

**St. James C.E. Primary School, Handsworth**  
**Governing Body's Curriculum Statement**  
**January 2017**

**Our aims:**

- To provide our children and teaching staff with a vibrant and effective learning experience.
- To fully engage children in the learning process.
- To provide children with the knowledge, skills and abilities they require to become successful learners and positive, successful citizens.
- To develop in our children the attitudes and beliefs that will help them to become confident human beings with a positive contribution to make and the ability to make appropriate life decisions.
- To enable our children to achieve / exceed the national standards at key points in their learning careers.
- To ensure that our children leave at the age of eleven ready and able to take full advantage of secondary education.

In drawing up this statement, the Governing Body has taken account of:

- Our roles as a voluntary controlled Church of England school (See "St. James as a Church of England School in a Multi-faith Community").
- The school's context identified through collective audit including the faiths, cultures and languages of our school and pupil and community background; pupil baseline attainment; internal assessment data; outcomes of our most
- The key focus areas coming out of our School Self Evaluation (including RAISEonline, most recent Ofsted inspection and SIAS Report.
- National Curriculum Programmes of Study 2014.
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012
- The New Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for R.E. 2012 - predominantly Christian model.
- Responding to DfE drives to promote:
  - Phonics through Letters & Sounds
  - A sharper focus on Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar
  - Promoting fundamental British Values
- Assessment for Learning strategies.

**The curriculum of St James School comprises:**

**The formal curriculum**

Our formal curriculum is essentially that which is prescribed, and is defined by guidance given in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012, the National Curriculum (2014), following the programmes of study (for English, Mathematics, Science, Design and Technology, Information and Communication Technology, History, Geography, Art and Design, Music, Physical Education and Modern Foreign Language in KS2), and the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for R.E.

The curriculum is given additional structure through subject leader planning and schemes are used to strengthen teaching in areas such as science by using the support of 'Snap Science'.

It is our task at St. James to ensure that this formal curriculum provides the basis for a wonderful, enlivening learning experience, and for the achievement of excellent standards of attainment.

Effective delivery of the formal curriculum is based on the foundation of well embedded assessment for learning strategies.

### **The informal or hidden curriculum**

The informal curriculum is much more the style and flavour of what we teach and how we teach it and gives very strong messages to our children.

- As a Church of England School, we are committed to positively valuing our community and our individual children. The cultures, faiths, languages and individual qualities of our children all provide opportunities to develop positive valuing. Topic areas used as contexts for learning have been chosen based on children's heritages e.g. Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jnr, etc. In certain subjects, such as History and Geography, the prescribed requirements of areas of study have been modified to more closely reflect the children's experience in order to more fully engage them in the curriculum.  
(See Curriculum Map)
- Similarly we are clear that we have an important role in developing children's spiritual understanding of themselves, other people, the community we live in, and our world. We will, therefore, identify opportunities to plan for exploration of spirituality and belief in lessons and to create moments during assemblies for collective worship to share a sense of spirituality but even more importantly we must share a frame of mind in which such opportunities will be built upon as they arise spontaneously. (See Collective Worship Policy and records)
- Each child must have a secure sense of belonging in the school and being able to effectively access learning through the curriculum provided. In developing and delivering the curriculum we must ensure that all children are given clear messages about being included and none that lead them to believe that they are not. We need to give positive messages regarding issues of race, faith, language, gender, socio-economic status, family circumstances (e.g. single parents, traveller families, refugee families etc.), disability, academic ability, personality traits (e.g. introvert, anxiety etc. furthermore, through our curriculum, we must seek to enhance children's perceptions of themselves as people and as learners and actively draw children into engaging with and effectively accessing it. (See Inclusion Policy)
- Children must be provided with strong, clear guidance in how to live their lives. The curriculum must therefore provide opportunities for the teaching and exploration of social and moral issues.  
This can be done explicitly through communication of expectations, timetabled lessons and assemblies but must also be woven through the fabric of the curriculum so that texts in literacy, exploration of topics in history or how we play competitive games in P.E. are all forums for the communication of messages about how we live our lives.

Key qualities, which will be nurtured, are:

- ❖ Imagination and curiosity
- ❖ The ability to work co-operatively and independently;
- ❖ Personal growth (self discipline, self-esteem, desire to learn);
- ❖ Social responsibility and respect.
- ❖ Aspirations for pupils to use self assessment.
- ❖ 12 Key Aspects for Learning

Enquiry	Problem solving	Reasoning	Creative thinking
Information processing	Evaluation	Self-awareness	Managing feeling
Social skills	Communication	Motivation	Empathy

The collective mindset that results from this informal curriculum is the ethos of our school and it breathes life and meaning into the formal elements of the curriculum.

### **Balancing the drive for raised attainment with breadth in the curriculum:**

A key governing body decision must be the identification of priorities in terms of how much teaching and learning time is devoted to raising standards of attainment in the reported “core” subjects of English, mathematics and science and how much is set aside for the teaching of the other, non-reported “foundation” subjects.

Audit of in-school data at St James and end of Key Stage results indicates that:

- On entry to Reception children’s development is frequently below the developmental band matched to their age requiring us to secure better than average progress in order to ensure that our children secure the expected standard at the end of each key stage.
- We find it necessary to allocate 60-70% of our teaching time to core subjects. This results in the considerable challenge of achieving breadth in the other subjects.

At St James, we endeavour to meet this challenge by:

- Providing sufficient time for the teaching of the core skills of speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy through a more flexible and cross curricular approach.
- Developing and embedding Key Skills through the R.E. and foundation curriculum.
- Creating strong links between learning in the foundation subjects and the core subjects by identifying:
  - 1) Contexts from topics being taught in the foundation subjects in which to:
    - a. Explore and create texts;
    - b. Explore mathematical concepts and practice problem solving (e.g. using data from weather studies, results from scientific investigations, appropriate historic timelines).
  - 2) Opportunities in the teaching of topics/ themes in the foundation subjects for children apply and linking learning from English and mathematics.
  - 3) Situations in which the use of ICT will enhance teaching and learning.

### **Curriculum planning and delivery**

All of the formal curriculum will be taught through schemes of work devised by the school, based on Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation

Stage 2012 and following the Programmes of Study for the 2014 National Curriculum from Year 1.

It will:

- Make best use of teaching and learning time through carefully thought out short term plans that maximise linkage of learning across the curriculum and secure core skills;
- Comply with statutory orders;
- Take account of child development patterns and variation in ability;
- Celebrate our children's faith, cultural, linguistic and heritage backgrounds;
- Create opportunities for children's spiritual, moral and social development;
- Show continuity and progression by revisiting National Curriculum Programmes of Study for expected standards for each year group;
- Balance practical, formal and aesthetic activities and presentation;
- Accommodate the variety of learning styles;
- Stress the application of learning in "real" contexts;
- Include embedded ICT links across the curriculum.

A crucial element in planning the curriculum is the need to enhance pupils experience in a context in which many children's experience of the wider world is limited and their language base from which to discuss it is similarly undeveloped. In addressing this need, the notion of a vibrant curriculum, which will engage, motivate and support the children, becomes especially important. This vibrancy will be created through:

- Development of the school site as a learning environment;
- The nurture of musical activities across the school with enrichment activities depending on funding;
- Educational visits to museums, art galleries, local shops, localities, historic sites, enrichment activities;
- A cycle of Religious Educational visits;
- Visits by "experts and enthusiasts" to lead workshops and assemblies e.g. musicians, authors, peripatetic teachers, artists, theatre groups etc.
- Special days & themed weeks e.g. our Black History Celebration, Children in Need, Comic Relief, Curriculum Challenges (Great things about Living in Britain, Teacher's passions, World War 1)
- Celebration of the main festivals relevant to cultural groups in the school;
- School based clubs;
- Resources, which positively reflect children's backgrounds and interests and enable effective teaching and learning;
- Use of ICT to extend the resource base available to teaching staff and pupils.

Teaching of the St. James Curriculum is described fully in our Teaching Learning Policy but in short it will be through a combination of separate subject teaching, linked subject teaching through a "topic" based approach, careful identification of cross-curricular linkages and "integrated day" strategies and special days.

Planning of curriculum delivery is formalised in our Medium Term Planning in which schemes of work are drawn up to identify learning objectives, subject

content, appropriate activities, National Curriculum references, cross curricular linkages and effective Assessment for Learning.

For reading, writing and mathematics, schemes are drawn up by the class teacher following the expectations set in the National Curriculum. For the remainder of the curriculum, the schemes are drawn up by the subject leaders, based on their vision and understanding of how their subject can be best delivered across the school.

### **Providing for pupils of differing needs and abilities**

The curriculum provided must cater for pupils meeting it from widely differing starting points. We must endeavour to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of each one of our children and enable them to maximise their learning potential.

Thinking narrowly, it is clear that we must tailor delivery of our curriculum to meet the needs of:

- Pupils learning English as an additional language, including those who are newly arrived to Britain with no prior experience of learning in English;
- Pupils in each year group with a wide range of ability and prior experience;
- Pupils with Special Education Needs, either general or very specific;
- Pupils experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties;
- Disaffected and disengaged groups;
- Pupils of exceptional / higher ability, who we have identified as our most able and talented.

Delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of the disaffected and disengaged groups, will be supported by:

- Differentiated planning;
- Identification of appropriate Learning Objectives for groups / individuals
- Deployment of staff experience in supporting EAL pupils, where possible;
- Providing bi-lingual support; where possible;
- Using volunteer, parent, external agency and pupil tutor support to enhance individual and group access;
- Implementation of an agreed SEN policy. (See SEN Policy)

Related policies:

• Vision Statement	• Teaching and Learning	• Time tabling
• Church School	• Equal Opportunities	• Inclusion
• Collective Worship	• SEN	• Spirituality
• Race Equality	• PPA	• Assessment Policy

Last Reviewed & Updated January 2017