

Guide to the Curriculum



Here at St Catherine's we believe that all children should have equal access to a broad, creative and engaging curriculum. We have developed a creative project based approach to the new National Curriculum 2014. There is a strong focus on skills as well as the knowledge based requirements of the New Curriculum. Our curriculum aims to link subjects together purposefully and creatively through an overarching question that is explored in depth throughout the term.

The projects begin with an experience or activity to inspire and engage the class. Children carry out an extended project that culminates with a public exhibition e.g. a display in a local supermarket, a guided walk, or 'selling' their castles at a local estate agent.

Children will cover a minimum of three projects within a year and occasionally a whole school mini project such as 'A day in the life of...' to celebrate our school bicentennial celebrations.

We think it is important that the children know which subjects they are being taught. To ensure that this does happen (in plans and lessons) we make it clear to the children which skills are being taught within the overall theme. When appropriate some subjects are taught as 'stand-alone' sessions for example; maths fluency, times tables.

At St Catherine's, we follow the Maths No Problem scheme to build mastery within our maths teaching. The Letters and Sounds DfE publication provide the outline to our phonics teaching with elements of Read, Write Inc incorporated. Where possible, grammar, spelling and writing learning links to the project. <https://www.booksfortopics.com> provides suggested texts that could be used to support the learning in each projects. Three times a year, children across the school take part in the same writing over time task as each other. This is kept in school as a portfolio of their writing progress over time and an indication of writing at St Catherine's. Stories are well embedded in our early years foundation stage and are used as the basis to much of the learning. In addition, children are heard to read or share a story with an adult weekly in preparation for group guided reading at key stage 1. During Year 3, children move to whole class teaching of reading.

We use other published material, such as Cornerstones to support (but not direct) our teaching across the curriculum. We follow [the](#) Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for RE and Computing and JIGSAW/Christopher **Winter** Project's for the teaching of PSHCE and SRE.

How will all of the subjects be covered?

At St Catherine's, learning is driven by a project-based learning (PBL) approach, builds on previous learning, links to real-life contexts and promotes partnerships within the local community. Children's interest and needs are integral in developing our curriculum and they are given opportunities and encouraged to explore their own ideas further.

Our teaching aims to develop children who are

- Eager to learn and achieve
- Confident, hardworking and motivated
- Happy, co-operative and independent
- Responsible, respectful and resilient citizens, equipped for their future

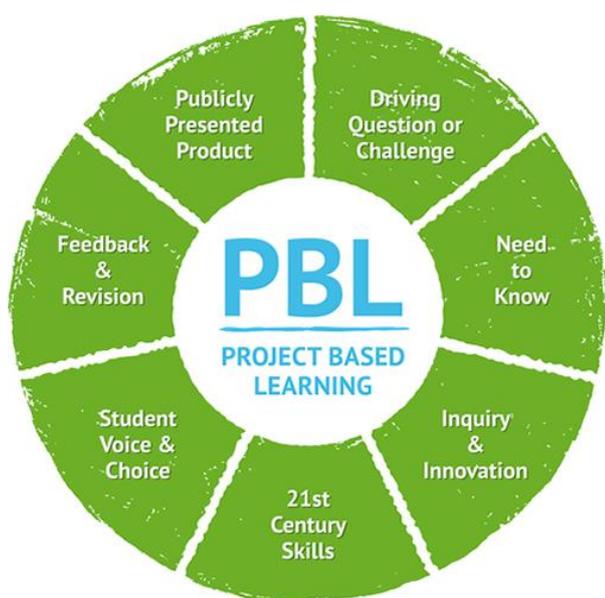
At the end of each project the children prepare a public exhibition in order to showcase their learning and talk about the skills and knowledge acquired during the project.

After the exhibition, staff create a PBL learning card which contains a synopsis of the learning and reflections from children, staff and audience members.

From the first day in EYFS to the day we say goodbye in Year 6, Growth mindset is modelled, taught and encouraged. We encourage children to develop an understanding of their own learning styles in order to achieve. Learners at St. Catherine's expect work to be challenging, persevere, know how to access support when needed and are reflective about their own work and that of their peers. Oracy and discussion is an essential part of the learning process and embedded within every lesson.

Every aspect of our curriculum is underpinned by the five British values of:

- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs



Moving through the process, students develop skills that include problem-solving, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity.

It's important to emphasize that [the goal of a project-based learning](#) is not solving the problem, but gaining aforementioned skills throughout the process of solving the problem.

<http://blog.awwapp.com/6-cs-of-education-classroom/>

Literacy

Reading and writing are hugely important and are the keys to unlocking learning across the curriculum. As such, our aim at St Catherine's is to make 'every lesson a Literacy lesson' by incorporating reading and writing skills across the curriculum.

Quality phonics teaching is delivered daily in KS1 and children are taught as a whole class, meaning that every child has exposure to all phonics phases and the rich phonic knowledge of their teacher and classmates. Phonics continues to be covered in KS2 as part of the spelling curriculum to enable children to become confident and competent spellers. Within these lessons children also learn the origination of words with reference to the Latin root when appropriate.

Children across the school have reading sessions daily. They are taught the skills of reading comprehension and inference and they use their reading to inform their writing. During their reading sessions, children will also have the opportunity to read simply for pleasure at least once a week. Children are expected to read at home at least three times per week.

Writing at St Catherine's is developed through exposure to quality texts and is underpinned by the teaching of grammar. Children use grammatical terminology to discuss their own and others' writing and use this knowledge to edit and improve their writing. In fact, the skills of editing and improving are taught regularly and are an integral part of the school's teaching of the subject. Children will cover all of the different text types specified in the National Curriculum during their time at St Catherine's. We also run whole school writing events termly, which use an engaging stimulus event or activity as a basis for a piece of writing. The children's progress over time can be seen through these activities.

Maths

At St Catherine's we want to ensure that every child enjoys maths and comes to the subject with a "can do" attitude. We use the Concrete Pictorial Abstract (CPA) approach which means that all children use concrete objects, pictures and numbers to help with their understanding. The latest research tells us that this is the most effective system and that by using this approach children are able to deepen and apply their understanding; thus making them more competent and confident mathematicians. After a great deal of research and discussion we have invested in the "Maths No Problem" scheme. This is one of only two schemes that have been recommended by the National Centre for Excellence in Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) and uses some of the best research to inform teachers in the most effective and inclusive ways to teach maths. At St Catherine's we truly believe that everyone is a mathematician!

If you would like to discuss how maths is taught in the school and how you can support your child please do not hesitate to come and speak to Mr Pring who is the maths leader in the school.

Science

Six principles underpin our teaching of Science. We believe that the teaching should be relevant to the children's world, practical and enjoyable, inspiring and inclusive. The teaching always helps the children to use their own knowledge to further their skills, aiming high in all they do.

At St Catherine's school we believe that all pupils should have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We encourage them to reflect on their learning so that they can use prior knowledge as the platform from which to launch their success. Thus we work hard to make sure that the science they learn is relevant and practical to their world. We help all pupils to succeed so the learning is inclusive, inspiring pupils of all abilities to participate in the activities. By actively working, thinking and understanding their way through practical enjoyable activities that stretch their ideas and concepts, the pupils are able to achieve our school motto of aiming high in all that they do.

Religious Education (RE)

RE is taught in accordance with the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus. Our aim is to ensure that pupils develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom and their impact, whilst exploring personal and critical responses. Sources of wisdom and their impacts:

There are 8 key areas of learning which all pupils will engage with: Beliefs and practices; Sources of wisdom; Symbols and actions; Prayer, worship and reflection; Identity and belonging; Ultimate questions; Human responsibility and values; Justice and fairness.

EYFS: children will explore Christianity and religious beliefs represented in their class. RE will support their growing awareness of self, the community and their place within it.

KS1: pupils will explore Christianity and Islam.

KS2: pupils will explore Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. There will be opportunities to explore other worldviews including atheism and humanism.

Teaching will include drama, art studies, the use of artefacts, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school.

Computing

At St Catherine's School, the Herts for Learning computing scheme is used to support planning and help us ensure that during their time at school, children experience a wide range of computing programmes, resources and skills that will support them throughout their lives. In addition to regular computing lessons, skills are applied regularly to support learning in other subjects; for example: research skills using the iPads to help support writing.

Children are frequently taught about the importance of esafety and how they can ensure that they stay safe whilst using technology at school and at home.

Music

In addition to whole school singing and class music lessons that follow the Charanga teaching scheme, there are a variety of specialist music lessons, including violin, piano, guitar and drums. Details of the cost of lessons and information for families entitled to PPG are available from the school office.

Design and Technology

D&T is taught through the project. Within the topics, children will have the opportunity to develop a creative, technical and practical expertise needed to perform everyday tasks, apply knowledge, understanding and skills in order to design and make high-quality prototypes and products for a wide range of users. They will learn to critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products. In addition all children will be supported to understand and apply the principles of nutrition and learn how to cook.

History

Historical themes are a major focus of much of our topic work. The teaching of history aims to develop a sense of chronology and the abilities to enquire, organise, interpret and understand.

Art

Work in art will sometimes develop a particular skill e.g. colour mixing, or the study of a particular artist. Other work will complement other areas of the curriculum eg their topic or language work. Children will have the opportunity to develop their skills in painting, drawing, printing, collage work, modelling, pottery and needlework. Much of their work is displayed at the termly exhibitions.

Geography

Geographical themes form a major part of the curriculum, and include food, weather, the world, rivers, settlement, and the environment. A study of places is included in a number of the other topics, as are the skills of map reading, investigating geographical features and using geographical tools.

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)

We aim to give children the time and opportunity to explore important ideas such as 'what it means to be me' and 'community'. PSHCE is taught as a whole class. Discussion and the willingness to listen to others and share ideas are key to our teaching of PSHCE. PSHCE provides a framework which allows teachers to deal with issues which can affect the class such as relationships and Rights and Responsibilities. It also provides a forum to address individual needs as well.

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)

At St Catherine relationship education permeates throughout the school and is included in the PSHCE curriculum at age appropriate levels. Children are taught that people are different from each other and to show respect and acceptance for each other as part of our Christian ethos.

Parents are invited into school to look at the content of the lessons delivered and to discuss any issues that might arise.

Physical Education (PE)

At St Catherine's we are very fortunate in having a wide variety of indoor and outdoor PE equipment, which includes our excellent on-site swimming facility. This enables us to offer a wide range of sports, from Rugby and Netball to less traditional sports such as handball and kick cricket. In addition to this we also offer Dance and Gymnastics across the whole school. We try to ensure that all children have at least 2hrs a week of physical activity. We have a specialist PE Teacher who delivers our PE curriculum in Years 1-6. Teaching of PE in EYFS is delivered by class teachers. The progression for Physical Education in our school is important. During Key Stage 1 the children learn the fundamentals and skills of many different sports, including balance and movement. As they progress through the school into Key Stage 2, activities become more sport specific, this includes competitive and tactical elements of games.

In addition we encourage all pupils to take part in as many sporting activities as they can through our many additional extra-curricular clubs including netball, football, badminton, dance, athletics, kickboxing, rugby etc, as well as through active lunchtimes and by encouraging pupils to participate in competitions, matches and tournaments against other schools and compete in our own Sports Day held annually.

Throughout their time at St Catherine's we uniquely offer all children the exciting opportunity to have swimming lessons on-site.

French

Children from Year 3 to Year 6 learn French as their language part of the National Curriculum. Each week Ms Farrington (our specialist teacher) or the Year 5/6 teachers leads the class through Games and activities that lend themselves naturally to language learning.

Language learning is more than just learning to speak and write in a different language. Learning about festivals and traditions from countries where the language is spoken helps children appreciate other cultures so that they can take a place in our global society.