

**St. John's R.C. JMI School**

**Teaching and Learning Policy**

**Mission Statement**

The Mission of St. John's School is:

- to educate each child entrusted to our care to their full potential.
- to sustain and develop the love and practice of our Catholic Faith.
- to demonstrate the presence of Christ in the community.

**1. Introduction:**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for teaching and learning at St. John's School.

The policy reflects the beliefs of the governors and the staff. It was developed during the Autumn and Spring terms 1995/96, as a result of discussion and consultation between staff, governors and parents. This document was approved at the meeting of the Governors' Curriculum Sub Committee held on 26th November 1996.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all members of the St. John's School Community.

**2. Purpose:**

Education is the purpose of our school. We offer a curriculum which is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the Education Reform Act relating to Religious Education, Collective Worship and The National Curriculum.

This Teaching and Learning policy lays the foundations for the whole curriculum, both formal and informal and, along with our Mission Statement and Aims, forms the context in which all other policy statements should be read. It is written for the benefit of all members of the school community to ensure that all are aware of the fundamental principles underpinning the work of the school.

**3. Aims & Principles:**

Our aims for teaching and learning are that all children will:

- achieve their potential in terms of spiritual awareness, academic achievement and aesthetic appreciation.
- be tolerant and understanding with respect for the rights, views and property of others.
- develop a responsible and independent attitude towards work and towards their roles in society.

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We see teaching and learning as a process of co-operative team work and welcome and encourage the involvement of parents and others in the community.

### 4. Beliefs:

We believe that effective learning takes place when:

- pupils feel valued as individuals and are actively involved in the learning process.
- classroom relationships are built on mutual tolerance and respect
- pupils are encouraged by their teachers and are given opportunities to enjoy a genuine sense of achievement.
- there is a common awareness that high standards of self discipline and order are expected.
- the environment in which pupils and teachers are working is stimulating, comfortable and safe.
- lessons are well prepared with tasks and resources appropriate to pupils learning needs.
- teachers are respected.

### 5. Responsibilities:

All members of St. John's community (teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, pupils, governors and visitors) are expected to work towards the school's aims by:

- valuing children as individuals and respecting their right to education in a caring, secure environment.
- fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community.
- providing a well ordered environment in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations.
- offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life.
- encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviour and work.
- working as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.

Teachers work towards the school's aims by:

- providing a stimulating programme of study ensuring that the teaching styles, resources and tools pupils encounter are varied and challenging, offering opportunities for the highest standard of personal achievement by pupils across the ability range.
- providing lessons which are prepared, structured and paced to make effective use of the time available.
- ensuring, through assessment and accurate record keeping, that learning is progressive and continuous
- ensuring that pupils have a clear and common understanding of the high expectations held of them individually, according to their ability and aptitude and of the targets to which they are working.
- giving pupils opportunities to review and reflect upon their progress and, where possible, to involve them in planning the next steps in their learning.
- maintaining an up to date knowledge of the curriculum they are delivering.
- establishing links with the local community and other schools to prepare pupils for the next steps in their education.

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- communicating with parents and keeping them informed of children's progress, topics to be studied and curriculum developments.

**Pupils work towards the school's aims by:**

- respecting themselves and each other as members of God's family.
- respecting and cooperating with each other in the classroom and playground.
- respecting school equipment, supplies and furniture.
- being positive and encouraging to other pupils.
- participating fully in school masses and liturgical services.
- being kind and respectful towards all staff and visitors.
- respecting other pupils' school materials and personal property.
- using appropriate language.
- attending school regularly.
- being punctual and ready to begin lessons on time.
- being organised bringing necessary kit, taking letters home promptly, returning reading books regularly.
- making full use of all the opportunities with which they are presented.

