



# ST ETHELBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

## Teaching and Learning Policy

**Reviewed: September 2025**  
**Date of Next Review: September 2026**

*Learning, achieving and growing together with Jesus*

### **Our Aims:**

We aim to ensure that all teaching and learning is Christ – centered with Catholic Social Teaching principles at its heart. We believe in a broad and balanced curriculum where all subjects are valued. This will equip our children with a breadth of knowledge. It will excite their imaginations, inspire and ensure high standards whilst meeting national requirements and relate to our setting. It will give them the foundations for developing healthy minds and healthy bodies. It will enable learners to have a value of themselves within the school, the local and wider community and the world beyond, knowing the positive impact they can make.

### **Effective teaching:**

Through our teaching we aim to:

- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring, resilient and independent learners;
- develop children's self-esteem and encourage them to understand the ideas, attitudes and values of others;
- show respect for a diverse range of cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
- enable children to understand their local and wider communities, and help them feel valued as part of them;
- help children grow into articulate, reliable, independent and positive citizens.
- motivate all children, and build on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement.

### **Planning and Assessment:**

Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons to take account of children's different abilities. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge, skills and understanding of all our children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability but also offer an appropriate level of challenge.

We deploy support staff and other adult helpers as effectively as possible to meet the needs of our pupils. We share expected learning outcomes with the children and review the progress of each child regularly throughout the academic year. Detailed records and other information are shared with the child's next teacher.

### **Relationships:**

Each of our teachers establishes good working relationships with all the children in the class. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs and we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We set and agree with children the class code of conduct, and we expect all children to comply with the rules which are jointly devised to promote the best learning opportunities for all. We praise children for their efforts and, by so doing, we help to build positive attitudes towards school and learning in general. We insist on good behaviour at all times. We follow the guidelines for sanctions as outlined in our Behaviour Policy.

### **Risk Assessments:**

We take all possible steps to ensure that all activities that the children perform are safe. When we take children out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: risk assessments are completed and various permissions are obtained. We inform parents, and obtain their permission, before the visit takes place.

### **Effective Learning:**

Children learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input (visual, auditory and kinesthetic); we therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners. We take into account the different forms of intelligence (for example, mathematical/logical, visual/spatial, interpersonal, and musical) when planning our teaching. We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, they belong, they enjoy being challenged, enjoy learning, and know that they will have every opportunity to succeed because they feel supported and are not afraid to 'have a go'. We provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils, including those with EAL and those new to the country (see Appendix 1).

Our Teachers Tool Kit found in Appendix 2 showcases the effective teaching and learning that takes place at St. Ethelbert's. The themes of our Tool Kit are threaded through our everyday practice so that pupils achieve the best possible outcomes.

## **Learning Environments:**

Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays regularly, so that the classroom reflects the topics studied by the children. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to display their work at some time during the year. We also use displays and word walls as learning prompts for the children and for key vocabulary. We believe that a stimulating environment sets a positive climate for learning.

- 1. Organisation:** All classrooms and corridors should be kept clean, tidy and free from clutter. Classroom and school routines should support children value and respect their learning environment and make a contribution to keeping it clean and tidy.
- 2. Language:** All classrooms should be “language rich” environments in order to promote and extend children's understanding and use of language. Displays should include key words and statements, open-ended questions, prompts and scaffolds related to the curriculum or to highlight key learning points.
- 3. Resources:** All resources should be clearly labelled and organised so that they are readily available to the children in order to promote independent learning and choice. Resources should include appropriate books, models, artefacts and concrete materials to support the children's learning in relation to the curriculum areas and current topics.
- 4. Classroom layout:** The physical layout of the classroom should support and promote inclusive, interactive teaching. It should allow for flexibility for working in different contexts (e.g. individual work, paired work, small group work as well as whole class teaching). This is to ensure that speaking and listening and collaborative learning are at the centre of teaching and learning. Every child should be seated so that they have a clear view of the interactive whiteboard/main teaching area.

**Expectations for Display:** Display, both inside and outside the classroom, contributes significantly to the creation of a positive school ethos, reinforcing high expectations for success and achievement. At St. Ethelbert's, we have two different approaches to display:

- Classroom displays – promote and support learning
- Corridor/hall displays – celebrate and value pupils' achievements

**Classroom displays:** Classroom displays should focus on supporting learning or exemplifying the learning process rather than on children's final outcomes. However, they will include examples of finished work in order to demonstrate what pupils achieved and how they achieved it.

