

## ST. BERNADETTE'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL (NC)

### TOPIC POLICY

#### *Our Mission*

#### *Learn to Love: Love to Learn*

*At St. Bernadette's Catholic School you will find us caring, hardworking and co-operative. We follow the ways of Jesus using our talents and gifts to make our school special. We show respect to all and welcome you.*

At St Bernadette's Primary School, we are committed to delivering an exciting and stimulating Topic Curriculum. We believe that through a variety of topics, children learn the essential knowledge, skills and understanding of a broad range of curriculum subjects and can make meaningful links between them.

Topics at St Bernadette's Primary School are taught through using the statutory Primary Curriculum. This offers opportunities to provide an enriched curriculum in which cultural diversity can be explored and children can bring their life experiences, preferences and abilities to impact on their learning.

We aim to provide the experiences, resources, support and environment in which all children will enjoy and develop their talents in a supportive atmosphere. The subjects covered within Topic are History, Geography, Art, and Design Technology. We endeavour to make frequent cross-curricular links especially between Topic, English and computing.

During the academic year within the Topic Curriculum, children have the opportunity to experience trips, work with visitors and dress up to enhance their learning. Any excursions and external visitors pertaining to the relevant topic will be organised by the year band teachers, including ensuring relevant risk assessments are completed. It is the responsibility of the year band teachers to ensure that all subjects are given an equal and fair coverage over the course of the academic year.

#### EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

It is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of age, gender, ability, including SEND children of higher or lower ability, religion, ethnicity and social circumstances, have access to the curriculum and make the greatest progress possible. Topic should allow all pupils access to the same opportunities for developing their expertise at their relevant stage of development. Topic should reflect the range of cultural influences in our multi-cultural / ethnic society. No child will be prevented from taking part in any of the Topic activities because of his/her gender, religion, culture, social background, ability or disability.

#### CATHOLIC FAITH

Topic in St Bernadette's is taught so that the children respect other people, their views and efforts. This reflects the ethos of the school.

#### CULTURE AND BRITISH VALUES

We are committed to enhancing children's understanding of themselves and others by promoting British Values and culture through Topic. We celebrate cultural diversity through all topics but promote British Values. We give children the opportunity to speak about themselves and share their opinions, their background, their culture, their religion and their ideas. We actively encourage positivity in cultural awareness.

#### GENDER

We ensure that all children, no matter what their gender, will be encouraged to take part in all topics.

## SEND

We ensure that ALL children, no matter what their ability, will have the opportunity to access the Topic curriculum on offer, within school and extra curriculum activities. No child will be prevented from attending any provision by the school because of their ability level. We actively encourage our SEND children to take part and will attempt to provide special provision as we see fit.

## PUPIL PREMIUM

Children from disadvantaged families with a specific interest or talent in Topic are likewise challenged and encouraged to improve on their talent both within school and outside of school. We encourage parents to find opportunities to build on their child's talent.

## AIMS:

- For children to have lots of fun expressing themselves and learning about the world through a variety of topics.
- To enhance the children's confidence and self-esteem.
- To provide children with the skills, concepts and knowledge necessary for them to express their responses to ideas, feelings and experiences in a written, visual and tactile way.
- To give the children a broad and balanced curriculum that allows them to make natural links and to deepen their understanding of our world.
- To enable children to learn about significant events, people and places through historical enquiry.
- To enable children to use geographical enquiry and skills to develop knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes.
- To develop a lifelong appreciation and admiration of the Arts.
- To encourage the development of imagination, original thought and personal expression.
- To prepare pupils to participate in tomorrow's rapidly changing technologies.
- To enable children to think and intervene creatively to improve the quality of life using technology.
- To enable children to become autonomous and creative problem solvers, as individuals and members of a team.
- To enhance children's appreciation of the diverse cultures within the school and our local community and across the world.
- To encourage children to become responsible citizens who value and care for the environment.
- To enable all children of all abilities, gender, religion, culture and social background to develop their understanding and appreciation of different topics.
- To ensure that staff are given the opportunity and encouragement to continually develop their knowledge, enjoyment, skills and understanding of all subject areas taught within Topic.

## OBJECTIVES:

- For each child to achieve personal satisfaction and personal fulfilment through studying a variety of topics
- To ensure inclusion in that every child is able to access the range of topics we have on offer and to provide a means by which each child can progress at his/her own individual level, whether special educational needs or gifted and talented.
- To allow all children to develop capacity for self-expression, giving each child the opportunity to communicate without being bound by written or spoken language.
- To provide high quality experiences for the children through the use of expert practitioners and visits.
- To allow all children to experience role play and dressing up as a vehicle for understanding others points of view and experiences.
- To provide experiences for children using a range of cultural input.
- For all children to gain a greater understanding of people, places and cultures of the world.
- To ensure children enjoy a broad, balanced and progressive curriculum in which they can explore the links between Topic and other areas of the curriculum.
- To provide audience for all children to perform/show their work at their level.

