

# ST HUBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Teaching & Learning Policy

### Rationale

This policy has evolved from the **School Aims** and underpins the whole process of teaching and learning in order to make for learning effectiveness. Whilst local/national initiatives in education will, at times, affect matters of organisation and planning, the philosophy underpinning our Teaching and Learning should remain constant and in line with our Aims.

**“What is critical is that we fire in our students a passion for learning.... It is capacity to learn that will define excellence in the future, not simply what young people achieve in school.”**

John MacBeath, (*Director of the Quality in Education Centre, University of Strathclyde*)

The pupils at St Hubert's have an entitlement to learn in an environment that offers encouragement to question, explore, analyse, investigate and evaluate. They need to feel secure and happy within a caring, mutually supportive community enabling them to grow physically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually.

We wish to see them increase their knowledge, skills and understanding, value their surroundings, learn mutual respect for other's beliefs and ideas and always strive to improve their skills and talents.

Children develop at their own individual pace, but teacher intervention and interaction at the critical stages will ensure a firmer base for that development and open paths for future learning. This concept of “scaffolding” (c.f. Vygotsky; Bruner) - a building of skills and concepts which underpins learning – empowers the child to make an independent leap in understanding. **We are committed to improving standards in our teaching and guiding the children to be independent life-long learners.**

### The Learning Environment

In support of our Aims, we recognise that children need a consistent school approach:

- to pursue challenging, realistic and achievable targets based on needs and ability
- to feel happy and secure within a controlled, stimulating and constructive environment
- to develop their sense of awe and wonder within the learning process
- to have their achievements recognised
- to be well-motivated
- to experiment and not fear failure
- to be able to discuss their work with adults and other children
- to have access to quality resources
- to be encouraged to ask questions
- to receive constructive feedback from their work
- to have the confidence to evaluate their own work
- to develop skills of self-assessment
- to have ownership of their learning
- to know how they can move their learning forward through shared visions (see PIARR policy)

### Support for Learning

In order for children to become independent learners we need to involve them in the understanding of the learning process and how we are providing them with what they need to learn. Children must be involved in the review of their own progress: self-evaluation, recording achievements and target setting.

Teachers must also be encouraged to listen to the pupil voice, learning from pupils' comments about how they learn best.

Whether by teacher, classroom supporter, other pupils, through systems in school and in the classroom or by the support of parents/carers at home (including parent support groups and training programmes), the child should be helped to develop a holistic understanding of the relationship between learning and teaching. It is vital that learning in and out of school is seen as a coherent whole. Parents are partners in the learning process and so have a crucial role to play. This is recognised and elaborated on in the **Home Study Policy** and the **Home- School Agreement**.

### Inclusion

St Hubert's is an inclusive school guided by the Gospel values that are expressed in our school aims and governors' ethos statement. These aims promote inclusive education in its widest sense in all areas of school life.

### Children with Special Needs

It is recognised that the majority of children will need extra support at some time during the learning process. St Hubert's commitment to ensuring that all children have fair and equal access to the curriculum (see inclusion statement above) means that each child will be monitored and assessed in order to recognise and establish the level of support required and the best method of support. Within class teachers will take into account pupil abilities and needs when planning lessons and activities, noting any targets set in IEPs. Additional learning support will be targeted to those requiring it as identified through formal and informal assessment and discussion with teacher, pupil and parents. The SENCo, LSPs and LSAs will oversee the provision and liaise with class teachers to ensure that it will complement and reinforce the work of the class and provide a framework of support for teacher, pupil and parent. Comprehensive details of SEN provision can be found in the **Special Educational Needs Policy**.

