# St Gabriel's Curriculum Policy – including Teaching and Learning

**Date:** Autumn 2016
**Lead Person:** Sue McMahon
**Committee:** Policy
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At St Gabriel's School we believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the notion that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding to be able to make informed choices about the important things in their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives.

Quality of teaching is the foundation on which our school's success rests, and we must be uncompromising in every lesson about striving for the very best for all pupils: pupils of different ages, pupils at different stages of language acquisition, and pupils with different cognitive abilities.

## Aims and Objectives

**We will:**

- Promote high quality teaching and learning experiences that focus on the development of understanding
- Raise standards by ensuring high pitch, consistency and continuity of teaching and learning
- Ensure all children are included, motivated and engaged by their learning
- Value each child as an individual
- Nurture mutual respect
- Develop confidence and independence
- Provide a stimulating learning environment

**We want children to:**

1.  Enjoy and achieve by developing: a love of learning; independence and self-motivation.

2.  Develop higher level skills, concepts and knowledge which will equip pupils for success in later life.

3.  Achieve their full potential by developing pupils' critical self evaluation and aspiration leading to justified high self-esteem.

4.  Be valued for their race, gender, culture and belief, and for their individual abilities in different areas.

5.  Make a positive contribution by developing moral standards and ethical values in order to respect others and live as part of a school and wider community.

6.  Develop qualities of mind such as imagination, creativity and feeling.

### **Effective Learning**

i.      **Every lesson must centre on active learning.** Effective learning is an active process – a product of doing rather than receiving. We use a range of strategies to ensure that children engage with whole class teaching and learning.

ii.     **Every lesson must** build on formative and summative assessment of children's abilities and focus on the most effective method of ensuring rapid progress. (see Appendix C)

iii.    **Every lesson must** make clear the learning objective and success criteria (or method) so pupils clearly understand how to be successful; how to further improve and know when they have achieved success.

iv.     **Every lesson must include quality questioning** to constantly extend pupils' thinking and understanding. Questions should test critical thinking; comprehension; knowledge; application; analysis; synthesis; evaluation (see Appendices A and B)

v.      **Every lesson must differentiate** questions, tasks and outcomes to constantly extend different learners to ensure progress regardless of starting point.

vi.     **Every lesson must have** accurate language modeled for the children -- by teacher, support staff or class member.

vii.    **Every lesson must cater for pupils with a range of learning styles.** We acknowledge that people learn in different ways, and recognize the need to develop strategies that allow all children to learn in ways that best suit them. Lessons should be as visual as possible with strategies; artefacts, real objects, pictures and photographs, images on interactive whiteboard to engagement and consequent progress. (see Appendix D)

viii.   **Every lesson must** put learning into a real-life context, so pupils understand the relevance of their learning and are well prepared for later life.

ix.     **Every lesson must include pupil self evaluation.** We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning; to be involved in reviewing their work with a view to further improvement and evaluating their own learning style. (see Appendix E)

x.      **Every class has a visual timetable** and visual cues to support the children's monitoring of understanding/organisation skills (e.g.*" what to do when I don't understand"* chart)

xi.      **Every class has noise levels well controlled** (use of computer mediated by adult, set quiet times, radio/tapes only listened to during set or group times, looking and listening prompts, visual clues to aid children (e.g. *noise meter*)

xii.      **Every lesson will utilize the school learning environment.** We believe that displays in classrooms provide an ideal opportunity for pupils to become involved in their own learning and make learning irresistible. (see Appendix F)

## Effective teaching

When teaching we focus on motivating children and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement.

### Planning

Effective planning:
- Must be informed by ongoing assessment. It is crucial that children are challenged in their learning, but to do this teachers need to know where the children are in their understanding.
- Ensures that all statutory objectives are covered in a relevant, exciting and challenging way
- Ensures continuity, challenge and progression in individual lessons, across topics and terms, throughout the year the year and between Key Stages.
- Enables other teachers to see what has been taught and how
- Enables subject leaders, Key Stage Coordinators and SLT to monitor challenge, coverage and progression across the school.

