

St. Mary's Primary School Draperstown



Curriculum Policy

Curriculum Policy Reviewed April 2010

Ratified By Governors May 2010

St. Mary's P.S. Draperstown

Curriculum Policy

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Education Order (2006) sets out the minimum requirements that should be taught at each key stage.

In St. Mary's Primary School, we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. We strive to give every child the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible.

The staff at St. Mary's P.S. continuously strive to meet the needs of each child, setting high standards for pupil effort, achievement and behaviour.

We encourage our pupils to develop lively, enquiring minds, to think creatively and to use their own initiative and to work with increasing independence.

Areas of Learning

The curriculum for the three stages is set out in six Areas of Learning. Although the Areas of Learning are set out separately teachers integrate learning across the six areas to make relevant connections for children. Teachers have considerable flexibility to select from within the learning areas those aspects they consider appropriate to the ability and interests of their pupils.

The Areas are:

1 Language and Literacy (including Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing; schools are also encouraged to teach additional languages).

2 Mathematics and Numeracy (focusing on the development of mathematical concepts and numeracy across the curriculum).

Curriculum Policy Reviewed April 2010

Ratified By Governors May 2010

3 The Arts (including Art and Design, Drama and Music).

4 The World Around Us (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in Geography, History and Science and Technology).

5 Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (focusing on emotional development, social skills, learning to learn, health, relationships and sexuality education and mutual understanding in the local and global community).

6 Physical Education/Development and Movement (focusing on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through play and a range of physical activities).

The Northern Ireland Curriculum sets out the minimum requirement that should be taught at each key stage. This is followed and used as a starting point for teacher planning.

Religious Education

Religious Education is central to the life of the school. Teachers use the Alive O series as a core syllabus. In addition to this the children celebrate the life of the saints and are involved in comprehensive preparation for the sacraments. We work hand in hand with the parish and the home to nurture and develop our children's faith. The school chaplain, Fr Colum Clerkin has strong links with the school and plays an active role in the life of the school.

Whole School Skills and Capabilities

In St. Mary's we place an emphasis on the development of skills and capabilities for lifelong learning. This ensures that the children can integrate successfully into society. Within lessons we provide the opportunities to engage in active learning contexts across all areas of the curriculum and progressively develop:

Cross - Curricular Skills

- Communication

- Using Mathematics
- Using information and Communication Technology

Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

- Thinking, problem-solving and decision making
- Self Management
- Working with others
- Managing Information
- Being Creative

Equity of Access

In St. Mary's Primary School, teachers are aware that pupils have different experiences, interests and strengths which will influence the way in which they learn.

In planning curriculum and assessment activities, teachers are aware of the requirements of the equal opportunities legislation and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) 2005 and have high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, pupils with disabilities, pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds, pupils of different ethnic groups including travellers and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Approaches to learning and teaching provide suitably challenging opportunities for all pupils to take part in lessons fully and effectively, thus enabling all pupils to achieve. For pupils with special educational needs the staff take account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child. For those pupils whose attainments fall significantly below the levels expected at a particular key stage, degrees of differentiation of tasks and materials appropriate to the age and requirements of the pupil are provided. For pupils whose attainments significantly exceed the expected levels of attainment during a particular key stage, teachers plan suitably challenging work by extending the breadth and depth of study across Areas of Learning.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Teachers use a variety of formative assessment methods on an ongoing basis within each class. Across the school a variety of summative assessment tools are used. These include NRIT, The British Picture Vocabulary Scale, The Middle Infant Screening Test, NFER Maths and English, The Suffolk Reading Scale, BURT Spelling Test, Assessment Units and INCAS. The Common European Framework of Reference is used to assess the newcomer children. The results of these are used to track pupil progress, aid curriculum planning, target children in need of support and highlight areas for development.

Roles and Responsibilities

The principal will report to the Board of Governors on all matters relating to the curriculum. The Vice-Principal, the Senior Management Team and the Curriculum Co-ordinators will assist the principal in monitoring and evaluating curriculum practice.

Complaints Procedure

In the event of a complaint concerning the curriculum, parents should, in the first instance, write to the Principal. The Principal, in liaison with the Vice Principal, will seek to bring about a resolution of the matter.

If such a resolution does not emerge, parents should write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors. The matter will be raised at the next governors' meeting. The matter will be dealt with by the Complaints Committee within the Board of Governors. They will arrange a hearing for the complaint and reach a decision on whether or not to uphold the complaint.

If a resolution has still not been arrived at, parents may write to the Curriculum Complaints Tribunal of the North Eastern Education Board and Library Board.