**Parents work towards the school's aims by:**

- ensuring that their children attend school in good health, regularly and punctually.
- ensuring that children arrive at school with the correct uniform and equipment.
- providing support for discipline within the school and the teacher's role.
- being realistic about their children's abilities and offering encouragement and praise.
- participating in discussions concerning their child's progress and attainments.
- giving due importance to homework, hearing reading, and assisting in learning of tables and spellings.
- allowing their children to take increasing responsibility as they progress through the school.
- where time allows using their own talents in developing the school community by assisting in class, supporting our PTFA at functions and supporting other school initiatives.
- keeping the staff informed of any changes in the child's circumstances which may affect their learning.

### Monitoring

The headteacher will monitor the implementation of the policy and will report to the Governors in accordance with agreed procedures.

**1. Strategies for Teaching and Learning**

Our curriculum is organised in a combination of cross curricular topics and discrete subject teaching.

Mathematics, physical education and some language development activities are taught outside the topic framework.

A programme of topics in line with our curriculum overview is followed throughout the school. (see Staff Handbook for details).

Classes are organised by age, wherever possible single age year groups are taught in each class. Where the numbers do not permit this, vertical grouping of not more than two age groups is used. With the exception of children in year 1, children do not usually change class during the year.

- Within each class whole class teaching, group work and individual work are used where and when appropriate.
- Groups are usually of mixed ability although matched ability sets may be used in maths, and for some aspects of language and science
- Discussion is encouraged where appropriate, although some periods of the day are set aside for quiet/silent work.

All teachers teach all subjects to their classes, seeking the advice and support of subject coordinators where necessary. Individual instrumental tuition is provided by teachers employed by the Hertfordshire Music Service.

Classroom helpers are available in the form of paid classroom assistants and volunteer helpers. As appropriate and at the discretion of the classteacher and headteacher helpers assist:

- in the classroom working with small groups or individuals, supervising groupwork, art and craft, I.T. and listening to readers.
- in sports activities,
- on outings and visits
- by providing other help, such as developing contacts with local groups and places of interest.
- secondary school pupils and FE students on work experience placements are accepted into school and certain standards of dress and conduct are expected.

Teachers draw up their own programmes of study for their class making reference to the national curriculum, our curriculum overview and our policies and schemes of work. Commercial schemes of work are used where appropriate to support this, particularly in the teaching of maths, english and history.

Pupils with special educational needs are identified and supported in line with our special needs policy and the Code of Practice.

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As a community we consider homework to be a valuable element of the teaching and learning process therefore:

- children are encouraged to work at home on a regular basis
- it is expected that all children will read at home and share books with their parents (see 'Reading Together at St. John's').
- children will have multiplication tables and spellings to learn at home.
- children who have made insufficient effort during class time may be asked to complete work at home.
- extra homework tasks will be given to children as they progress through key stage 2 to help them prepare for life in secondary school.
- further practice in basic skills may be set at the class teacher's discretion.
- homework is monitored by being checked and marked by teachers. Parents are also asked to monitor their children's homework.

Excellence in achievement/effort is celebrated by:

- each child is given an opportunity to have work of a high standard displayed at some time in the school year.
- sustained effort including drafting and reworking is encouraged to enhance standards.
- school events such as concerts and plays are seen as opportunities for all children to be involved and to make a contribution. Technicians are given as much praise and value as performers.
- pupils are encouraged to believe that any work to be displayed should represent the highest standards of their own personal effort and achievement.
- class teachers send particularly pleasing pieces of work to the headteacher, children are rewarded with a sticker.
- good work is shared at the Celebration assembly on Thursday each week.
- a variety of stars, stickers and stamps are used by class teachers.

### 2. Strategies for ensuring progression and continuity.

Planning is a process in which all teachers are involved , wherein

- the foundation for curricular planning will be the Whole School Development Plan, developed through a process of consultation between staff and governors.
- the cycle of topics to be drawn up by the staff will be carefully balanced to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum.
- schemes of work for individual subjects, will be developed by coordinators.
- work plans including detailed weekly/daily plans are drawn up by individual teachers for each half term and monitored by the headteacher and subject coordinators.
- regular staff meetings will be timetabled to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach and standards.