Each classroom should have the following displays

- a) Religious Education - the current topic, vocabulary and pupil reflections and questions
- b) English working wall - Working walls should be used to record and visualise the learning process. Teachers and pupils should refer and add to working walls throughout the unit of work/topic. A working wall is a “work in progress”; it is not always necessary to back or mount work.

- c) Maths working wall – modelled and scaffolded working out, mathematical vocabulary, number line or square, visual representations
- d) Assessment for learning display + Targets + Self and peer-evaluation (questions, scaffolds, prompts) + Marking symbols

**Corridor and hall displays:** These will be used to celebrate and value children's achievements across the curriculum as well as promote the Catholic ethos of the school as exemplified by our mission statement. These displays will primarily consist of children's final outcomes/finished work but may also include examples of the learning process, in order to demonstrate children's learning and progress over a period of time.

Minimum expectations for corridor/hall display -

- The display is backed and has a border
- There is a clear title that references the topic/learning/curriculum area
- The year group and class name should be clear and included on the display
- A variety of work is displayed which reflects the range of abilities and achievements within the class. This is essential in creating an inclusive learning environment.
- Finished work that is displayed should always be the best that an individual can achieve and it should be largely free from errors. Emergent writing and work in progress are also valuable for display and need to be labelled as such so the context is understood.
- All 2D work is mounted appropriately (e.g. double-backed) with mounts trimmed in a straight line. • All work should be clearly labelled with the child's name (pupil or ICT label)
- Displays should always be accompanied by labels to explain the context of the learning and the learning process, reinforce learning and key vocabulary, make links to other topics/areas of learning ask open-ended questions and contain prompts which encourage pupils to interact with the display. Where appropriate, dual language headings and labels may be used. Drapes, hangings and other 3D objects should be used to create visual interest where possible.

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis. This will take the form of pupil/staff voice, work scrutinies, learning walks or as part of a lesson observation.

### **The role of governors:**

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to teaching and learning. In particular, they:

- support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning;
- seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good quality teaching;

***Learning, achieving and growing together with Jesus***

- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from the staff governor, head teacher's report to governors, and further reports from those governors assigned responsibility for subject areas.

### **The role of parents:**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We do all we can to inform parents about what and how their children are learning:

- by offering parents weekly opportunities during 'Take a Look Tuesdays' to look through their children's work and meet staff to discuss progress;
- by meeting parents on a more formal basis once a term for a longer meeting to discuss their child's progress;
- by providing information to parents, at the start of each term, which outlines the term's curriculum
- by sending parents an end-of-year report in which we explain the progress made by each child
- explaining to parents how they can support their children at home with resources available on Seesaw
- by running weekly parent coffee mornings which focus on one area of the curriculum to discuss and showcase resources and support available in an informal manner.

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents:

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible and arrives punctually and ready to learn;
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform, classroom equipment and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general.

### **Monitoring and Review:**

We are aware of the need to monitor the school's teaching and learning policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary.

## **Appendix 1- Strategies for teaching pupils who are new to the country or who have English as an additional language**

*Providing EAL support leads to:*

- ✓ **Increased academic achievement**
- ✓ **Higher self-esteem**
- ✓ **Providing equal opportunities for all**
- ✓ **Stronger learning environments**
- ✓ **Different perspectives**
- ✓ **Positive home-school relationships**

### ***What are the Barriers to Learning for EAL Students?***

#### **1. Learning the language**

As well as acquiring vocabulary, picking up pronunciation, and understanding grammar, students also need to be able to learn *through* the language. This requires them to comprehend the language well enough that they can grasp new, complex concepts expressed through it. Then, they must be able to ask questions, analyse ideas, and use academic language (such as the passive tense and formal vocabulary). This can be extremely difficult for those whose grasp on a language is not yet very firm.

#### **2. Developmental differences**

Children who grow up bilingual or multilingual reach language development milestones in a slightly different way to monolingual children. They do meet the milestones, but only when you consider their speech in *both* their languages combined. This is because they hear less of each language than monolingual children do – their time is split between two languages.

