needs in accordance with their Performance Management Reviewer. The school has systematic procedures for identifying strengths and areas for development in teaching and provides opportunities for teachers and support staff to continually improve their practice. We conduct all of our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

Performance Management systems and procedures are constantly revised and updated.

Teaching & Learning Policy

Use of specialist teachers: PE, MFL, Music and Computing will be taught / team taught by specialist teachers across year groups. These teachers have excellent subject knowledge and will use this expertise to provide outstanding teaching and learning opportunities for children in addition to outstanding professional development opportunities for our Teaching Teams. The school will also utilise their experience in ensuring that the needs of gifted and talented pupils are met.

Use of ability grouping: Ability grouping for children is a constant focus whereby Teacher Assessment (summative & formative) is effectively used to inform teaching groups including:

- ✓ One to One
- ✓ Small Group
- ✓ Interventions
- ✓ Booster Groups
- ✓ Extension Groups
- ✓ Teaching Whole Classes

Rigorous monitoring identifies impact of intervention and outlines action plans set. Therefore by nature, in order for grouping systems to be fully effective we have the facility to be fluid and interchangeable.

Collaborative learning strategies: We promote opportunities through lessons whereby children are proactive educators of each other. Peer and Self-Assessment procedures are prominent across all year groups.

Specialist intervention for pupils with English as an additional language or Special Educational Needs: Our school's policy is to deploy learning support assistants according to the specific need of the school, department, class or specific individual.

Special programmes of work for gifted and talented pupils: the school will provide extension and acceleration programmes / workshops for more able pupils when appropriate. Children will also be selected to take part in gifted and talented days / events at the local secondary school where appropriate.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At St Cuthbert's and St Sebastian's we work hard to ensure our classrooms have Working Walls creating stimulating and interactive learning environments that are clearly focused on enhancing learning and empowering learners. We frequently update displays to ensure that the classroom reflects the Creative Challenge Curriculum topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display and celebrate quality examples of their work at some time during the year. We believe that a stimulating environment sets the climate for learning, and a well organised classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.

CREATIVE CHALLENGE CURRICULUM

The curriculum comprises planned activities organised in order to promote learning and personal growth and development. This includes formal requirements of the National Curriculum 2014, but also the range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises in order to enrich the experience of the children. 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, so that they achieve their true potential.

The aims of our Creative Challenge Curriculum are:

- ✓ to enable all children to learn and develop their skills to the best of their ability;
- ✓ to promote a positive attitude towards learning, so that children enjoy coming to school, and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning;
- ✓ to teach children the basic skills of english, maths and computing
- ✓ to enable children to be creative and to develop their own thinking;
- ✓ to teach children about their developing world, including how their environment and society have changed over time
- ✓ to enable children to be positive citizens in society;
- ✓ to fulfil all the requirements of the New National Curriculum 2014

Teaching & Learning Policy

- ✓ to teach *Come & See*, the Religious education Syllabus (Liverpool Archdiocese directive)
- ✓ to teach children to have an awareness of their own and other religious and spiritual development;
- ✓ to help children understand the importance of truth and fairness, so that they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all;
- ✓ to enable children to have respect for themselves, high self-esteem and to be able to live and work co-operatively with others.

We plan our Creative Challenge Curriculum at three levels:

Whole School level – long term

At whole school level we have a newly devised Creative Challenge Curriculum map for each year group covering Year 1 to Year 6. This indicates what topics (theme based) are to be taught each term and to which groups of children. The curriculum map is made up of specific themes / units of work for each subject based on the programmes of study in the National Curriculum. This also forms the basis for our Creative Challenge Curriculum devised with challenge in mind and therefore consisting of writing, maths and computing links in addition to extension challenges. We also use the English and Maths LA planning and the Liverpool Archdiocese agreed syllabus for Religious Education 'Come and See'.

In addition to the themes taught, we also encompass the development of key skills, making strong cross curricular links to ensure a broader understanding. The six key skills that we aim to develop are:

Communication This includes listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Application of number This includes basic skills, arithmetic & calculation skills, and learning how to apply these skills to solving 'real life' number problems.

