

Curriculum Provision

Curriculum Statement

At St. Thomas C.E. Primary School the curriculum, underpinned by our Christian foundation, prepares our children for a constantly changing world, giving them the necessary skills to contribute to society and lead happy, healthy lives. Values such as responsibility, respect, love and forgiveness permeate all that we do.

Our curriculum provides children with the opportunity to:

** Learn to value others, their views, cultures and beliefs*

** Celebrate the uniqueness of everyone, treating everyone with care and respect*

We will provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all our children.

This will be based on the principle that literacy and numeracy underpin everything we do.

Whilst the curriculum is planned and organised in separate subjects, teachers make best use of links between subjects.

Effective links enable children to apply the knowledge and skills learned in one subject to others.

We bring together complimentary aspects of subjects in a thematic approach to provide greater coherence to learning.

Where a thematic approach is used the number of subjects is no more than three or four, and the links between them are strong.

Some aspects of some subjects will be taught in discrete units.

We have high expectations and give learners confidence that they can succeed.

We establish what learners already know and build on it.

We structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging and enjoyable.

We actively promote independent learning

We inspire learning through passion for the subject.

We make individuals partners in their learning.

We develop learning skills and personal qualities.

Everyone in school is a learner.

We follow, as often as possible, a theme-based approach to learning, in the belief that children learn best when logical connections are made between different aspects of their work. The school also implements the National Primary Strategy which provides detailed frameworks for the teaching of literacy and numeracy in particular.

We believe passionately in giving the children ownership of their learning. We support our children in becoming 'aspirational' - aiming high - in order to make the most of their learning opportunities. St. Thomas C.E. Primary School believes in an active partnership between school, pupil and home.

Teaching and Learning is matched to pupils preferred learning styles, is differentiated to match ability and makes the most of our developing provision in Computing to support this.

English and Literacy

We are committed to developing literacy skills through uniting the important skills of **reading and writing**. We teach children to read initially by a synthetic phonics approach (Letters and Sounds) supplemented by a variety of means as children's skills develop. The children have the opportunity to select from a wide range of good quality reading books, from a well-stocked library in both Key Stages.

The development of early reading and writing skills is a school focus and children's progress in reading and writing is carefully monitored throughout the school. A variety of opportunities are provided across the curriculum for children to develop their writing skills. For example, writing reports, stories, poems, notes, plays, lists and diaries and a creative room to promote writing across the curriculum.

To help children progress in their learning and understand what they need to do to improve, they have individual targets each half term, which are shared with parents.

Children are provided with regular opportunities to develop the essential skills of **speaking and listening**. This is done through discussion, drama and specific listening activities in pairs, groups and as a class. Good oral work enhances pupils' understanding of language in both oral and written forms.

From Foundation Stage, children are taught letter formation and joins following our **handwriting** scheme, which enables children to develop an independent, mature style of writing. Good presentation is expected at all times and displaying children's work is an integral part of this process. Ultimately we want each child to develop a fluent, legible and attractive style of handwriting.

Mathematics / Numeracy

Our aim is to develop children into confident mathematicians who are able to use mathematics as a tool in a wide range of activities both in and out of school.

Throughout the school the children are involved in mathematical activities based on the requirements of the National Curriculum and the guidelines set out in the National Numeracy Strategy.

A high priority is given to teaching children mental strategies to calculate independently. They partake in problem solving activities and use both basic and more advanced numeracy skills as they move through the school. The use of calculators and computers is vital to the children's learning in some areas of mathematics, therefore children have opportunities to explore and use these teaching resources. The children are given many opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of mathematics through practical experiences in the classroom.

Science

Science teaching follows the Curriculum 2014 guidelines through a topic approach, providing a broad, relevant science curriculum for all the children. We teach the children a balance between knowledge and investigational skills. Active engagement in learning is encouraged and children often work co-operatively, communicating scientific ideas to each other. Basic scientific concepts are developed with the aim of helping children understand their world and encouraging them to develop a sense of responsibility towards it. Pupils are encouraged to combine interest and curiosity with a responsible attitude towards health and safety, as well as respect for living things and the physical environment. Scientific ideas are applied to real life problems including those that require aspects of design and technology to solve them.

Geography

We teach geography throughout topic-based curriculum. The children are taught to use maps, atlases, globes and compasses. We endeavour to extend children's interest, knowledge and understanding of people and places both near and far. The infant children are involved in local investigations such as shopping surveys or looking at historical buildings using a simple map. Carefully planned visits are arranged for all children to study places outside the local area. Children are encouraged to think deeply about the environment in which they live and the scarce resources that the Earth provides and upon which all life depends.

History

We teach history throughout topic-based curriculum. We encourage our children to find out about the past by looking at evidence and considering informed opinion by using original sources. We use the locality, with its rich history as a basis for a lot of our work.

We aim to bring history to life and to instil a desire to find out about our predecessors. We organise a number of visits to sites of interest and have a wide range of historical artefacts that we use with the children. We help our children to understand that history means everything that has happened in the past, and also our actual record of what has happened.

Computing

We teach Computing through out topic-based curriculum, with skills, knowledge and understanding that the children need if they are to continue life long learning and living in our fast changing world. We employ a wide selection of software including word processing; data handling, LOGO, graphics and simulation packages, which help children, acquire these necessary skills.

Computing is an important tool for teaching and learning across all other subject areas. We endeavour to help pupils see Computing as a natural tool for research, analysis and presentation. We have a Computing system set up in 2011,

The school is well equipped with computers, interactive whiteboards in every classroom and data projectors but is always seeking to develop its resources.

