



ST MARY'S SCHOOL HAMPSTEAD

Curriculum POLICY

September 2024

Reviewed September 2024
Next Review Date: September 2025

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's School seeks to provide an outstanding education firmly founded on the Catholic Faith.

Spiritual and moral principles are nurtured in a way that is reflected in daily life.

Within a happy and caring environment and based on the recognition of the dignity and worth of each child, where each child is valued and high standards are expected. Intellectual development is emphasised and fostered along with the pursuit of academic excellence to achieve individual potential and spiritual development.

St Mary's values the unique contribution of every child within the school community.

St Mary's is inclusive and welcomes girls from all communities and faith backgrounds, or none, and believes that all benefit from the school's values.

St Mary's aims to encourage an active partnership between home, school, parish and the wider community.

CURRICULUM POLICY

At St Mary's School, Hampstead, we provide a full-time supervised education for girls from Rising 3s to the end of Year 6.

We provide experience for pupils in linguistics, including French; mathematical skills and their application; scientific and technological capability, including design, computing and digital literacy within our STEAM framework (please refer to the separate STEAM policy); human and social, physical, creative education and RE.

We provide subject matter appropriate for the ages and aptitudes of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan. Schemes of work are in place to ensure continuity and progression.

The curriculum is designed to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. As a school, we encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act(a).

Pupils will acquire skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum as detailed in our subject policies.

Personal, social, health (both physical and mental), citizenship and economic education, which reflect our school's aims and ethos, is integrated across the curriculum. Please refer to the PSHCEE (Growth) and RSE policies for further information on how the school addresses these aims.

All pupils, including those with special education needs (SEND), learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) or English as an additional language (EAL) will have the opportunity to learn and make progress. This is achieved through careful planning, including differentiation when necessary. Please refer to our separate SEND policy for more information.

Pupils will be well-prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British Society.

A BROAD AND BALANCED CURRICULUM

Although our remit is to prepare our pupils thoroughly for entrance to their chosen senior school, we believe that we are preparing our children, not only for this, but also for the life that lies beyond.

We regard these school years, from Rising 3s to 11 years, as forming the base on which our pupils will build their future education and their love of learning.

We therefore aim to give our pupils as broad and balanced an education as possible during their time with us; offering those in our care opportunities to develop their creativity, imagination, curiosity, analytical and thinking skills, self-confidence, co-operative skills and independence. We also offer the children an enrichment opportunity, coordinated by the Director of Pupil Progression.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also given strong emphasis and our mission statement underpins the delivery of the curriculum.

EYFS

The Early Years Foundation Stage, which underpins the curriculum in St Mary's Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception classes, is distinct in its identity. The curriculum, by which we mean the learning and development undertaken by every child in these year groups, is planned in accordance with The Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2023). The school provides a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills.

Under the guiding theme of Learning and Development there are three prime and four specific interconnected areas of learning:

Prime

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

Communication and Language

Specific

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

The prime areas are particularly crucial for helping children to thrive and develop good relationships with others, for building their aptitude and ability for learning and for igniting their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. All areas of learning are of equal importance as the children move through EYFS and depend on each other to provide a rounded approach to child development. Reference is also made to the non-statutory document Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024). This development is recorded through the use of both formative and summative assessment which provides an accurate and detailed insight into the progress made by each individual. Each child's attainment is assessed in the final term of Reception against the Early Learning Goals and is recorded on the EYFS profile. Observations made of each child in a variety of environments and learning situations ensure that an accurate recording of individual attainment is made.

The support children receive as they learn is personalised to meet their individual needs and to extend their talents. Careful and flexible planning between all the staff in contact with the children, based on the children's interests, ensures a wide, varied and effective curriculum is delivered. Subject specialist teachers work closely with class teachers to give an accurate picture of children's attainment in the prime and specific areas of the EYFS curriculum relevant to their subjects.

Please see our Early Years Policy.