### Children with Marked Aptitudes

At St. Hubert's, we recognise that each pupil and teacher is a unique human being created in God's own likeness, each with his/her own special gifts and abilities. Within lessons, we aim to provide opportunities for teachers and pupils to use and develop these gifts and abilities further. Some pupils can be identified as having marked aptitudes and, in line with the school's inclusive ethos, the needs of these pupils also need to be addressed and supported through the planning of appropriate activities, use of differentiated resources and the provision of a range of enrichment and extension opportunities. Comprehensive details of identification strategies and provision for Gifted and Talented pupils at St. Hubert's can be found in the **Gifted and Talented Policy**.

## The Teaching Environment

All teachers at St Hubert's are committed to school improvement and this requires us to recognise the need for examining our classroom practice, being able to articulate our skills and improve our teaching by design rather than by trial and error and by using a repertoire of teaching styles appropriate to meet particular needs. The organisational strategies that can be applied will vary depending upon the work in progress or the tasks to be covered.

## Teaching Strategies

- whole class teaching
- group work teaching with children of comparable ability
- friendship groups
- teacher directed mixed ability groups
- interest groups
- groups of pupils with the same preferred learning style
- peer support groups
- paired work teaching
- individual teaching

Any of these can be successful, either taken in isolation or by varying the strategies throughout a lesson or session. (NLS and NNS are examples of use of differing strategies planned for a lesson).

## Teaching Techniques

At St. Hubert's, we adopt a creative and thematic approach to teaching and learning. All staff have also undergone training to enable them to use accelerated learning techniques. These should play a key role in the repertoire of techniques and styles employed by teachers, which will increase with experience, and professional and personal development. Such techniques will additionally include the ability to:

- show insight, kindness and patience
- help create a sense of awe and wonder
- present instructions and explanations clearly based on a foundation of subject knowledge
- question skillfully and appropriately promoting the use of higher order thinking skills
- intervene constructively
- demonstrate with confidence and skill
- observe progression accurately
- set clear objectives for learning based on knowledge of prior pupil attainment and use day-to-day, formative and summative (school-based, statutory and commercial) assessment approaches (see PIARR)
- provide purposeful feedback, oral and written
- promote self and peer assessment of work
- model high standards
- select and use high quality resources which support learning and engage pupils' interest
- use the planning process to identify progression, differentiation, appropriate levels, varied activities, cross-curricular links and assessment opportunities
- set challenging yet realistic targets for the class and individuals
- use praise and encouragement to recognise effort and/or success including for behaviour

- have high expectations of children both in personal and academic terms
- reflect on and be analytical of progression in order to inform future professional decisions
- allow time for reflection and discussion
- be prepared to take risks and encourage pupils to do the same
- use ICT effectively as a teaching and learning tool
- use a range of teaching techniques e.g. drama, hotseating, envoying, pictorial, research (see **Appendix 1** for extended list of techniques)
- promote creative thinking and creative outcomes
- create an environment , plan activities and use resources which acknowledge and address the needs of pupils with different learning styles, different multiple intelligences, or different cultural backgrounds
- make links between subjects and between past, present and future learning
- promote pupil ownership of outcomes e.g. choice of presentation methods, involvement at planning stage
- promote active participation of all pupils
- work with others to support pupil progress e.g. support staff, home (through effective use of home-school partnership book)
- set purposeful homework tasks which is clearly linked to past, present or future learning
- base practice on understanding of up-to-date theory about learning

For further ideas of presentation styles see **Appendix 1**, **Thinking Skills (Appendix 2)** and **Mindkind folders in school**.

### Support for Teaching

It is vital to provide the systems which will support all teachers' effectiveness and work in school. School-based and external INSET should be clearly linked to School Improvement Plan targets and performance management objectives. Opportunities for networked learning are also invaluable and opportunities for this should be maximised.