We plan from the 2014 National Curriculum Objectives, a local agreed syllabus for RE and the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. In July, year group teams formulate a yearly overview of teaching and learning for the coming year, informed by an evaluation of the Creative Curriculum from the previous year. Cross curricular links and links with other planned events in the schools calendar are exploited. There should be evidence of skills development over a period of time (within a year group and progressing across Key Stages), skills taught in one area being applied in another and evidence of a tangible goal or outcome.  (See Appendix G for Planning Expectations)

### Long, medium and short term teaching structure (reading, writing, mathematics)

### Writing (long term):

•      Important non-fiction genres re-visited annually interspersed with fiction genres. Both showing progression in skills taught within the genre.
•      Pupils voice survey undertaken at start of year, or the term before a topic is taught, to inform planning of topics within genres to ensure pupils are writing about topics they are interested in & know something about.

**Writing (medium term):**

•      Each genre should last for three weeks. Each block follows the following format:
•      Week 1: Inspiration lesson; planning lesson; lesson focussing on the beginning of the piece; lesson focussed on the middle of the piece; lesson focussed on the end.
•      Week 2: Planning & conferencing lesson; lesson focussing on the beginning of the piece; lesson focussed on the middle of the piece; lesson focussed on the end; editing lesson.
•      Week 3: Planning lesson focussing on the beginning of the piece; lesson focussed on the middle of the piece; lesson focussed on the end; two publishing lessons.
•      Each week, new skills should be introduced to ensure progression, including genre specific structural devices and relevant grammar objectives.

**Writing (short term):**

•      All lessons to include opportunity for pupils to respond to previous marking and use it in their writing.
•      All genres, topics & lessons to be inspirational to inspire interest and interesting writing
•      All lessons to focus on pupils learning to write against their banded Success Criteria.
•      Three writing lessons to include teacher modelling against Success Criteria to scaffold the use of the Success Criteria to pupils. By displaying these on classroom display and referring to them, pupils will become involved in their learning.
•      Strong focus on success criteria for higher level punctuation utilising a specific sentence level approach and on text organisation using specific paragraph expectations in the Success Criteria.
•      Carpet time to be kept to a minimum, with pupils learning through practice & maximising opportunities for self-assessment against the success criteria.
•      Different groups of pupils to be stretched differently in every lesson & different parts of lesson
•      Children from Year 3 upwards to use their marking from the previous day to inform their writing and to include 'Today I am focusing on….' at the start of each piece.
•      All lessons to include Assessment for Learning techniques to ensure pace & ensure that misconceptions are dealt with & in particular opportunities are taken to extend all groups into unknown learning. (See Appendix H)
•      All lessons to include pupils using SC sheets stuck in books and assessing themselves using these sheets ("involved in their learning")
•      Pupils to have opportunity to write on beautifully presented sheets to produce "completed pieces"
•      Pupils to refer to Extended Writing Success Criterias stuck in the back of their Literacy Books, to inform their targets.

**Mathematics (long and medium term):**

• To ensure appropriate coverage and progression, long term and medium term planning is combined. Each class has the medium term plan at the beginning of the year.
• Objectives are repeated in a cycle over the year with children progressively going deeper in their understanding and application of new skills. The amount of time spent on each topic is stipulated in weeks.
• Strong focus on personalised high pitch using the same Learning Objective, but with a greater depth of questioning for the more able pupils

**Maths (short term):**

- Every lesson to start with children responding to marking from the previous lesson.
- Where appropriate, recap and referral to previous learning.
- Lessons based on pitched questions above the pupils' existing levels of knowledge to ensure progress
- Pupils to refer to individual target cards during every lesson
- All lessons to include Assessment for Learning techniques to ensure opportunities are taken to extend all groups into unknown learning; ensure that misconceptions are dealt with and to maximise pace of learning.
- Ongoing assessment to inform gap analyses and future planning – children answering several questions on objectives taught the week before
- Carpet time to be kept to a minimum with pupils learning through practice.
- Different groups of pupils to be stretched differently in every lesson & different parts of lesson *(e.g. TA supporting HA group at table during the start of the lesson, while the rest of the class are on the carpet, then swapping round with teacher)*

