	St Elizabeth's Catholic Voluntary Academy	Issue Number 1
	Teaching and Learning Policy	Issued: October 2023 Review: September 2024

Our Mission Statement and Guiding Rationale

"Be like Jesus. Be your best. Be Safe. Be Caring."

St. Elizabeth's Catholic Academy is a caring, Catholic school community, where we celebrate that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. Here, individuals are helped to achieve their full potential, through experiences and opportunities that nurture the whole person. These experiences include daily high-quality teaching and learning and a curriculum that is not only broad and balanced but ambitious – allowing pupils to develop depth of knowledge and foster a life-long love of learning. Pupils are empowered to become caring individuals, capable of independent thought, through links to the world around us and the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Aims of the Policy

At St. Elizabeth's Catholic Academy, we are committed to high-quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all pupils. All staff and governors have been consulted in developing this policy, which summarises expectations and common working practices. The policy reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice to which the school aspires. It also reflects the aims and objectives of the school and supports its vision.

Learning is the purpose of the whole school and is a shared commitment. At St. Elizabeth's Catholic Academy, we recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, the community, diocese, and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit all should work closely together to support the process of learning.

Working in partnership, we aim to:

- Provide a Christ-centred, supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community.
- Recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress, attain the highest personal achievements and enable them to be their best and fulfil their potential.
- Ensure children can develop as literate, numerate and technologically competent individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum.
- Provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding.

- Provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils.
- Develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes.
- Encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self - esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being.
- Develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our subject policies.

Curriculum Intent Statement

Basic Principles

- At St Elizabeth's we define learning as a change to long-term memory.
- Our aims ensure that our pupils experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge.

Curriculum Intent model

1. Curriculum drivers shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our students, our beliefs about high-quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our students appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities. Our curriculum drivers are: community, spirituality, culture, democracy and possibilities.
2. Cultural capital gives our students the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.
3. Curriculum breadth is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for students to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.
4. Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics and 'curriculum themes'. Subject topics are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied and help to ensure curriculum breadth.
5. Curriculum themes organise our curriculum and tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, students return to the same concepts over and over and gradually build understanding of them.
6. 'Golden Threads' are categories of knowledge specific to each subject discipline. They also support pupils to relate each subject topic to previously studied topics and to form strong meaningful schema.
7. For each of the curriculum themes, learning is planned by year group, each of which includes the procedural knowledge and golden threads in each subject, giving pupils a way of expressing their understanding of the curriculum.
8. Cognitive science tell us that working memory is limited and that cognitive load is too high if students are rushed through content. This limits the acquisition of long-term memory. Cognitive science also tells us that in order for students to become creative

thinkers, or have a greater depth of understanding, they must first master the basics, which takes time.

9. Within each year group, pupils gradually progress in their procedural fluency and semantic strength through three cognitive domains: Remembering, Knowing and Reasoning. The goal for students is to display sustained mastery at the 'knowing' stage of understanding by the end of each milestone and for the higher-attainers to have a greater depth of understanding at the 'reasoning' stage.

10. As part of our progression model, we use a different pedagogical style in each of the cognitive domains of remembering, knowing and reasoning. This is based on the research of Sweller, Kirschner and Rosenshine who recommend direct instruction in the early stages of learning and discovery-based approaches later. We use direct instruction in the remembering domain and problem-based discovery in the reasoning domain. This is called the reversal effect.

11. As part of our progression model, we design and use tasks using the cognitive domain driver words to portray progress through the curriculum and show our curriculum expectations.