## ENTITLEMENT AND ORGANISATION

### Foundation Stage.

The Foundation Stage is important in its own right and also in preparing the children for the rest of their school lives. The Early Learning Goals set out what is expected of most children by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Throughout the academic year the curriculum of the Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing the children's

- Personal, social and emotional well-being.
- positive attitudes and dispositions towards their learning.
- social skills.
- attention skills and persistence.
- language and communication.
- reading and writing.
- mathematics.
- knowledge and understanding of the world.
- creative development.
- physical development.

Therefore during the Foundation Stage pupils start exploring and investigating the world around them, their personal history, how things work and acquiring creative and making skills. They build up knowledge and understanding and apply them through creative, language and communication, reading and writing and mathematical tasks.

### Key Stage One and Two

During the academic year, children have 3 dedicated topics – 1 per term. Each Topic will cover the appropriate part of the History, Geography, Art and Design and Design Technology Curriculum. The time allocated for each subject area varies for each topic but all relevant programmes of study are covered during the academic year.

## PROGRAMMES OF STUDY / WHOLE SCHOOL PLANNING

### History

The programmes of study for History are taken from the National Curriculum which set out in detail what pupils will be taught.

History chronicles, investigates and explains the past. History is a priceless preparation for citizenship, work and leisure.

### Planning and coverage

Planning, teaching and coverage are intended to ensure that all pupils' experience of history is acquired through a variety of methods and media, e.g. drama, dance, visits, adults sharing experiences, handling and observing artefacts, stories/ plays. The use of primary and secondary sources should be appropriate to the age and development of the child. By the end of each key stage children should have had thorough experience of both.

Careful planning ensures:

- provision for the children with an experience of History which is both valid and stimulating.
- enables children to gain an understanding of the past, with relation to themselves, their families, their communities and the wider world, as appropriate to age, ability and aptitude.
- encourages a lively and questioning approach to History which enables children to enjoy what they do.
- enables children to select, organise and communicate what they have learned about the past.
- enables children to make appropriate progress in knowledge, understanding and skills in history.

At both Key Stage 1 and 2 there are 5 key elements which are developed through the units.

These elements are:-

- I. Chronological understanding

2. Knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past.
3. Historical interpretation.
4. Historical inquiry.
5. Organisation and communication.

### Geography

The programmes of study for Geography are taken from the National Curriculum which set out in detail what pupils will be taught.

Geography is concerned with the study of places, the human and physical processes, which shape them and the people who live in them. As members of a Catholic community, children are encouraged to explore and understand their environment, to acknowledge its complications and the effects of human attitudes and approaches toward its care and so become more empathetic in their outlook. It is a world, which God created and has entrusted in our hands and it is our duty to look after it in the best way we can.

The study of Geography, helps children to understand the loves of other people in a world where needs are sometimes very different. It also helps them appreciate their own lives and how choices they make impact the wider world.

“A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth’s key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth’s features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.” National Curriculum for England 2014

### Planning and coverage

Planning and coverage will develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes.

It will enable children to understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time

It will ensure that children are competent in the geographical skills needed to: collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes, a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)

It will enable children to communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

### Art and Design

The programmes of study for Art and Design are taken from the National Curriculum, which set out in detail what pupils will be taught.

Art and Design at St. Bernadette’s School stimulates creativity and imagination. The variety of resources encourages the children to use their senses to explore colour, texture, shape and pattern of different materials in the world around them. They are encouraged to communicate what they see, feel and touch through their own two and three-dimensional artwork, individually, in groups and as a whole class whenever appropriate. Knowledge and appreciation of artist’s work, both contemporary, cultural and historically is encouraged through visits to the local Art Gallery and exhibiting professional artwork within the school (where possible). Also visits from professional artists to work with the children are encouraged. Appreciation of the children’s artwork is shown through beautiful displays in the classrooms, corridors and halls around the school. (Please refer to the display policy.)

### Planning and coverage

Planning and coverage should ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are applied to illustrate the expectations in different areas for example: -

- 1.Exploring and developing ideas
- 2.Investigating and making art, craft and design,
- 3.Evaluating and developing work.'

### Design and Technology

The programmes of study for Design Technology are taken from the National Curriculum which set out in detail what pupils will be taught.