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Subject coordinators have a variety of roles. They

- take the lead in policy development and the production of schemes of work designed to ensure progression and continuity in their subject throughout the school.
- monitor progress in their subjects and advise the headteacher and Governors on action needed.
- organise and purchase central resources for their subjects within the budget and priorities identified in the School Development Plan.
- are expected to keep up to date through reading and attending relevant courses.
- support colleagues by advising on planning, resources and developments in their subject area.

Feedback to pupils about their own progress is achieved through the marking of work. Effective marking

- aims to help pupils develop, not merely find faults. Our teachers aim to use positive comments.
- identifies errors in pupils' work and provides constructive advice for improvement.
- is often done in the presence of the pupil and includes discussing the work
- is carried out promptly and provides feedback that results in action.
- is consistent within key stages, and carried out with discretion so that a child can assimilate a limited number of corrections at one time--this will vary according to the age and ability of the pupil.

Formative assessment is used to guide the progress of individual pupils. It involves identifying each child's progress in each area of the curriculum, determining what each child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Suitable tasks for assessment include:

- discussion between the pupil and teacher, either individually or in small groups, perhaps in the context of a practical task.
- use of short teacher devised tests relevant to the unit of work being studied.
- individual assignments.
- marking and monitoring of class work.
- teacher observation of the pupil particularly during practical tasks.

Cross Phase continuity is ensured by:

- links with the secondary schools which we feed.
- visits to secondary schools by year 6 pupils.
- transfer of pupil's Records of Achievement and Summative Assessment results.
- discussions between teachers both within the school and between the year 6 teacher and the secondary schools.

### 3. Strategies for Recording and Reporting

In line with our assessment policy records of progress kept for each child are:

- updated at least once a year by the class teachers and contain samples of pupils' work.
- examined by class teachers at the start of each academic year as they prepare for their new class.
- available for parents to view, providing statutory notice is given.
- monitored by the headteacher.

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Reporting to Parents is done on a termly basis through interviews and annually through a written report. Parents are made aware that:

- parent interviews may be held immediately after school and/or early evening.
- they may meet their child's teacher or the headteacher by appointment at any other time, to discuss particular concerns.
- parents of children that have been identified as having Special Educational Needs are invited to take part in their reviews.

### 4. Strategies for use of resources

Classroom resources are the responsibility of classroom teachers who ensure that;

- there is a range of appropriate, accessible and labeled resources available from which pupils can select materials suitable to the task in hand.
- all pupils know where resources are kept and the rules about their access and use.
- all children know what they must not touch for reasons of safety and privacy.
- children are encouraged to act independently in choosing, collecting and returning resources where appropriate.
- children and teachers work together to establish an attractive, welcoming and well organised environment promoting respect, care and value for all resources.

Central resources are generally the responsibility of the subject coordinators, each of whom is responsible for auditing and monitoring the use of resources. Budgets will be allocated to the subject coordinators in accordance with the School Development Plan. Stationery is ordered by the school secretary and stored centrally with free access for all staff.

Time is a resource that we value. To maximise its use

- in the early years children's time is tightly organised by the teachers.
- as children progress throughout the school they are expected to take greater control over their own learning, including their use of time within a framework specified by the class teacher.
- time wasting is reduced by ensuring that tasks are made specific and clearly defined.
- children are made aware of the procedure to follow at the start of a session.
- on entering the classroom children are encouraged to gather on the carpet in preparation for the next lesson, or to engage in useful activities.
- all children know what to do between the end of an activity and the end of a session.

I.T. is a major resource which is used across the curriculum. It has been identified in the School Development Plan as one of the areas to be upgraded over the next four years.

The Library is a valued resource, children are encouraged to use it as a source of information and to treat its contents with respect.

Health and Safety issues are the responsibility of all who work in the school..

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