Diagram of Content Model
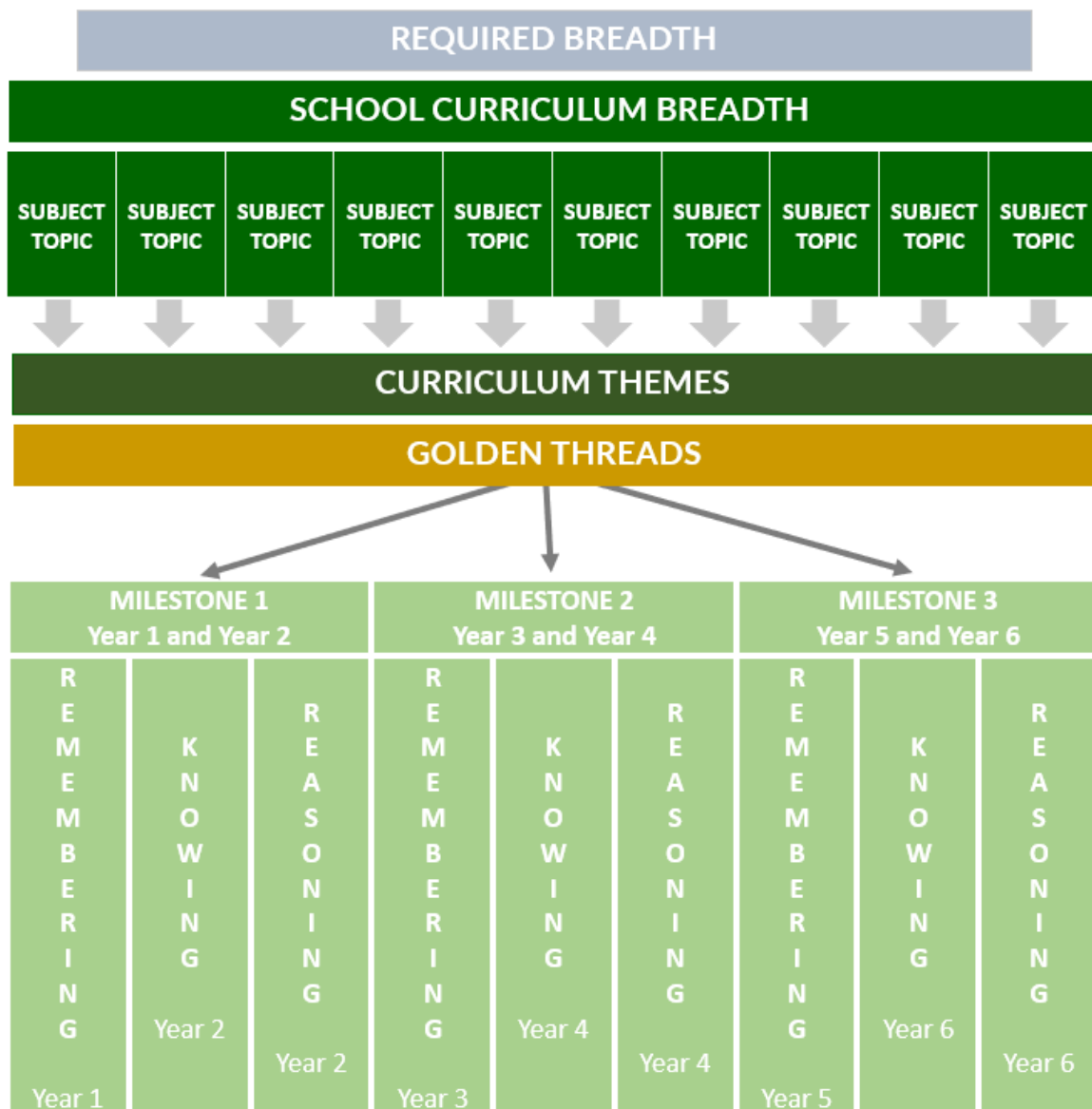
Implementation

1. Our curriculum design is based on evidence from cognitive science; the main principles that underpin it are:

    1.1. Learning is most effective with spaced repetition.

    1.2. Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength.

2. In addition to these principles, we also understand that learning is invisible in the short-term and that sustained mastery takes time.

3. Our content is subject specific. We make intra-curricular links to strengthen schema.

4. Continuous provision, in the form of daily routines, replaces the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum and, in other cases, provides retrieval practice for previously learned content.

Impact

1. Because learning is a change to long-term memory, it is impossible to see impact in the short term.

2. We do, however, use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practise. This means that:

    2.1. We look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long-term.

3. We use comparative judgment in two ways: in the tasks we set and in comparing a pupil's work over time.

4. We use lesson observations or visits to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.

Ethos

The ethos and climate for learning underpins the agreed aims of the school. In the course of their daily work, the staff will contribute to the development of this ethos through:

- Providing a calm and effective working environment, in which each child can produce his or her best work.
- Providing a welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered.
- Providing positive role models.
- Providing a fair and disciplined environment, in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- Effective management of their professional time.
- Developing links with all stakeholders and the wider community.
- Valuing and celebrating pupils' success and achievements.
- Reviewing personal and professional development in order to ensure a high level of professional expertise.
- Promoting our Franciscan values, character traits and learning skills