#### **3. Stigma or misinformation**

Because EAL students may not initially be able to communicate very well, some people believe that they are less intelligent. They think that the students don't understand the concepts discussed in lessons, rather than simply the language they are discussed with. This is untrue – EAL students are often even more capable than monolingual students, because learning another language gives them cognitive advantages. It is important to remember this, and to convey this to the other students in your class.

#### **4. Misunderstandings about their behaviour and cultural norms**

Cultural differences can lead to EAL students feeling confused and uncomfortable with the expectations of an English classroom. Teachers often don't realise that things they consider to be 'normal' are not commonplace for students from other countries.

#### **5. A sense of discomfort leading to challenging behaviour**

When students feel frustrated or embarrassed that they cannot understand or be understood, it may lead to them acting out in class. They might disengage, misbehave, or simply refuse to do any work. This can have a huge effect on their ability to learn.

## ***EAL Teaching Strategies***

### **1. Use visual learning**

Use labelled images and videos to illustrate your lessons, so that when you introduce new concepts, everyone understands what you're referring to. Print these images out for students to stick into their books and refer back to. Other ways to use visual learning are to write all instructions for the lesson on the board, and to use gestures and facial expressions to engage and aid your students.

### **2. Sit them near the front**

So that your EAL students can better hear and see during the lesson, sit them near the front of the classroom. You could also consider who they are sitting next to. A native English speaker with high ability (i.e. one who uses a wide vocabulary and complex sentence structures) will be a good language role model for those learning English.

### **3. More group work**

Group work increases students' engagement, and gives EAL pupils a chance to practise speaking in a less intimidating context. They may not be confident speaking out in front of the whole class, but might feel able to contribute to a small group discussion. Choose peers who are supportive and good language role-models to be in a group with EAL students. This will also help to facilitate friendships, giving the students further opportunities to develop their language outside the classroom.

### **4. Adapt your teaching style**

To enhance students' understanding of lessons, speak slowly and pronounce every syllable in every word. When you ask a question, give EAL pupils an extra three to five seconds to think before you call on them. They need this time to translate the question into their first language, think of the answer, and translate back – and it could help them to build up their courage. It might also be helpful to repeat instructions several times, and frequently check that your students understand the topic and what they need to do.

Be aware of phrases that might be particularly different for those trying to learn the language. Idioms (such as 'that's the last straw' or 'I'll let you off the hook') as well as slang and words that are specific to English-speaking cultures (think of 'brolly', 'wellies', or a 'Sunday roast') might need an explanation. This is another place where you could use pictures to help EAL students to understand.

Finally, use sentence frames to scaffold your students' responses. Frames such as 'I disagree with what \_\_\_ said, because...' show students how to structure formal, academic sentences. Display your sentence frames on the wall of the classroom, and ask all students to use them regularly in their discussions and writing. For younger children, have 'who/what/where/when' question words on cards to support their learning.



## 5. Let them use their first language

Their first language is a useful foundation to build on – it gives them an opportunity to compare words and sentence structures, and understand more quickly. In the early days of language-learning, the classroom can be extremely intimidating. Allowing EAL students with the same first language to speak it together can help them to relax, and engage with concepts at a higher level. Dictionaries – and apps such as Google Translate – are helpful for the same reason. However, don't let the student become entirely dependent on these aids.

## 6. Pre-teaching

If your EAL students are pre-taught a list of key terms and phrases in advance, it increases the likelihood that they will understand the lesson and their confidence will be boosted.

## 7. Don't force them to talk

It is important to understand that language learners go through several stages on the path to fluency. They can often comprehend language – through listening and reading – before they can produce it themselves, through speaking and writing. Some teachers may see that a child is able to understand and try to make them speak; however, this puts on too much pressure. Accept that it is normal for EAL students to go through a silent period, and let them speak when they feel confident to.

## 8. Learn about their name and their culture

Make an effort to get EAL students' names right, and encourage your students to do so too. This shows them that you respect their language and identity, and helps them to feel accepted. Similarly, learn exactly where they come from, and research the religion and culture in that area. This will help you to accommodate for your students' needs and be aware of cultural differences.

## 9. Give feedback

Strategies for giving feedback on **spoken language** include:

- Repeating what the student has said, but with the correct sentence structure or pronunciation.
- Asking for clarification if you don't understand what they have said.
- Questioning whether they think the sentence is well-formed or not – for example, 'is that the right word order?'. Let them rephrase it themselves.
- Talking about how to structure similar sentences to the one the student said, without directly correcting them. This could help to preserve their self-esteem in front of the class.
- Praising them for good attempts at difficult structures, or trying something new, even if it isn't quite right. Don't feel the need to correct *every* error.

Strategies for giving feedback on **written language** include:

- Acknowledging their effort and what they have done well.
- Giving marks for good content, even if there are grammar, punctuation or spelling errors.
- Pointing out their use of correct sentences in the wrong context. Try to explain which contexts you would use this structure in. For example, when you're writing instructions in a recipe, you would use command words. You would not tend to use them in a formal letter.
- Writing clear examples of structures that the learner is struggling with so that they can practise.

## 10. Communicate with home

If your students' parents understand what they are doing at school, it gives the students an advantage. Ensure that you are communicating effectively with home by making letters clear and accessible. This means using short sentences, no jargon, and translating them into the parents' first language if necessary. Encourage them to come to parents' evenings, and provide a translator if you need to. Give them reminders of the topics you are currently covering, and suggest that they could do research at home in their first language. Additionally, you could give them a list of useful websites for homework or further information about school.

### Five principles to guide EAL pedagogy



## Appendix 2: St Ethelbert's Teacher Toolkit

This toolkit is part of the school strategy to build a highly effective culture of professional learning and targeting developments in key curriculum, teaching & learning priorities.

**A CULTURE OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING** - We aim to enable teaching staff to engage critically with research and evidence-based practices, promoting time for teachers to discuss and reflect with colleagues. We want teachers to have a secure understanding of, and recognise, their strengths and areas for development, and be highly reflective about their practice in a safe and constructive environment.

**A CULTURE OF HIGH AMBITION FOR ALL PUPILS** - Teachers create classroom environments that promote high expectations, especially for pupils facing additional barriers or vulnerabilities. They communicate a belief in the academic potential of all pupils, through the use of intentional and consistent language that promotes age-relevant challenge and aspiration. Teachers set tasks that stretch pupils, but which are achievable, within the context of our ambitious curriculum. Classrooms are a place where making mistakes and learning from them (and the need for effort and perseverance) are part of the daily routine. We start from a clear shared agreement that learning involves a lasting change in pupils' capabilities or understanding.

**A CULTURE OF MOTIVATED PUPILS** - Teachers are highly aware of the levels of pupil motivation and design learning in a way that supports pupils to be successful and master the ambitious content. This helps pupils to journey from needing extrinsic motivation (stickers, verbal praise and rewards) to being motivated to work intrinsically (based on their prior experiences of success and reward from making a personal investment into their learning).

KEY FEATURE OF PRACTICE to HELP ALL PUPILS LEARN	What teachers should know:	What this looks like in practice:
Curriculum and planning	<p>Knowing our curriculum well is an important starting point for effective teaching and learning. Our curriculum has been developed to support teachers to know the order and sequence that concepts should be taught.</p> <p>The curriculum provides clarity about the most important concepts that</p>	<p>Avoid overloading working memory, by taking into account pupils' prior knowledge when planning how much new information to introduce.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check that the majority of pupils are secure in their knowledge of previous concepts before introducing new concepts and content</li></ul>

	<p>should be assessed – this should inform teachers planning and preparation and ensure a focus on ensuring all pupils have the chance to learn the most important knowledge and skills.</p> <p>When planning lessons teachers should consider how:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prior knowledge plays an important role in how pupils learn;</li> <li>• when prior knowledge is weak, pupils are more likely to develop misconceptions, particularly if new ideas are introduced too quickly</li> <li>• teaching activities align closely with the key concepts that need to be taught</li> <li>• possible pitfalls and misconceptions for pupils can be anticipated and avoided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you checked what the prior knowledge of the children should be?</li> </ul> <p>Reducing distractions that take attention away from what is being taught (e.g. keeping the complexity of a task to a minimum, so that attention is focused on the content).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal number of slides showing essential information</li> <li>• Displays to model the key learning</li> <li>• Ensure pupils know the key concept of the lesson</li> <li>• Ensure the activity matches the key outcome</li> </ul> <p>Build on pupils' prior knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for possible misconceptions</li> <li>• Link what pupils already know to what is being taught</li> </ul> <p>Increase likelihood of material being retained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balancing exposition, repetition, practice and retrieval of critical knowledge and skills e.g. (I do, we do, you do).</li> </ul> <p>Teachers should design practice opportunities, activities and retrieval tasks that provide just enough support so that pupils experience a high success rate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent practice is explicitly linked to teacher's model</li> </ul>
Learning activities and Adaptation	Guides, worksheets, scaffolds and worked examples can help pupils	Teachers should model effectively by exposing potential pitfalls and explaining how to avoid them.

	<p>apply new ideas, but should be gradually removed as pupil expertise increases.</p> <p>Pupils should have regular practice and opportunities to apply their new knowledge in ways that provides the teacher evidence and reassurance that they have learned/remembered what they are taught.</p> <p>Seeking to understand pupils' differences, including their different levels of prior knowledge and potential barriers to learning, is an essential part of teaching.</p> <p>Adapting teaching in a responsive way,</p> <p>including by providing targeted support to pupils who are struggling, is likely to increase pupil success. This approach is often more effective than more elaborate interventionist approaches that happen after the lesson.</p> <p>Every teacher can improve pupils' literacy,</p> <p>including by explicitly teaching reading, writing</p> <p>and oral language skills. High-quality classroom talk can support pupils to articulate key ideas, consolidate understanding and extend their vocabulary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers to model and narrate the process of the new learning</li> </ul> <p>Activities and tasks in class should enable critical thinking and problem solving by first teaching the necessary foundational content knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check knowledge of subject building blocks are secure prior to problem solving</li> </ul> <p>Removing scaffolding only when pupils are achieving a high degree of success in applying previously taught material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Word banks, visual aids, sentence stems, maths caddys, Inprint</li> <li>Providing sufficient opportunity for pupils to consolidate and practise applying new knowledge and skills.</li> <li>Breaking tasks down into constituent components when first setting up independent practice</li> </ul> <p>Provide opportunity for all pupils to experience success, by adapting lessons, whilst maintaining high expectations for all, so that all pupils have the opportunity to meet expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible groupings</li> <li>Effective use of adults to support</li> </ul> <p>Pre teaching where appropriate; Building in additional practice or removing unnecessary distractions, inputs or anecdotes / off on a tangent – if needed track back</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sharp focus on the key concept</li> <li>Less teacher talk</li> <li>Use meaningful questioning</li> </ul>
--	---	--

		<p>Considering carefully whether intervening within lessons with individuals and small groups would be more efficient and effective than planning different lessons for different groups of pupils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible groupings</li> <li>• Check for understanding throughout the lesson</li> </ul> <p>Modelling and requiring high-quality oral language, recognising that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use questions and in-class discussions to extend and challenge pupils (e.g. by modelling new vocabulary or asking pupils to justify answers).</li> <li>• Provide scaffolds for pupil talk to increase the focus and rigour of dialogue.</li> </ul>
Effective use of Assessment	<p>Effective assessment is critical to teaching because it provides teachers with information about pupils' understanding and needs</p> <p>Good assessment helps teachers avoid being over-influenced by potentially misleading factors, such as how busy pupils appear and the completion of pupils' work.</p> <p>To be of value, teachers use information from assessments to inform the decisions they make, including changes to this lesson, and following lessons, and make suitable adaptations, such as extra practice for some pupils.</p>	<p>Avoid common assessment pitfalls, by planning formative assessment tasks linked to lesson objectives and thinking ahead about what would indicate understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick questions, talk partners, whiteboards, responsive marking throughout the lesson, mini plenaries, next steps</li> </ul> <p>Drawing conclusions about what pupils have learned by looking at patterns of performance over a number of assessments/ a range of their work outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marking policy</li> <li>• Assessment tasks</li> </ul> <p>Check that learning can be securely applied across a range of contexts. Structuring tasks and questions to enable the identification of knowledge gaps and misconceptions</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre plan questions to check prior knowledge and new understanding</li> </ul> <p>Monitoring pupil work during lessons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including checking for misconceptions</li> <li>• Verbal feedback and live marking during lessons in place of written feedback after lessons where appropriate.</li> </ul>
--	--	--