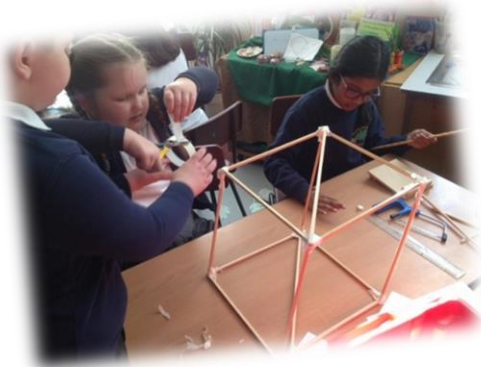


*'Encouraging each other, overflowing with hope.'*

## *Curriculum Commitment*



*Compassion*

*Fellowship*

*Trust*

*Resilience*

*Respect*

## Introduction

Our ambitious curriculum at St Thomas' CE Primary Academy, is underpinned by current research and our own context (as stated below). It has been skilfully designed to take account of the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Primary National Curriculum.

We teach the full range of core and foundation subjects as separate disciplines, as this provides opportunity for our children to gain greater insight and understanding of what piques their interest and what they enjoy in preparation for their future. The subjects have been carefully organised and sequenced, so that knowledge, understanding, skills and concepts are built over time both horizontally and vertically.

To enhance our curriculum, we ensure that a wide range of experiences are provided to our children (considering the voice of the child) which takes many forms such as out of school visits, roles of responsibility and a wide array of lunchtime and after school clubs which include; sport, music, The Arts and being active in their pursuit for change in the world around them.

Inspirational and skilled subject leaders are the driving force behind our curriculum and we value the opportunity to work collaboratively to reflect on our practice to improve teaching and learning.



## St Thomas' CE Primary Academy Curriculum Drivers

Underpinning our 'curriculum design' are our key drivers. These shape our curriculum, bring about the aims and values of our school, and respond to the needs of our school community. Our curriculum drivers at St Thomas' CE Primary Academy are Safe and Secure, Aspire to Achieve, Happy and Healthy and Relationships:

Drivers	Justification	Evidence-Base
Safe and Secure	<p>Digital Literacy and Online Safety</p> <p>Many of our children engage in online gaming and social networking. We want children to avoid risky behaviour online. We recognise that working and communicating online will be a key skill in the future employment of our children.</p>	<p>Learning Mentor Evidence of issues related to online activity and gaming, prevalence of children using games aimed at an adult audience, children's use of multi-player online games.</p>
Aspire to Achieve	<p>Reading</p> <p>We believe that the ability to read is fundamental to pupils' development as independent learners. In order to read across the curriculum with fluency, accuracy, understanding and enjoyment, pupils need to be equipped with a range of strategies, drawing on and combining knowledge of context, grammar, punctuation, phonics and word recognition. Reading fluently and enjoyment is a key factor in ensuring pupils' thrive in school.</p>	<p>EEF Evidence on the impact of Teaching Reading comprehension strategies <a href="#">EEF reading comprehension strategies</a>, recognition of the "Word Gap" for disadvantaged students, Early Years baseline data, <a href="#">EEF Phonics Evidence</a>, a number of St Thomas' pupils for whom English is an Additional Language.</p>
Aspire to Achieve	<p>National Curriculum</p> <p>The National Curriculum is required to be taught in all maintained primary schools.</p>	<p><i>"All local-authority-maintained schools in England must teach these programmes of study."</i></p> <p><a href="#">national curriculum 2014</a></p>

<p><b>Happy and Healthy</b></p>	<p>Healthy Mind and Healthy Body</p> <p>We recognise that children are participating less in exercise/sport outside of school and that food choices are not always well informed. We know that improved physical health can lead to improved focus and mental health.</p> <p>We know that children are at risk of low self-esteem, anxiety and poor mental health. We want to ensure children have effective strategies to build their resilience, their ability to resolve problems and to recognise their emotions.</p>	<p>Observations of lunch &amp; playtime foods, Government incentive to improve Children’s Health: <a href="#">childhood obesity a plan for action</a> School Survey of Sports Participation</p> <p>Increase in the need for Learning Mentor interventions, number of referrals to Healthy Minds. Pupil Voice questionnaires, National research including <a href="#">the good childhood report 2018</a></p>
<p><b>Relationships</b></p>	<p>Leadership for our children &amp; Working Together</p> <p>Being able to function effectively as part of a team is a crucial life-skill in a world where collaborative working is increasingly common. Children need to develop leadership skills and an awareness of how to work within a group taking on different roles to ensure a successful outcome.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of pupils who find collaboration challenging especially in EYFS &amp; KS1.</p> <p>Evidence suggest that Collaborative working supports pupils learning: <a href="#">EEF Collaborative Learning Evidence</a></p>
<p><b>Aspire to Achieve</b></p>	<p>Careers and Future</p> <p>We acknowledge that not all children will have an awareness of the range of careers open to them both in and beyond the local areas. Our aim is that children are ambitious for their futures and make informed choices about their education to reach their goals.</p>	<p>According to Indices of Deprivation our schools are in areas where Education, Skills and Training are in need of improvement. <a href="#">Index Multiple Deprivation</a></p>
<p><b>Aspire to Achieve</b></p>	<p>Basic, Adventurous and Technical Vocabulary</p> <p>Limited vocabulary can lead to limited learning so at St Thomas’ CE Primary Academy we recognise the need to expose pupils to broad, wide-ranging vocabulary and subject specific terminology and the ability to debate and engage effectively in conversation.</p>	<p>School-based evidence suggests that pupils are limited in their understanding of tasks, questions and texts due to limited exposure to a broad range of vocabulary.</p> <p><a href="#">Why Closing the Word Gap is Important-Oxford Language Report</a></p> <p><a href="#">EEF Oral Language Interventions</a></p>