Franciscan Values	Character Traits	Learning Skills
Joy	Try new things	Original ideas
Forgiveness	Push yourself	Goes for gold
Faith	Improve/Work hard	Remembers and reflects
Respect	Concentrate	Doesn't give up
Service	Understand others	Not alone
Peace	Imagine	Asks good questions
Stewardship		

Curriculum Planning

At St. Elizabeth's Catholic Academy, we are committed to following the programmes of study as required by the National Curriculum 2014. A cycle of National Curriculum Programmes of Study is drawn up by the curriculum lead and subject lead and is carefully balanced to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum, PSHE, RSE and RE. We teach all curriculum subjects individually but make intra-curricular links to strengthen schema using the golden threads. We also make use of subject specialist teachers for PE, Music, Art and DT. Regular staff meetings are used to discuss various aspects of the curriculum and ensure consistency of approach and standards.

Medium Term Planning takes place on a half termly or termly basis as appropriate, with reference to the National Curriculum 2014, Early Years Foundation Stage and the Whole School Long Term Curriculum Plan. Termly/half-termly plans and weekly plans for Talk for Reading (KS2), Talk for Writing and Maths are made available for subject leads.

Subject Leaders

Subject leaders have a variety of roles. These include:

- Taking the lead in policy development and quality-assuring knowledge organisers, resources and subject plans throughout the school;
- Supporting colleagues in their development and implementation of knowledge organisers, resources and subject plans and in assessment and record-keeping activities;
- Monitoring progress in their subjects and advising the Senior Leadership Team on future priorities;
- Taking responsibility for the purchase and organisation of central resources for their subjects;
- Using release time to support colleagues;
- Keeping up-to-date through research and continuing professional development and disseminating this with staff.

Organisation

The learning environment will be managed in such a way as to facilitate different styles of learning.

Opportunities will be made for:

- Whole class teaching
- Group work, organised according to appropriate criteria (i.e. attainment, mixed attainment, friendship, etc)
- One-to-one teaching
- Conferencing
- Collaborative learning in pairs or groups
- Independent learning

All areas of the learning environment will be planned for, including, where appropriate, the outside areas, in order to ensure opportunities for a range of practical activities, which will develop appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

The classroom will be organised to facilitate learning and the development of independence. For example:

- Resources in each area will be grouped according to curriculum subject.
- Book corners will be comfortable and attractive.
- Labels and posters should be used wherever possible/appropriate and reflect the inclusive nature of the school.
- Areas for imaginative play will change regularly, in order to give opportunities for a range of play and role-play which will contribute to learning in a purposeful manner.
- Pupils will be involved in the maintenance and care of all equipment and resources.
- Classrooms provide a stimulating and purposeful learning environment, including thought-provoking and stimulating displays.

Adaptations and Scaffolding

So that we always have the highest possible expectations of individual learners and so they can demonstrate what they can do, understand and achieve, teachers will adapt the curriculum according to individual needs through:

- Pace
- Challenge
- Mastery
- Content
- Task

- Relevance
- Resources
- Extension
- Autonomy
- Teacher/adult support

Adapted tasks will be detailed in planning and evident within lessons. All groups of pupils have access to quality-first teaching, through the five key principles:

- Flexible grouping
- Cognitive and metacognitive strategies
- Explicit instruction
- Using technology to support
- Scaffolding

Extra support is given in the classroom by teaching assistants. Additionally, advice is sought from relevant external support agencies when and where the need demands it. (See Special Educational Needs Policy)

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Regular formative assessments are made of pupils' work and responses in order to establish the level of attainment and progress and to inform future planning. 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 should be the next stage in his/her learning. Live marking and feedback is given in all lessons and feedback sessions are used to review the previous lesson's learning. Pupils respond to feedback and address misconceptions using purple pen.

Formal summative assessment is carried out at the end of each National Curriculum Key Stage (i.e. in Years 2 and 6) through the use of SATs and teacher assessment. Phonics is tested in Year 1 and re-tested where necessary in Year 2. Termly assessments are used in Reading, Writing and Maths across the school, this includes the use of testing, low-stakes quizzes, 'hot task' activities, analysis of pupils' work and observation. Initial assessment is used in Reception/Early Years within three weeks of starting school and Foundation Stage Profiles are maintained. All results and information from assessments are analysed and used to inform future planning. (See Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy)