



**St. Joseph's Catholic
Infant & Junior Schools
Birtley**

**Curriculum Rationale
and Strategy**

September 2022



St. Joseph's
Catholic Infant
& Junior Schools
Birtley



OUR MISSION

Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone, to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.

Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of Christ shall end divisions:

All are welcome in this place.

OUR VISION

Lord, in our daily lives, may we:

Love and serve like St. Joseph, care and protect like St. Joseph, work and teach like St. Joseph, show compassion and loyalty like St. Joseph, have trust and faith like St. Joseph.

We follow St. Joseph's virtues and remember our significance in God's world. Amen.



*We need to embrace
the curriculum as a
never-ending story.*

(Myatt, 2022)

**High Challenge – Low
Threat**

(Myatt, 2022)

St. Joseph's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools Curriculum Statement of Intent

"In a democratic society which prizes equality of opportunity, the curriculum should be based first and foremost on the knowledge we consider all young people should have the access to and begin to acquire during their school years."

(The Curriculum: Gallimaufry to Coherence - Myatt)

Our **curriculum intent** comes directly from our school mission statement – a metaphor for ongoing educational formation in our schools.

'Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone, to heal and strengthen serve and teach to live the word they've known. Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace, here the love of Christ shall end divisions.'

St. Joseph's staff and local governing committee firmly believes that, in order for pupils to grow and develop in way that supports their acquisition of skills and knowledge, we need to expose them to a culture within a community which promotes and encourages the values and attributes required to support their spiritual, academic, physical, social and emotional needs. The metaphor describes the formation that pupils of St. Joseph's community will undertake while embarking on their primary education with us. In order to fulfil our mission statement, our staff recognise that:

- each daily encounter with our pupils matters
- the subject content taught matters
- the moments of feedback to pupils in the classroom matter
- the high-expectations and low-threat approach matter
- the progression and links between subject content, outcomes and assessment matter
- each child will develop spiritually and personally - and this matters.

While we want pupils to experience a knowledge-rich curriculum, we also want them to understand why aspiration, ambition, confidence, and life-experience are important for their personal development journey. The curriculum is not limited to the learning that takes place inside of the classroom, neither does it start at 8:45am and end at 3:15pm. The curriculum is the ongoing schemata which is taught over a number of days, weeks, months and years to reach a point whereby pupils can be wholly prepared, ready and confident to enter key stage 3 – ready to embark on the next stages of their academic journey.

Most schools will say that each child should develop respect, understanding, tenacity, responsibility, resilience and problem-solving abilities and St. Joseph's are no different. However, our school mission is underpinned by a Christ-centred approach, in which we use St. Joseph as our role-model. In our vision statement, we say together:

"Lord, in our daily lives, may we love and serve like St. Joseph, care and protect like St. Joseph, work and teach like St. Joseph, show compassion and loyalty like St. Joseph, have trust and faith like St. Joseph. We follow St. Joseph's virtues and remember our significance in God's world. Amen."

Our curriculum is not just about our intent, it is about how pupils and the school's community go about their daily lives to demonstrate that we have understand the curriculum's core components.

St. Joseph's Infant and Junior Schools curriculum begins with the child and their relevant starting points, no matter whether they commence their St. Joseph's schooling in Early Years, or further up the school. Each child's lived experience will be different - given their life experience - and we recognise that no two children are alike. With this in time, the government provide a national curriculum mandate, which provides St. Joseph's Infant and Juniors Schools with the building blocks of our curriculum strategy, but **our ultimate goal is for our pupils to know more, and remember more. Evidence has proven that children, who access a well-sequenced and logical curriculum, with clear opportunities for practice, progress and application, will become adept at keeping pace with their peers, nationally.**

Our **curriculum structure** comprises of a series of short, medium and long-term overviews which logically sequence and demonstrate progression in the core components of each subject area. First and foremost, our core curriculum objective is to ensure that all children leave key stage 2 being able to read: we have therefore selected a series of texts taken from across the genres and types of text. The reading book is the enabler of the curriculum and, wherever possible,

provides the link to and from other subject areas e.g. humanities or art and design. The texts are purposely chosen as high-quality books which expose pupils to syntax and ambitious vocabulary and support pupils to gain a greater understanding of the chosen subject area. Once the core text has been established, all other aspects of subject content is identified and planned sequentially (based on prior and future learning).

The learning journey is the next biggest factor in our curriculum plan. For example, in history, the learning journey is sequenced so that pupils:

- identify a core component
- analyse a core component
- record the core component
- investigate the core component
- explain the core component
- evaluate the core component

N.B. the core component could be an aspect of an historical era e.g. causative factors for the commencement of World War I.

The learning journey sequence is one of the most important components of teaching and learning and needs to be executed correctly so that pupils have the contextual knowledge to support their understanding. The core component also requires frequent revision so that it becomes engrained into a child's long-term memory so that it is 'learnt'.

At the beginning of each term, the knowledge organiser or subject content overviews (SCOs), will be included at the start of each unit of study and will also be included on the school's website. The SCOs will identify the knowledge that will be taught and learnt throughout the unit of study, which will be taught discretely.

The **impact of the curriculum** impact will be evident in several ways. Firstly, pupils will be keeping sufficient pace with the curriculum so that they are judged to be inline, or above their counterparts, nationally in national testing assessments e.g. end of key stage 2 assessments.

Additionally, pupils will have demonstrated that they are familiar with the key knowledge/threshold concepts and the vast majority of children will be able to recall them. The recall of key facts will demonstrate that changes to long-term memory have been observed.

However, as with any curriculum it is open to review, monitoring and evaluation and may be subject to change, depending upon feedback, pupil voice, world changes, or progress reviews.

Outside of the national curriculum, there are also additional objectives that we want our children to achieve including:

- knowing the journey of St. Joseph's Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Birtley - the associated heritage story of their being, and who they are.
- recognising their place in modern society and the British Values which underpin our country
- understanding and reacting to current affairs, as and when the big issues arise
- developing social justice for themselves as well as their local, national and global counterparts.

If we do all of the above, then the children will leave St. Joseph's School in Year 6, having lived by St. Joseph's virtues and having followed the curriculum and it would be realistic to assume that they have indeed fulfilled the expectations of our curriculum - and it has been successful.

Each school has the opportunity to craft a curriculum which is bespoke to the needs of their pupils. By delivering a high-quality inclusive curriculum, which all pupils access, learners will inevitably make progress from their respective starting points.

We should teach and 'embrace the curriculum as a never-ending story' so that our children become life-long learners - full of ambition, hope, drive, determination, matched with a desire to succeed. By doing this, we know we will have prepared our children to become young adults, eager to find their place in the world.