In addition, mutual support and encouragement amongst staff underpins both effective delivery and staff morale. It finds expression in the staff:

- supporting one another
- being able to share successes, ideas and problems with colleagues
- respecting the work that each colleague does
- working for a common purpose
- never feeling isolated

The responsibility for the support systems and structures within the school lies with the Senior Management Team who should show willingness to:

- be accessible and visible in the school
- understand and be sensitive to teachers' needs
- have a strong sense of purpose and direction
- listen to the views of colleagues and be capable of change and flexibility
- communicate effectively

Other systems for professional development and support of teachers are those that deal with staff appraisal and staff development, two interrelated schemes for ensuring effective teaching and learning. Further details will be found in **Performance Management Policy** and **Staff Development Policy**

A key element in the drive for more effective teaching and learning is curriculum monitoring and comprehensive details can be found in the **Monitoring Policy**.

## The Classroom Environment

Our school aims state that we will create a happy school environment which will nurture the pupils' joy of learning [and] promote independence and perseverance.....

In order to achieve this aim it is necessary to consider:

- the quality of the environment
- effective use of space
- effective use of resources
- effective use of time
- effective use of people

The beginning of each term is a time to instruct pupils in

- classroom organisation
- classroom behaviour
- behaviour at other times i.e. break, assembly, P.E., cloakrooms, etc.

Expectations need to be reinforced at frequent intervals and all staff are expected to be responsible for whole school involvement, not just their class. Keeping systems on track requires whole school ownership.

“In schools where all teachers followed guidelines in the same way, the impact on progress was positive. Where there was variation between teachers in their usage of guidelines, this had a negative effect.”(School Matters, B. Laar)

School rules are displayed in appropriate places around the school. These will need constant reinforcement during the year. We must expect the standards to be met by everyone and anyone failing to achieve them must be given the opportunity to try again.

Classroom rules should be displayed in an age-appropriate way and should address, not only the organisational aspects, but set out clear guidance for fairness and respect for others:

Listening attentively and looking at the listener  
Speaking clearly so that everyone can hear  
Keeping hands and feet to oneself on the carpet  
Encouraging each other etc.....

The merit system should be used as a reward for those pupils who are making efforts to be self-disciplined and courteous. The **School Mission Statement** and **School Prayer** should be prominently displayed and used to reinforce good behaviour. A Pupil of the Week (or Best Buddy) Award etc. should be used throughout the year and the **Behaviour Policy** sets out further suggestions for effective behavioural strategies.

Classroom rules (and whole class sessions e.g. Circle Time) also provide opportunities for reinforcement of the **Anti-bullying Policy**. The use of classroom and playground Buddies also support this.

Pupil views about their ideal environment are expressed in Appendix 3

### Display of Pupils' Work

The display of pupils' work serves to

- impart information
- acknowledge effort and celebrate achievement
- arouse curiosity and stimulate activity
- set standards of quality and raising expectations
- visually convey something of the ethos of the school to visitors

Every aspect of the school should transmit its values, standards and attitudes and should establish the right environment for the child to succeed. Displays can provide foci for different aspects of learning which in turn can form the basis for thought, speech and expression through a variety of media. Such results do not come easily: the foci and presentation of work needs considerable thought from the planning stage, and discussion with colleagues and pupils in order to share the vision and objectives should be part of the process. See **Planning, Assessment, Recording & Reporting Policy**.

Whole school displays (including the "curriculum corridor") are planned at the Summer Planning Day Stage and focus on the termly Citizenship theme.

Classroom displays should include all areas of the curriculum across the year but Mathematics, English and Religious Education should consistently feature in order to emphasise the high profile of these subjects. There should also be displays of accelerated learning tools.

Each classroom should contain

- well resourced and attractively displayed book area(s)
- writing areas (including word banks or similar)
- mathematics areas
- prayer table or similar quiet/reflective area
- art and technology areas with relevant and tidy resources

The management of these areas as resource bases, as well as opportunities to display pupils' work, is crucial to the promotion of pupil independence.

Working surfaces should be tidy and well managed, resources should be accessible and clearing away should be planned into the activity.