**Reading (Long and medium term):**

• Reading objectives are integrated into the medium term plans for each genre and where relevant include Word Reading and Comprehension objectives

**Reading (Short term):**

• Every child (Y2-6) to be questioned on retrieval during reading and greater depth comprehension questions.
• Teachers fill in a weekly guided reading planning sheet which includes the objectives for each reading group, informed by gap analyses and ongoing questioning
• Adults will check home reading books and any lack of reading at home to be followed up

**Enrichment days**

We hold a number of themed enrichment days throughout the year. E.g. the use of the life bus, DT days, creativity, science.  These are planned for differently. There is still a strong

emphasis on knowledge and skills development there is, however, a greater degree of flexibility. Enrichment days are seen as an opportunity to:
• Apply skills taught in specific curricular areas
• Cover an area of learning in more depth
• Broaden learning experiences
• Promote a higher level of thinking
• Make meaningful cross curricular links
• Make use of additional learning resources beyond the normal range

## Partnership teaching

At St Gabriel's we are committed to the notion of partnership teaching (more than one teacher/teaching assistant to a classroom.) We regard it as key to improved outcomes. We invest heavily in it and it is through partnership teaching that we secure access to the curriculum for all our children.

The school acknowledges the difficulty in stipulating a particular partnership model. Partnership teaching is a fluid process and classroom teaching configurations will change and be responsive to children's needs, the curriculum and the dynamic between the adults involve. However, when two teachers are present in the classroom, there are ways of using this fact to the full, rather than just taking turns. A successful partnership is more than 2 people doing 1 persons job. Listed below are just a few effective partnerships teaching configurations:

• The class may be split into ability groups for a lesson e.g. Maths, or reading and children will work with a specific adult.
• One adult presents the basic information to the entire class, the other adult paraphrases, clarifies, and monitors children's learning.
• One adult presents basic information, the other develops and asks questions to move children to higher order thinking.
• One adult reviews basic content of a lesson while the other provides additional review (e.g. vocabulary instruction) for children who require additional work on specific components of the curriculum.
• One adult presents while the other adult scaffolds access to the lesson using prompts/ response frames/ questioning)
• One adult can talk while the other writes on the board (especially effective for modeled writing)
• One adult takes responsibility for the teaching content and the other for teaching 'how-to' skills so children can successfully understand and acquire the content materiel (Examples of 'how-to' skills include note taking, skimming and scanning to locate main ideas in the text.).
• Both adults model partner work/role play activities.

Successful partnership teaching configurations vary, but **all** require **prior planning and negotiation of roles**.

## The Role of Parents

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children learn. We involve parents in their children's learning by:

- Holding year group meetings for parents at the start of the academic year to explain teaching priorities and how parents can best support their children
- Sending a termly year group update to parents outlining the topics to be studied over the term, listing useful web based resources, and highlighting relevant places of interest where parents could take their children
- Sending a weekly newsletter
- Ensuring the requirements of the home school agreement are met by all parties
- Parent review meets held three times a year to discuss progress and strategies for further development.
- Holding parent's meetings in Yr 2 and Yr 6 to explain SATs information
- Parents receive a detailed school report in July and a termly update on progress. This outlines the child's achievement during the year, how they are achieving in relation to expectations and how they can improve and develop in the future.
- Running workshops designed to help parents support their children's learning (phonics workshops, Maths, reading)

## Safeguarding Children

At St Gabriel's we have a session for Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship education every week. This S.O.W. outlines 6 transferable skills that are taught as part of the two year rolling programme:

- Emotional Well-being
- Managing Change
- Managing Risk
- Communication and Participation
- Self-Awareness
- Relationships and Valuing Difference

These are generic skills that we all need to use every day in order to maintain relationships, be aware of ourselves and reduce risks.