KEY STAGE 1: YEARS 1 AND 2

Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum begins formally in Year 1. Class teachers are responsible for teaching English, Mathematics, Computing and Digital Literacy, History and Geography (within our Creative Curriculum), PSHCEE (Growth), RSE and RE in accordance with the National Curriculum (2014). We follow the Westminster Diocesan RE Scheme and 10% of teaching time is set aside for Religious Education activities. Subject specialist teachers teach Science within our STEAM framework (please refer to the separate STEAM policy), Music, PE, Art, Design and Technology and French.

KEY STAGE 2: YEARS 3 TO 6

The syllabus for English, Mathematics, Science (within the STEAM framework), PSHCEE (Growth) and RSE is planned in accordance with the National Curriculum (2014). This is supplemented with the requirements of the Common Entrance and senior school entrance examinations at 11+. The syllabus content and skills taught in Computing and Digital Literacy, History, Geography, Art and Design Technology, PE and Music are broadly in line with the National Curriculum. We teach a Creative Curriculum at St Mary's, with sessions allocated to teach around a topic or theme, which will encompass many subjects, especially History, Geography and Computing. RE is taught in accordance with the Westminster Diocesan Scheme and 10% of teaching time is allocated to Religious Education activities. French follows its own syllabus.

Specialist teachers continue to play an important role in providing a quality education for all our pupils.

PSHCEE (Growth)/RSE

PSHCEE (Growth) and RSE are taught as discrete lessons. The subjects are also delivered through Circle Time, assemblies, church services, charity/community involvement, outings, class roles and responsibilities and guest speakers. Our teaching of Health Education includes both physical and mental health.

TRIPS AND OUTINGS

All classes are expected to try to go on at least one outing each term to complement an area of the curriculum and full use is made of the local facilities of museums, art galleries, theatres, historical sites and sites of scientific interest. This can include visitors into school.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Assessment is an essential part of the teaching process. From EYFS to Year 6, regular formative assessments are made of pupils' learning using Assessment for Learning strategies. Summative assessments are made at the end of the EYFS and termly through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

These assessments inform teachers about individual strengths and weaknesses and, in turn, feed into future planning. Teachers use assessment information to track the progress of individual pupils and the Director of Studies and SLT use it to monitor the curriculum and teaching and learning.

Record-keeping and assessment procedures are defined in the Assessment policies and in departmental handbooks.

Reports to parents give clear accurate and useful information on their children's progress.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We believe all pupils in the school should have equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum. Please see our Equal Opportunities Policy.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In-service training is provided in order to update and improve standards of teaching and learning. Training needs are regularly assessed. Initiatives in curriculum development and teaching and learning styles are monitored to ensure teachers are well-equipped to deliver the curriculum effectively.

The role of the subject leader, curriculum team and specialist teacher is to:

- provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject;
- support and offer advice to colleagues on issues related to the subject;
- monitor pupil progress in that subject area;
- provide efficient resource management for the subject.

The school gives subject leaders non-contact time each term, so that they can carry out the necessary duties involved with their role. It is the role of each subject leader to keep up-to-date with development in their subject at both national and local level.

Heads of Department and the DoS, in conjunction with teaching staff, review the way the subject is taught in the school and plan for improvement. This development planning links to whole-school objectives. Each subject leader reviews the curriculum plans for their subject, ensures that there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and the 11+ syllabus (where appropriate) ensuring learning objectives are clear and that progression is planned into schemes of work.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Governors are encouraged to take a special interest in a subject area. The governors liaise with the Director of Studies and subject leaders and monitor the way the school teaches these subjects. We have a named governor for SEND.

The Director of Studies and Headmistress are responsible for the day-to-day organisation of the curriculum. The Senior Leadership Team monitors the plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the curriculum, and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives.

Subject leaders, specialist teachers and the SLT monitor the way subjects are taught through the school. They examine long-term and medium-term planning and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used. Subject leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

Subject leaders and the SLT ensure that assessment is used to promote learning. They check that the medium-term plans and lessons for each subject lead to a broad and balanced curriculum taking into account the needs of different learners.

They work with subject teachers to ensure that clear learning objectives are identified in plans

and that children receive consistent and developmental feedback on their work.

Please see our Teaching and Learning Policy and individual subject policies for more details.