### Learning beyond the classroom

At St. Hubert's, we believe learning is not confined to the classroom or curriculum hours. We aim to provide a range of opportunities to develop pupils' abilities and self-esteem e.g. buddies, school council, office assistants, classroom monitors, competitions etc.. We also provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities, e.g. peripatetic music provision, sports' clubs, activity and interest clubs, lunchtime play activities, visitors to school and off-site visits including residential experiences. By working in a range of environments, undertaking varied tasks and working with different people, pupils will be encouraged to develop life-skills, develop existing skills further, acquire new knowledge and skills. Our **Citizenship Policy, scheme** and **skills passports** outline the school philosophy with regard to this.

## The Lesson Structure

Lesson planning will be in line with the school's **Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy** which sets out clear structure for lessons to ensure that good practice is established in each year group to deliver the planned objectives. This structure can be summarised as follows:

	<u>Must contain:</u>	<u>Teaching skills:</u>
<u>Beginnings of lessons</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☺ Introductions for explicitness of content and purpose</li><li>☺ Connections with previous teaching and learning</li><li>☺ Thinking/discussion time</li><li>☺ Warm ups</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☺ Presentation skills and strategies</li> <li>☺ Relevant vocabulary/ key language</li></ul>
<u>Middles</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☺ Instructions</li><li>☺ Groupings</li><li>☺ Expectations</li><li>☺ Questions</li><li>☺ Thinking/discussion time</li><li>☺ Structure (including talk if applicable)</li><li>☺ Timings</li><li>☺ Pace and rigour to keep on task</li><li>☺ Teacher time</li><li>☺ Children on task, independent, co-operative</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☺ Materials &amp; resources inc other adults</li> <li>☺ instruction, intervention, responding to pupils</li></ul>
<u>Ends of Lessons</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☺ Review of learning</li><li>☺ Plenary for sharing</li><li>☺ Critical thinking</li><li>☺ Learning reinforcement</li><li>☺ Assessment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>☺ Summarises learning against objective shared with pupils. Identifies next learning stage</li><li>☺ Display</li></ul>

## Appendix 1: Presentation styles

- Writing/sentences
  - Cloze procedure
  - Mind Map
  - Diagram
  - Table/chart/graph/survey
  - 2D/3D art work
  - Drama/role play/experience
  - Movement/dance
  - Discussion
  - Interview/questionnaire
  - Comprehension
  - TV/newspaper report
  - Display
  - Labels/signs
  - Instructions
  - Explanations
  - Poem/rhyme
  - Song/chant/music
  - Audio/tape recording
  - Visual/video recording
  - Make a book
  - Information sheet
  - Poster
  - Invitation/reply
  - Letter/postcard
  - Lists
  - Design
  - Description
  - Fact file
  - Picture/drawing
  - Timeline
  - Cut/stick
  - Mapping diagram
  - Worksheet
  - Diary
  - Sequencing
  - Comparison
  - Alternative writing form e.g. Braille/runes
  - Questions
  - Directions
  - Map/plan
  - Caption/speech bubble
  - ICT
  - Research
  - Talk/presentation
  - Colour coding
  - Mnemonics
- 
- Use of a picture to raise questions or provoke thought e.g. children to take turns looking at a hidden picture and describe to group who must try and draw it

- Give the answers: children to work out what the question could have been
- Thought shower: children then have to refine this by sorting into categories, either teacher supplied or pupil determined, then sort into very important/quite important/not important and identify 3 most important things about topic
- Option-based learning: children given several options as answers, at least two of which should be possible besides the real answer. Pupils work impairs to find the real answer. Extension: find other answers to the question
- Rewrite a story in a different time/place. Change the characters and see what other elements of the story would change as a result. Is a character justified: courtcase scenario
- Pictures of a story e.g. Bible stories: Has the artist remained true to story? Which parts of picture are fact/interpretation
- Can you do the task kinaesthetically?
- Give pupils choice about how to present knowledge e.g. song/drama/mind map/talk
- Make up a game about the topic/their learning
- Sense maps from photos/pictures
- Who/what/where/what's happening/feelings/speech from a picture and for story planning
- Feather maps of big picture of topics: can be added to after a lesson/used to show where a lesson fits in
- Introduce a topic in science with a story e.g. separation: you are on a mountain with no clean water, how will you get the sand, soil and gravel out of stream water? Or which tights/socks are stretchiest for Cinderella's ugly sisters to wear to the ball?
- Children role play a story then are hotseated by other class members and asked to justify actions/explain events