There is a progression of learning objectives, enabling that the children to develop these skills as they mature. These skills are taught explicitly in the first three units of each year and then transferred throughout the following units.

Links are made between the skills taught and situations where these skills may be applied not only in the PSHCE units, but also across the curriculum and as situations arise during the school day.

We strive to equip the children at St Gabriel's with these skills in order that they can make their own informed choices and take action in difficult situations.

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of Procedures

### Monitoring and evaluation

- Our performance management cycle monitors generic teaching and learning through lesson observations, linked to Performance Management objectives and priorities highlighted on the School Improvement Plan.
- Curriculum leaders monitor teaching and learning in specific subjects through lesson observations, scrutiny of work/ plans and interviews with children.

**Review**
Evidence and evaluations from the monitoring process is fed back to the SLT for review. Any necessary steps will then be taken to address identified needs e.g. through professional development.

Appendix A – Questioning

- **Targeted questioning –** to raise the attention levels of children, assess understanding, extend thinking and differentiate.
- **Posing questions before asking a particular pupil for a response** – if you call on a pupil before posing the question, the rest of the class is less likely to listen to the question or formulate a response, at times using a no 'hands up' approach
- **Talk partners** – at specific points children turn to the person next to them and share an experience, generate an idea, ask and answer questions or reflect on what they have just learnt.
- **'Thinking time'** – we give children time to answer questions. When a child is struggling we scaffold their response by moving on and asking a similar question of another child and then returning to the original child.
- **'Show me'** boards
- **Response frames** – these provide a skeleton on which to hang ideas – e.g. sentence starters, vocabulary to include, sorting mats and questions to answer.
- **Question generation** – before watching a video we pose questions or ask the children to work out questions they would find answers to.
- **Listening frames** – we guide children's listening by giving them headings to help them listen systematically.
- **Group Talk** - We recognize the value of group talk in extending understanding and developing higher levels of thinking. In order to help the children communicate more effectively within a group, we establish appropriate behaviours at the start of each new academic year.

Appendix B – gaining effective responses from pupils

Responses to answers from learners:

| | |
|---|---|
| Withhold judgement | • Respond in a non evaluative fashion<br>• Ask others to respond |
| Invite children to elaborate | • ' Say more about….' |
| Cue alternative responses | • 'There is no one right answer'<br>• 'What are the alternatives?'<br>• 'Who has a different point of view?' |
| Challenge children to provide reasons | • 'Give reasons why' |
| Use 'think-pair-share' | • Allow thinking time<br>• Discuss with a partner, then in a group<br>• Pair children so that they can discuss in their first language or in English ('talk partners') |
| Allow rehearsal of responses | • Thinking time- after the question and after the answer. The first allows children to produce more thoughtful answers, the second allows the questioner responding to think for a few seconds about the answer<br>• 'Try out the answer in your head'<br>• 'Try out the answer on your partner' |
| Invite children's questions | • 'Would anyone like to ask …. a question about that?' |
| Try alternative methods for a show of hands | • Use whiteboards for note taking and responses |

# Appendix C – assessment strategies & the interactive whiteboard

- Use of individual writing boards is the most effective method of rapidly assessing the pupils' knowledge. It also allows pupils a less pressured way of practicing prior to independent learning and a forum to magpie ideas off peers to make their own subsequent work better.
- Use of lollipop sticks or other randomizing strategies to choose pupils ensuring that hands up" strategies do not predominate.
- Focus on **key words** – we ask the children to count on their fingers or record on show me boards each time they hear key words. Different groups of children listen for different words.
- **Picture this** – we ask children to make a picture in their heads as they listen (visualize).
- **Statement games** – the children are given a number of statements which they must group in some way. The task can be made more sophisticated by asking the children to decide if a statement is justifiable with reference to text or video evidence
- **Support access to challenging texts with prior exposure for less able children**

## The interactive white board

- The interactive white board is a potentially powerful tool to learning. We acknowledge that it most effective when used in conjunction with strategies and applications that promote pupil engagement and interaction.