<p><b>Relationships</b></p>	<p>Cultural Awareness</p> <p>Children live in a diverse world and it is our responsibility to ensure that the children of St Thomas' CE Primary Academy are culturally aware. This is achieved through interaction, the challenging of stereotypes, celebrating diversity, empathising and learning about difference. By encouraging our pupils to engage in positive contact with others, known as "the contact hypothesis", we are able to dispel myths, breakdown barriers and reduce prejudice.</p>	
<p><b>Relationships</b></p>	<p>Family Engagement</p> <p>At St Thomas' CE Primary Academy, we place great importance on the partnership between school and home. We know that our children learn best when they feel supported and encouraged by their teachers and parents. By engaging effectively with parents &amp; helping them feel part of the school, we are able to offer them access to support, which in turn helps our children both academically and pastorally.</p>	<p><a href="#">EEF Parental Engagement</a></p>
<p><b>Relationships</b></p>	<p>Social Capital</p> <p>We want our children to feel connected and committed to their local area and learn that individually and collectively they can add value and make a difference to the place in which they live. This is especially important in a local context where children come from a number of different countries, cultures and backgrounds.</p>	

## Curriculum Intent

At St Thomas' our core values sit at the heart of our ambitious and engaging curriculum which encourages, challenges and guides all of our pupils to succeed as they journey through school. All of our children will flourish through a broad and rich curriculum full of experiences and opportunities, building knowledge and developing skills and understanding of the world around them. Our curriculum strives for pupils' to develop their character so that they leave us prepared for a future of hope and possibility.

## Curriculum Implementation

1. Through our research of meta-cognition and pedagogy, we know how children learn but we also know that children forget. Therefore, our curriculum is sequenced in a way that makes learning stick. We believe that children require concepts as they are the 'hanging baskets for knowledge' (Mary Myatt) and allows children to build schema. By providing a context for learning and a purposeful curriculum, children learn to build upon conceptual content that prepares them to transform from novice to experts as they secure substantive and disciplinary knowledge.
2. Our spiral curriculum revisits concepts to ensure coherence and depth marries knowledge and skills, which have now been introduced and implemented across the school. Through these concepts, children will make connections as they build their knowledge and will be provided with mapped out opportunities to create links and retrieve prior learning so it 'sticks' and can be remembered.
3. Through our pedagogy of a knowledge-engaged curriculum, children explore 'Big questions' in each subject. These form the entry point for new learning and are then supplemented with subsequent questions as the unit progresses. Classroom environments support these by displaying key knowledge as it builds. Children are exposed to wide ranging vocabulary within each subject discipline (**BAT**- 1. Basic words, 2. Adventurous Vocabulary and 3. Technical Vocabulary) to expand and develop disciplinary knowledge within subjects and make connections.
4. Throughout a unit of learning, all children will have opportunities to engage in experiences to enhance their learning, and further develop their knowledge and understanding. This could be as simple as sharing a high-quality text, school trip, a visitor into school or a practical activity or experience led by school staff.

5. We recognise the importance of quality texts and oracy in our curriculum pedagogy. When referring to research, we identify with Dan Willingham, who suggests that the 'brain privileges story' which means they are remembered differently to other resources. Allowing children time to speak, formulate and share their learning is also an important part of our curriculum implementation.
6. As a result of our strong Christian ethos that permeates through our school family, our core values (Respect, Resilience, Fellowship, Trust and Compassion) equip our children with learning behaviours which enable them to be successful in our school and our wider community. Reflection and Restorative Practice is threaded through our curriculum offer. Our children understand that hard-work and resilience improves ability and outcomes.
7. Our assessment and reporting system includes:  
Ongoing assessment by the class teacher throughout each lesson, through questioning, observation and dialogue to inform next steps in teaching. 'Mind -maps of Knowledge' are used for prior assessment to establish existing knowledge and are built upon over the unit of work to answer the 'Big question' and these are then used as a retrieval tool to secure children's learning. Work is assessed both by verbal and written feedback (pupil, peer and teacher).

At St Thomas' the distance travelled from the starting point is evidenced through pupils, **'knowing more, remembering more and doing more'**.

In addition to the above, we will have three 'formal' assessment points in the year. We will use [NFER tests](#) for Reading and Mathematics, as these will provide us with a [standardised score](#) to tell us how much progress children are making and if they are on track to meet National Curriculum expectations for their age range. Furthermore, tests will also allow teachers to identify next steps in learning.

Teacher assessment is used for writing across the school. In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 Reading, Writing and Maths are teacher assessed.

## Impact

Our children will have developed their character, confidence and curiosity. Through encouragement they will have built knowledge, skills and Christian values which will enable them to get ahead in education and life. They will know more, remember more, do more and enjoy more and deal with challenge courageously. They will have hope for themselves and others and 'live life to its fullest'.