Within Design and Technology children learn to think and intervene creatively to improve the quality of life. The subject calls for the pupils to become autonomous and creative problem solvers, as individuals and members of a team. They must look for the needs, wants and opportunities of a specified user or purpose and respond to them by developing a range of ideas before making products and systems that then are able to evaluate and improve. They combine practical skills with an understanding of aesthetics, social and environmental issues, function and industrial practices. As they do so, they reflect on and evaluate present and past design and technology, its uses and effects and how they might influence the future. Through Design and Technology, all pupils can become discriminating and informed users of products, and become innovators.

### Planning and coverage

Planning and coverage should ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are applied when developing ideas, exploring materials and components, researching, planning, communicating ideas, making products and evaluating. Pupils learn to work with tools, equipment and materials to make quality products independently, as a pair or as part of a team.

During Foundation Stage pupils start exploring and investigating how things work and acquiring making skills. They build up knowledge and understanding and apply them through creative and mathematical tasks. They build up their independence to do things (Designedly Thinking.)

During 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 also extend their knowledge and understanding of less familiar products or applications using research or information given and use imaginative opportunities to design for specific users. They learn how to design and make safely and many start to use computing as part of their designing and making.

During 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, the needs of the people who use them and how they are made. 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 knowledge and understanding from other areas of the curriculum and use computers in a range of ways.

At both Key Stages 1 and 2 there are 5 key elements that are developed throughout the units: Design, Planning, Research, Making and Evaluation. However the focus area may change – Mechanisms and Control, Structures or Materials and Components. Then these may be further sub-divided e.g. Materials into Food, Textiles or Resistant Materials.

Breadth of Study is ensured by following the process of Investigate and Evaluate Activities (IEs) – Product Analysis (PA) – Focussed Practical Tasks (FPTs) – using a range of techniques, skills, processes and knowledge and Design and Make Assignments (DaM)– using a range of materials to make products covering a variety of areas (Structures, Mechanisms, Control, Food and Textiles.)

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to ensure safe working practice.

Parental permission is obtained for trips to take into account medical and/or cultural needs of pupils and to keep parents informed. .

Permission should be obtained for food tasting to take into account medical and/or cultural needs of pupils and to keep parents informed. This may have been given upon entry into school.

The age group / ability of pupils should always be considered before using certain tools, equipment and materials e.g. glue guns or knives. There should be adequate supervision and pupils should have been informed of rules and the need to follow them. If

pupils do not follow rules for safe working practice, activities will be stopped and then a limited range will be available to them until they can follow rules.

## RESOURCES

All topics are well resourced at St Bernadette's and the Topic Subject Leaders continue to build on the resources for each year group.

## COMPUTING LINKS

Where appropriate, computing is used to compliment work in Topic as set out in the teachers planning and in relevant programmes of work.

There is a fully equipped trolley containing laptops and the computer suites are frequently used by the children during Topic lessons. I-pads are also used to record photographic evidence. Parents are involved and engaged by use of the school's Twitter Account.

## MARKING

- Please refer to the Topic Marking Policy.

## ASSESSMENT

The National Framework entails using assessment formatively to help planning, teaching and to inform decisions about the next steps for a pupil. Attainment can be assessed in a variety of ways including teacher / pupil discussion, teacher observations, photographic evidence, finished products and in written form. Assessments are entered on the excel spreadsheets for each subject.

## RECORD KEEPING

Class and pupil records of pupil's achievements are kept to:-

Plan pupil's future learning.

Report progress to parents.

Maintain a written record of pupil's learning.

Provide a curricular record of each pupil.

## PORTFOLIO OF WORK

A sample of children's Topic Books are kept annually within year bands. Also children's work is photographed and stored on the system / Website as evidence, along with a small sample of examples of work. Annually Sketch Books are sent up to new classes, which also form part of the portfolio of evidence.

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND EXPERTISE

All staff are given the opportunity to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding of subjects taught within Topic through INSET, staff meetings, specialist courses and working alongside professionals. All subject leaders are given the opportunity to attend various leadership courses/programmes.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

St Bernadette's Primary School has subject leaders for Topic who continue to build on resources for each year group. All of the Topics are fully resourced with staff and materials, and that the aims come out in the practice of staff and for the objectives to be reflected in the outcomes of the children. St Bernadette's Primary School implements a monitoring cycle which ensures a high standard, and timetabling ensures that Topic is allocated appropriate timing. We appreciate and value feedback from all sources, including our parents, children, governors etc. and will aim to accommodate any suggestions made if practicable and viable.

This policy document will be reviewed annually to assess its value as a working document.