**Appendix D – different learning styles**

We offer a range of learning opportunities. **These include:**
- Investigating and problem solving
- Use of props/ 'real' objects to scaffold learning
- Research and finding out
- Group work
- Pair work
- Independent work
- Whole-class work
- Asking and answering questions
- Use of ICT
- Building learning from experience
- Fieldwork and visits to places of educational interest
- Watching video and responding to recorded material
- Drama, debates, role plays, philosophy and oral presentations
- Designing and making things
- Participating in physical activity
- Working towards and end goal

**Appendix E – Self-evaluation**

**We encourage pupil self evaluation by:**
- Sharing a lessons learning intention and basing the lesson on success criteria
- The success criteria is displayed prominently in the classroom and updated regularly.
- Pupils assessing their own learning through the use of color coded 'traffic lights' or smiley faces or thumbs up/down in KS1.
- Pupils assessing their writing against the success criteria in KS2 and being involved in improving their work e.g. by "highlighter marking" it
- Pupils responding to teachers' marking and to the questions that teachers set as a result of marking
- Pupils responding to their weekly targets and assessing their work against them with the teacher.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to self and partner mark
- Encouraging children to discuss their learning – (Ref. Shirley Clarke discussion prompts)

## Appendix F – The school learning environment

- We change our displays regularly, so that the classroom and corridors reflects the topics currently studied by the children.
- To ensure continuity we have school colours of blue and yellow, backing display boards
- We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their best work at some point during the year.
- All work should be well presented and there should be no mistakes in spelling
- Foundation stage and Year 1 have role-play areas.
- Displays often serve as learning prompts for children – word lists, high frequency words, connectives, number lines, time lines number squares, clocks etc.
- The classroom environment reflects a multi-cultural content.
- All classrooms have an attractive and tempting reading area.
- All classrooms have a worship area and an RE display
- Working walls show learning development
- There should be clear walkways through the classroom


## Resources that must be in the classroom:

- Display of key words about learning so that children use them when talking about their learning. These must be referred to throughout the lesson.
- Agreed classroom rules, routines and procedures made public and referred to, including procedures in case of fire
- Maths and literacy groups
- Neat labels on drawers indicating the content

## Appendix G –planning expectations

All planning should be saved electronically in the 'Shared Area', in 'Planning' and the relevant year.

At the start of the year, all teachers are given:
- Updated Creative Curriculum Maps for the year, outlining topics to be covered in each subject, in each term
- Medium term Maths Plans covering the whole year, detailing the objectives to be covered for each strand and the weeks to be allocated.
- Medium term Literacy Plans – teachers to edit as appropriate
- Science, Computing, RE, PE and PSHE planning

## Planning Flips:
Teachers then adapt these medium term and long term plans weekly onto 'Planning Flips'. It is expected that all planning for the week for each subject, is completed by the Monday morning of that week. There is some flexibility around maths as this could and should be adapted as the week progresses; however as a minimum there should be at least three lessons outlined, and the objectives for the last two lessons of the week, recorded and dated – to ensure that there is progression.

As a minimum planning flips should include:
- The objective and date on each page
- Subject specific vocabulary (on each page if possible)
- Which adult is where and supporting which group
- Which groups are working with the teacher and which are working independently
- Success Criteria placed so that it can be referred to throughout the lesson
- Reference to National Curriculum objectives and previous learning where appropriate
- Evidence of differentiation
- Should be bright and colourful
- There should be no spelling errors (unless these are part of a teaching point)

  See Sample planning flips in the Shared Area.