## Appendix 2: Thinking skills

Thinking skill	Key Vocabulary	Sample questions	Example
Information processing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate and collect relevant info</li> <li>• Sort &amp; classify</li> <li>• Sequence</li> <li>• Compare &amp; contrast</li> <li>• Analyse part/whole relationships</li> </ul>	Sequence, examine, label, identify, quote, list, collect, who, when, where, tabulate, match	What happened after? How many? Describe what happened at? Can you tell me who?	Can you identify anything strange/interesting/unusual about what you have read or seen?  
Reasoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for opinions &amp; actions</li> <li>• Draw inferences and deductions</li> <li>• Explain precisely about what they think</li> <li>• Make judgements</li> </ul>	Explain, compare, predict, describe, restate, discuss, interpret, infer, select, debate	What do you think? Can you distinguish between? What was the main idea? What were the motives for? Why did changes occur?	Discuss your responses with a partner and consider whether they were the same  
Enquiry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask relevant questions</li> <li>• Pose &amp; define problems</li> <li>• Plan what to do</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Predict outcome &amp; anticipate consequences</li> <li>• Test conclusions</li> <li>• Improve ideas</li> </ul>	Modify, plan, examine, calculate, complete, design, construct, apply	What factors would you change? What questions would you ask? Develop a set of instructions about? Would this information be useful?	From your discussion, consider a question that you would like answered. <i>(Leave questions on display for a period of time to allow longer thinking time)</i>  
Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judge the value of what they hear/read/do</li> <li>• Develop criteria for judging the value of their own and each other's work &amp; ideas</li> <li>• Have confidence in their own judgements</li> </ul>	Assess, measure, convince, decide, conclude, recommend, support, judge	Judge the value of.. How would you have handled? Do you believe? Defend your position about.. What changes to... would you recommend? Do you think it's a good or bad thing? Explain?	Select which is the best question to go forward to be debated and why it is a good question  
Creative thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate ideas</li> <li>• Extend ideas</li> <li>• Suggest hypotheses</li> <li>• Apply imagination</li> <li>• Look for alternative innovative outcomes</li> </ul>	Create, design, compose, rewrite, substitute, invent, integrate, formulate, generalise	Can you design a ... to...? How many ways can you? Can you develop a proposal to...? What would happen if? What are your feelings in relation to?	Ask the questioners to offer reasons for their question - to suggest possible theories Encourage alternative interpretations

Final thoughts...

Consider how we can plan to introduce vocabulary into different stages in the lesson

Consider how we can get discussion going

Provide thinking time

Develop criteria against which to judge

Provide 'models' to show possibilities

Make the thinking act explicit

Value feelings and opinions

Develop a multi-skilled approach to learning

## Appendix 3: Pupil views on ideal classroom environment (survey Autumn 2003)

- Pleasant lighting and appropriate temperature
- Up-to-date computers with internet access
- Beanbags/sofas/cushions
- New books
- Desks with drawers
- New boards especially whiteboards and flipcharts
- Pets
- Organised and labelled and accessible environment
- Books to resource work and topics
- Colourful displays
- Window paints
- Information board
- Jobs, job titles and team leaders
- Be able to work uninterrupted
- Study book approach
- Music while working and during different routines
- Moving to a focus area for an activity preferably at a different level/seating arrangement from normal
- Brain break in the afternoon for KS2
- Range of VAK activities
- Clear rules and systems: these should be displayed
- Wordlists
- Displays which can be used as a learning resource
- Accelerated learning tools displayed
- Visualisation space
- Common ethos from class to class