Computing This involves using new technology (and software) to find, analyse, interpret and present information. It also involves the skills necessary to use technology appropriately and successfully.

Working with others This involves the ability to work well with others as a team member or team leader. When children are offered the opportunity to

work with others, they learn to consider the views of others and to develop the social skills of co-operation and mutual understanding.

Improving learning and performance This involves children in evaluating their own performance and that of others (self & peer assessment) and understanding what they need to do next in order to improve 'Next Steps'. Through marking, an open dialogue between teacher and pupil also allows for continual extension opportunities and for misconceptions to be overcome.

Problem-solving This skill involves learning how to apply common techniques to solve problems in a variety of contexts and situations in any aspect of life.

These key skills also link closely to the school's focus on building children's 'Learning Power' developing specifically:

Readiness: Being ready and willing to learn e.g. being motivated, set goals and have a positive attitude to learning.

Resourcefulness: Being ready, willing and able to learn in different ways e.g. ask questions, imagine and make links.

Resilience: Being ready, willing and able to lock on to learning e.g. persevere and manage distractions.

Responsibility: Being ready, willing and able to work alongside and with others.

Reflectiveness: Being ready, willing and able to become more strategic about learning e.g. reflecting, improving and practicing their work.

Year Group level - medium term

Within our Creative Challenge Curriculum medium-term plans, we give clear guidance on the objectives, teaching strategies and extension opportunities that we use when teaching each topic. As we have adopted National Curriculum 2014 for our schools, we take our medium-term planning directly from the guidance documents. Our medium term planning also takes account of children's interests, their experiences, the school identities and extended school communities.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING & REPORTING

We believe that effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. We give our children regular feedback on their learning so that they understand their 'Next Steps'. We use information collected from assessments to allow us to plan lessons based on detailed knowledge of each pupil. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. Planning makes clear the learning objectives for each lesson. We use planning as a working document and note those individual children are achieving below or exceeding Age Related Expectation (A.R.E) for the lesson and use this information when planning for the next lesson. We also keep this information as a record of progress made by the class. We give parents regular reports on their child's progress so that teachers, children and parents are all working together to raise standards for all our children.

Procedures used by the school

National statutory tasks and tests: The EYFSP data and Phonics Screening that is administered in Year 1 (& re-administered where applicable).

Statutory National Assessments for KS1 & 2 are currently under review. The Federation is committed to our partnership with the Liverpool LA Assessment Pilot Scheme and as such is developing rigorous assessments systems in accordance developing guidance.

National non-statutory tasks and tests (optional SATS): We are developing Scale Score in order to define our standards in line with Liverpool LA Assessment Pilot Scheme recommendations.

FOUNDATION STAGE PROFILE

The overarching aim of the EYFS is to help young children achieve the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

The EYFS aims:

- To provide a structured, secure, caring and well-resourced learning environment; both inside and out which meets all the individual developmental needs of 'young learners'. To enable them to become confident, motivated and happy learners, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for their own successful future learning.
- To develop independence and individuality, whilst fostering respect and tolerance for others irrespective of ability, race, creed, gender or background.

The needs of young learners:

- Adults who are sensitive to their differing needs, abilities, backgrounds and previous experiences to teach, support, care and offer equal opportunities for them all to develop.
- Adults who will respect them and value their ideas and opinions, every child is a competent learner from birth.
- A challenging and diverse curriculum offering ample opportunity to practice and develop skills and learning. The curriculum should also offer opportunities for the development of personal qualities and social skills.
- Rich and positive learning experiences with plenty of first-hand experience, varied to include all learning styles and including regular opportunity to explore and learn through practical and play activities.
- The chance to make decisions and to take responsibility - both for their learning and behaviour. This includes the chance to make mistakes in a forgiving environment and to realise that making mistakes is a learning experience.
- In all, a well-planned, carefully structured programme of academic and personal development, building on past experiences and achievements - delivered in ways appropriate to their age and stage.

