

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

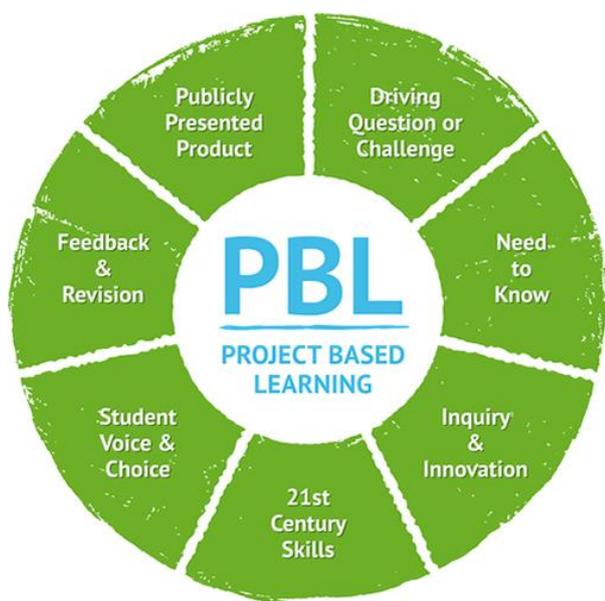
At the end of each project the children prepare a public exhibition in order to showcase their learning and talk about the skills and knowledge acquired during the project.

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/>

Project-based learning. Photo

Credit: zulama.com

Literacy

At St Catherine's we view Reading and Writing as the keys to unlocking learning across the curriculum. Quality phonics teaching is delivered daily in EYFS and KS1 and is delivered to the whole class, meaning that every child is exposed to all phonics phases and the rich phonic knowledge of their teacher and classmates. Where needed, extra support in phonics is delivered to children in short sharp sessions, in addition to their lessons as a class. Phonics continues to be covered in KS2 as part of the spelling curriculum to enable children to be confident and competent spellers. Within these spelling lessons, children also learn the origin of words with reference to the classical root when appropriate.

All children at St Catherine's have reading sessions daily and will be heard by their teacher or a skilled TA at least once a week. Early readers are taught to apply their phonics skills to decode the words in a text in order to find meaning. As children develop as readers, they are taught the skills of comprehension and inference in order to fully understand the texts they read. We view vocabulary as an essential part of reading and high importance is given to the teaching of vocabulary so that our children have a rich vocabulary to draw

upon. Reading for Pleasure is very important to us here at St Catherine's and our staff keep up to date with new children's fiction. They share wonderful texts with the children to help foster a love for reading that our children can carry with them throughout their lives. Children have the opportunity at school to read simply for pleasure at least once per week and all classes benefit from story time with their teacher daily.

Writing at St Catherine's is developed through exposure to quality texts and is underpinned by the clear and effective teaching of grammar. Children study the features and language of particular text types carefully before practising each skill and applying it to their own writing on a range of subjects and across a variety of text types. Our children are knowledgeable about grammatical terminology and use this knowledge to develop their own, and others' writing and to edit and improve their work. Proofreading is seen as a key skill and our children are taught these keys as an integral part of the writing sequence. 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 as well as through their usual Literacy books.

Maths

At St Catherine's, we aim to ensure that every child enjoys maths and is engaged in every lesson. We work hard to encourage children to have a 'growth mindset', and begin each lesson with a 'can do' attitude. We use the Concrete Pictorial Approach (CPA) approach, which means that all children have access to, and use, concrete objects and maths resources, pictures and numbers to help their understanding. Research, and seeing it in action at St Catherine's, has shown that the CPA approach is an extremely effective system. By using this consistent approach from Years 1-6, children are able to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts and strive to master all areas of maths.

For the past 4 years, we have used the 'Maths No Problem' scheme which is one of only two schemes that have been recommended by the National Centre of Excellence in Teaching Mathematics (NCETM). Through the use of repeated models (such as 'bar modelling'), children at St Catherine's are able to combine learnt methods and maths knowledge, from previous years, to build on and improve in this subject year on year.

In addition to maths lessons being taught every day, children also benefit from short and frequent fluency and times table teaching sessions. This ensures that the fundamental aspects of maths, such as the four operations of calculation, are kept at the forefront of children's minds throughout the year.

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 speak to Mr Fitch 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

Computer science, information technology and an understanding of digital literacy are vital skills that every child needs. To ensure that children are exposed to a wide range of resources, programmes and skills, we use the Purple Mash scheme to deliver computing lessons. This also allows children to access high quality resources at home to enhance their learning. Children are taught to: write and debug programmes, use a variety of software to design and create content and to gain a greater understanding of computing networks. E-safety is an essential part of every computing lesson and children learn how to use electronic devices safely, respectfully and responsibly.

Music

At St Catherine's we understand how music can help develop skills in all areas of the curriculum. This includes listening skills, concentration, creativity, intuition, perseverance, self-confidence and the ability to work in a group.

Our aim is to ensure all children have the chance to access music during their time at St Catherine's. This can be through specialist music lessons, choir, workshops, whole school singing and school productions.

Music is taught through the Charanga musical school scheme. This scheme allows children to develop their understanding of the key musical elements; pulse, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo, timbre, structure, texture and notation. Charanga also provides opportunities for all children to listen to and appraise a wide range of music. They will partake in musical activities such as games, singing and playing instruments. Create and explore a range of musical styles through improvisation and composition and have regular opportunities to perform.

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

History at St. Catherine's is taught through the historical themes which are a major focus of our topic work. It aims to inspire pupil's curiosity to know more about the past and how significant events and individuals in history shape our world today. Pupils will acquire knowledge and understanding about Britain's past and also the history of other countries and the wider world. The teaching of history aims to develop a sense of chronology and an awareness of the process of change over time. It will equip pupils to think critically, ask perceptive questions, weigh evidence, sift arguments and develop perspective and judgement. Children will study a range of historical events and eras and will research, analyse and question how our knowledge of the past is constructed and shaped from historical sources.

Art

Art across the school falls across 6 key areas: drawing, painting, sculpture, textiles, collage and printing. Every year group covers the three main areas in the national curriculum: drawing, painting and sculpture with the other areas being covered in alternating year groups. From year 1 onwards, pupils will learn new skills appropriate to their age range and continue to develop these as they progress through KS1 to KS2. A unit covering one of the three main areas of art is begun with the study of an artist for enquiry and subject reference followed by the learning of a skill. Pupils then have lessons dedicated to developing said skill before planning, adapting and creating a final piece.

Geography

At St Catherine's we realise the importance of children having an understanding of their place in the world; starting with an appreciation of their school and its grounds and moving on to consider Hoddesdon; its location and land use and how it has changed over time. We learn about the county of Hertfordshire and key industries supported within it as well as developing an understanding of our place within the UK and wider world. We encourage children to experience fieldwork so that their learning is rooted in experience of the world around them. Using maps, globes and digital technology, we learn about how the world is represented on a global and local way.

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'. We follow the 'Jigsaw' scheme of work where PHSE is taught as a whole class. Discussion and the willingness to listen to others and share ideas are key to our teaching of PHSE. The Jigsaw scheme 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.

As St Catherine's have their own pool, we are in a unique position to ensure that a high percentage of our students leave primary school confident in water and able to swim a minimum distance. The curriculum indicates that children should be able to: swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres; use a range of strokes effectively [for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke] and perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations. To enable our school to achieve this, we will follow the Swim England Learn to Swim guidelines as a way to gradually progress to a desired outcome.

French

Children from Year 3 to Year 6 learn French as their language part of the National Curriculum. Each week class teachers lead 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.