Technology

We teach technology throughout topic-based curriculum. Design and Technology encourages the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in a practically based subject. Pupils are taught to develop, plan and communicate ideas. They work with tools, equipment, materials and components to make quality products. Upon completion of their task, they evaluate the processes and products.

In Key Stage 1 pupils learn how to think imaginatively and talk about what they like and dislike when designing and making. They build on their early childhood experiences of investigating objects around them. They explore how familiar things work and talk about, draw and model their ideas. They learn how to design and make safely and start to use *COMPUTING* as part of their designing and making.

In Key Stage 2 pupils work on their own and as part of a team on a range of designing and making activities. They think about what products are used for and the needs of the people who use them. They plan what has to be done and identify what works well and what could be improved in their own and other people's designs. They draw on their knowledge and understanding from other areas of the curriculum and use computers in a range of ways.

Modern Foreign Languages

In years 1 and 2, we teach the children beginners French.

In years 3 and 4, we introduce children to French..

In years 5 and 6, we continue with the French teaching through drama and video sessions.

Music

There are three main strands to music - singing, listening and playing. Children are taught a wide repertory of songs appropriate to their age group. These include hymns, traditional songs from other lands and cultures and songs from former times as well as modern songs.

Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of the different effects of instruments used in music, as well as to give a thoughtful and sensitive response to recorded music.

Children are taught how to use pitched and unpitched percussion instruments. They are taught to recognise and discriminate between the various elements of music such as pitch and rhythm.

Additional Small Group Music Tuition

We have access to specialist music teachers from the Wigan Music Service who takes small groups of children for individual and group sessions.

Art & Design

We teach art through out topic-based curriculum Art for most children is a natural form of expression and a source of great pleasure. We aim to increase confidence and competence in the use of different media, such as pencil, charcoal, paint, collage, inks, textiles and clay. We promote the necessary skills for our children to develop their natural ability to be expressive and creative and we aim to instil pride by achieving finished work that is of a high standard.

Physical Education

Our sporting aims are to provide children with a balanced range of activities and the opportunity to develop these in more specialist clubs. Each week our children work on at least one area of the physical curriculum.

Gymnastics and dance both take place in the Hall and involve all the children following various themes. Through dance and movement, they learn how to express themselves whilst being able to work at their own level. Whereas gymnastics, involves learning how to use equipment safely and acquire, develop and gain new skills. Games, outdoors and adventurous activities take place outside and children learn a variety of skills that are developed into small games and team building situations.

Children in years 1,2 and 3 have a period of time each year when they learn swimming, which takes place at the local swimming pool.

After school clubs offer: Tag Rugby (Yr3 onwards), Drama and Choir. We are constantly looking to expand these after school activities.

Religious Education and Collective Worship

At St. Thomas C of E Primary School, children are taught to understand and respect the importance of religious beliefs in the world around them. We encourage children to use and develop their skills in RE and to participate in critical thinking. We aim to ensure that the RE curriculum is challenging, dynamic and relevant to pupils of all ages. In the Foundation Stage, RE is taught through topics based upon children's own lives and their own experiences. During Key Stage 1, the study of Christianity is introduced and aspects of Judaism and Islam are taught. There is also consideration for non-religious beliefs. In Key Stage 2, the study of Christianity is developed and religious beliefs within Hinduism, Judaism and Islam are explored.

Collective Worship

As a church school, collective worship at St. Thomas Primary is an integral part of school life. It creates, nurtures and sustains a sense of community and creates an opportunity to bring to life the core values of the school and local area. Each week we focus on one worship theme, allowing us to come together, celebrate children's achievements and provide an opportunity for pupils to reflect. Our close relationship with St. Thomas Church provides children with another regular link to the Christian faith. Pupils are involved in various services at the church throughout the year and the vicar leads assemblies for both key stages and Communion Services for Y5 and Y6 both in church and in school.

PSHCE

Personal, social, health, citizenship and economic (PSHCE) education is a carefully planned programme of learning opportunities and experiences that enable children and young people to grow and develop as individuals and as valuable members of families and of social and economic communities.

PSHCE education provides children and young people with knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive, fulfilled, capable and responsible lives. It inspires them to be enterprising and supports them in making effective transitions, positive learning and career choices and in managing their finances effectively. It gives children and young people the skills to reflect on and analyse their own values and equips them to face difficult and sometimes conflicting attitudes they may face in the future.

Opportunities for learning in PSHCE are split into six areas they are: Enjoy and Achieve, Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Relationships, Emotional Health and Positive Contribution.

Sex and Relationship Education

We follow our sex and relationship education policy which has been set up in accordance with Wigan LA and national support information. We use the living and growing resources which provided focused learning for all year groups covering all areas of sex and relationship education.

Drugs Education

The School has a scheme of work for the delivery of Drugs education that is cross-curricular.

Special Educational Needs

The curriculum is planned through a whole school approach to curriculum planning, taking into account progression and differentiation. The work for some children is supported by Basic Entitlement and IEPs which teachers use as part of their daily planning. Additional support and intervention is provided for identified groups and individuals. Children with statements of special education needs are supported in accordance with their statements.

Curriculum enhancement

The curriculum is enhanced by using visits and speakers whenever possible. We aim that each class should have one of these enhanced opportunities each half term.

Each year there is the opportunity for the children to enjoy some form of theatre experience.

There are opportunities for the children to take responsibilities within their class and the whole school. Each class has children who have monitor roles and across the whole school children can be School Councillors, House Captains, or Play leaders depending on their year group.