Play underpins the delivery of all the EYFS. The EYFS principles guide the work of all practitioners, there are four themes: ***a unique child, positive relationships, enabling environments, learning and development.***

There are 3 prime areas: ***Communication and language, Physical development, Personal, social and emotional development.***

There are 4 specific areas through which the 3 prime areas are strengthened and applied: ***Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the world, Expressive arts and design.***

Assessment:

In accordance with all schools, each child will be assessed in their first term at school. Through observation staff will assess their attainment in the three prime areas and the four specific areas against the *Early Years Outcomes*. Ongoing assessment (formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process.

Staff are involved in daily observations, using '*2 Simple to Build a Profile*' programme and assessments throughout the Foundation Stage; they include child initiated tasks and teacher led activities in the inside and outside learning environments. Observations, samples of work and photographs are recorded in each child's 'learning journal.' Data is entered electronically onto '*Target Tracker*' at the end of each term. The EYFS Profile will be completed at the end of the Reception year; data will be sent to Liverpool Local Authority and practitioners will report whether children are meeting expected levels of development or if they are exceeding expected levels of development or not yet reaching expected levels (emerging).

Some Reception Year children will begin to work on level one of the National Curriculum when it is judged appropriate for them. (Children who do not achieve all of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year continue to work towards them in Year 1.) The observations, assessments and 'scale points (emerging, expected, exceeding) form the basis of individual reports to parents in the summer term.

All attainment data is passed to the Year1 teacher for continuity at this time of transition.

Key Person:

The key person approach is aimed at enabling and supporting close attachments between children and practitioners. Attachment provides a sense of security so that children can become confident, independent and capable young learners. At school the key person is the Early Years class teacher and NNEB. Their role is to meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, talking to the parents and working in partnership with them.

A key person is:

- A named member of staff who has more contact than others with the child
- Someone to build relationships with the child and parents
- Someone who helps the child become familiar with the provision
- Someone who meets children's individual needs and care needs

- Someone who responds sensitively to children's feelings, ideas and behavior
- The person who acts as a point of contact with parents

Home-school links:

- Literature to support the parental role in early learning is given to all parents prior to their child's entry to the school. We also have workshops for parents to find out how we teach phonics, number skills etc
- Parents are invited to attend 'stay and play' sessions and 'Family Learning week' in November
- An 'open door' policy is incorporated in our practice
- Two alternate termly parents' open evenings (February & July) are held and the staff involved with the early years children meet with parents/carers to often on an informal basis or by appointment if necessary

Links with other EYFS Providers:

- The school maintains a good relationship with the local Sure Start Centre- StoneyCroft & Kensington Children's Centre.
- Members of the 'Early Years Team' (Assistant Headteacher, Foundation Stage Teacher and NNEBs) represent the school at local 'Early Years' network events and training activities.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in supporting children in their learning. We are proactive in informing parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- ✓ meeting with parents at the start of the academic year and at the start of each term in which we outline the topics that the children will be studying in addition to sharing termly targets set.
- ✓ hosting parents evenings to explain our school strategies for teaching and learning and to provide information about children's attainment and achievement;
- ✓ devising interim and annual reports to parents in which we explain the progress made by each child and indicate how the child can improve further;

- ✓ working with parents for the support of their children with home/school learning. The Home/School Agreement is updated annually and signed by children, teachers & parents (refer to Home/School Agreement)

THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS IN CREATIVE CHALLENGE CURRICULUM - TEACHING AND LEARNING

The schools governors determine, support, monitor, review and challenge the school policies on teaching and learning. They are regularly invited in to partake within lessons, Federated 'Learning walks' and SIP visits. In particular they:

- ✓ support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ✓ ensure that the school buildings and premises are best used to support successful teaching and learning;
- ✓ monitor teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations; monitor how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- ✓ ensure that staff development and performance management policies promote quality teaching;
- ✓ monitor the effectiveness of the Federations curriculum & teaching and learning policy through the school's self-review processes.

Governors at St Cuthbert's and St Sebastian's are actively involved in supporting and monitoring teaching and learning. They do this in a number of ways. They support the monitoring of reports from subject leaders, giving insight for future action planning. The Curriculum Committee monitors implementation of the SDP, evaluate teaching & learning, partake within learning walks and book scrutiny and review policies.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

We are aware of the need to review the curriculum and teaching and learning policy annually so that we can take account of new initiatives, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school.

C.Bellis-Knox & J.Davies.