## Weekly Paper Timetable
A timetable should also be written for the week with objectives for each lesson noted. This then should be on display by the door. Thus enabling all adults, children and any visitors in the classroom to see what is happening over the course of the week.

Refer to the Literacy and Mathematics policy for subject specific guidance on planning.

## Appendix H – Assessment for Learning strategies

Teachers make ongoing assessments both through tests and teacher assessments throughout the year. This information is used to identify 'target children' for intervention and support and help plan lessons. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our children. We strive to ensure that all learning is appropriate and differentiated to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children on the special needs register, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's IEPs. Teachers modify and annotate planning, teaching and learning as appropriate in relation to IEPs, early stage English speakers, and needs of the gifted and talented pupils

Assessment exists to help the teachers to help the child. It ensures more effective learning by providing the evidence for closer matching of tasks to the child's needs. It helps us identify future planning and teaching strategies.

**We use these strategies to link assessment to better teaching and learning:**
- Teachers enter performance data into Target Tracker
- Use of data from formal assessment to inform planning and targeting
- Improvement time –pupils are given back written work which has been highlight marked and includes a 'improvement prompt.' Children start the lesson answering this prompt.
- Children have individual writing Success Criteria as Targets and Maths Target Cards. Pupil progress in the EYFS is tracked using target tracker and profile observations and parent review meetings.
- Using Target Tracker, teachers click relevant objectives if a child is working towards or has met an objective. This informs Gap analyses and aid in planning. Clicking of the objectives is used in Maths, English and Science. For other subjects, teachers make a judgment on pupil attainment and complete the bands termly.

## Appendix I – Book expectations

Literacy Books

- Long date
- Learning objective - skill or grammar based, e.g. *I can use speech to start my fantasy story*
- My focus is... (Years 3 to 6)
- Success criteria before first writing lesson
- 3 week genres following format
- Evidence of 5 lessons per week
- 3 long pieces of writing per week
- 2 pieces of '**quality marking**' each week using marking symbols - all other work initialled

- Checked marking responses
- Highlighted objectives for each lesson
- Self-assessment (ticked success criteria and traffic lighting)
- Absence recorded with date and learning objective
- Chn writing in pen from year 3 and 4
- Assessed writing sample success criteria stuck in back
- Incorrect spellings indicated
- Level of support indicated

Maths Books

- Short date
- Learning objective
- Evidence of 5 lessons per week
- All answers marked right or wrong
- 2 pieces of '**quality marking**' each week using marking symbols - all other work ticked and initialled
- Target cards
- Self-assessment
- Marking responses ticked
- Highlighted objectives for each lesson
- Absence recorded with date and learning objective
- Level of support indicated
- Questions included with work where possible

Creative Curriculum Books

- Topic and Vocabulary Page (KWL) at start of each half term
- Long date
- Learning objective taken from medium term planning
- Absence recorded with date and learning objective
- Level of support indicated
- Art and DT success criteria stuck in at beginning of unit
- evidence of whole learning process & finished work
  - ✓ analysed artists' work
  - ✓ collections of research and other information
  - ✓ copied sketches from sketch book
  - ✓ activities used to develop technique
  - ✓ photos
- Topic work done in different subjects, e.g. Literacy inspiration lessons, guided reading comprehensions, Maths investigations, writing activities, etc. with corresponding subject specific success criteria & learning objectives
- Explanation of activities included with work where possible
- 1 piece of '**quality marking**' per week at alternate stages – all other work initialled
- Incorrect spellings addressed, e.g. year group words and topic vocabulary

- Highlighted objectives for each lesson
- Checked marking responses

RE Books

- Topic and Vocabulary Page (KWL) at start of each half term
- Long date
- Learning objective taken from medium term planning (incorporating **from** and **about**)
- Absence recorded with date and learning objective
- Level of support indicated
- Success criteria
- 1 piece of **'quality marking'** per week
- Incorrect spellings addressed, e.g. year group words and topic vocabulary
- Highlighted objectives for each lesson
- Checked marking responses