

# CURRICULUM STATEMENT

The curriculum at St Luke's is based on the current national curriculum requirements and is underpinned by the school and curriculum aims:

## SCHOOL AIMS

St Luke's CE Primary School aims to work in partnership with our parents to:

- Strive for excellence and celebrate achievement in all aspects of school life
- Value all individuals through inclusion, tolerance and self respect
- Reflect the Christian foundation of the school in all that we do
- Provide a creative and relevant curriculum for all, within a safe and stimulating environment
- Foster independence and a love of life-long learning

## CURRICULUM AIMS

The aims of our school curriculum are to promote:

### Success

having the essential learning skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT);  
having an enquiring mind; for pupils to think for themselves, to process information, to reason, question and evaluate  
effectively communicating in a range of ways  
understanding how they learn and to learn from their mistakes  
knowing about big ideas and events that shape our world  
enjoyment of learning and motivation to achieve the best they can, now and in the future

### Confidence

having a sense of self-worth and personal identity and dealing well with their emotions  
having secure values and beliefs and having principles to distinguish right from wrong  
making healthy lifestyle choices  
recognising their talents and having ambitions  
being willing to try new things, take measured risks and stay safe, and make the most of opportunities  
being open to the excitement and inspiration offered by the natural world and human achievements

## **Responsibility**

being enterprising and well prepared for life

able to work co-operatively, respecting others and acting with integrity

understanding their own and others' cultures and traditions, within the context of British Heritage, and having a strong sense of their place in the world

challenging injustice, being committed to human rights and striving to live peaceably with others

sustaining and improving the environment, both locally and globally

taking account of the needs of present and future generations in the choices they make

## **ORGANISATION OF THE CURRICULUM**

The school curriculum is carefully planned to ensure balance and progression in all National Curriculum subjects. Ofsted (2009) reported that St Luke's makes "untiring efforts to find new ways to enrich pupils' experiences." We have a strong commitment to the creative arts, and were awarded Arts Mark Gold in 2008 and again in 2012.

The curriculum consists of the core subjects English, Mathematics, Science and ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and the foundation subjects of Art, Design Technology, Geography, History, Music, PE (games, athletics, dance, gymnastics and swimming) and Religious Education. Citizenship and PSHE (personal, social and health education) are also important aspects of our curriculum. Pupils in Y3-Y6 also enjoy a weekly lesson of French.

A recent large-scale review of our curriculum has led to themed projects covering several subject requirements in all key stages. This allows children to make links in their learning across different subjects and ensures that the curriculum is relevant and exciting. Children are taught in mixed-ability classes, with teachers using a variety of groupings within the class depending on the activity and expected outcomes. In Mathematics children are in ability sets from the second half of the autumn term in Y3. There are two sets in each year group and the sets are regularly reviewed. We believe that setting for Maths enables a better focus on differentiation, challenge and support for all pupils.

Teachers produce half-termly curriculum information sheets for parents, which are also published on the school website: please see separate year group pages.

The RE curriculum at St Luke's is the Sefton syllabus linked with the Liverpool Diocesan syllabus. It is broadly Christian based, but also includes knowledge and understanding of other world religions. Parents have the right to exclude their child from Religious Education or to have a denominational element added to the syllabus for their child where appropriate.

Class teachers teach music with their own classes. Peripatetic teachers offer opportunities for children to learn guitar, woodwind, brass and stringed instruments, providing a weekly individual or small-group lesson. Each year we invest in the Wider Opportunities Scheme which enables a whole year group to learn to play an instrument and perform. In 2012-13 this involved Y4 and the clarinet; in 2013-14 we are investigating diversification into percussion. We have a growing number of children in our choir and school orchestra and

they perform at different school and community events throughout the year. We now have a separate music room with fantastic acoustics and we hold an outdoor summer music concert each year.

Sex and Relationships and Drugs Education programmes have been developed through consultation with Governors and parents and are taught as part of our science and PSHE curriculum. A series of lessons devoted to sex education is taught in the summer term in Y5 and further developed in the summer term of Y6. Drugs education is an integral part of the PSHE programme throughout the school. Information on drug abuse and misuse (including alcohol and tobacco) is part of the Y6 scheme of work. Information meetings for parents are offered prior to the taught sessions and parents are able to withdraw children from any aspect of the programme if they wish.

### **Approach to Reading**

At St Luke's we believe that teaching children to read is the single most important thing we can do to increase their chances of success in school and in the workplace. Reading acquisition is considered as a combination of accuracy, speed and comprehension, beginning with the basic skill of phonic acquisition. Synthetic phonics is taught from the start of reception using the Read Write Inc scheme. This was a huge investment in resources and training for all staff in 2012-13. Throughout reception and Y1, children are grouped within their year group according to ability and taught to read using the scheme, supported by a huge variety of other texts. Parents and carers are encouraged to contribute by not only listening to their child read but also reading with them - sharing stories, poems, playscripts, non-fiction books and comics/magazines. The scheme is fun and interactive and includes lots of partner work and peer support to develop the skills of decoding and comprehension, leading to successful, confident readers and writers. Children are regularly assessed and regrouped so that the ability range in each group is narrow and teachers can really focus on the stage that the children are at. Once children reach the end of the scheme they are reading confidently at the equivalent of Y1 age related expectations. Where children have not reached this level at the end of Y1, they will continue with the phonics element of Read Write Inc as they move into Y2. Our School uses a wide variety of book banded books for children to read from Y2 to Y6, these are designed to support pupils reading in a structured manner to encourage comprehension skills, enjoyment and a love of reading.

### **Homework**

Homework is a valuable means of extending and reinforcing work done in the classroom. Following consultation with parents and pupils, the homework policy is regularly reviewed. Children in every year group are given homework activities, and parents are asked to support their child where necessary and to inform the class teacher if their child has difficulty with a particular activity or concept. Homework includes reading or sharing books, spellings/phonics, Maths and English activities, preparation for "Show and Tell" or talks, and topic-related activities. In Reception, a newsletter is sent home detailing ways in which parents can support learning at home. From Y1-Y6 homework is given out on a Friday to be returned the following Wednesday, allowing children and parents the freedom to plan their homework around other out-of-school activities and commitments. Homework increases as children progress through the school, with Y1 pupils expected to do two

twenty-minute activities per week, plus reading, and Y6 pupils approximately half an hour each school day. All homework is valued and written homework is marked promptly.

When children are absent due to long-term illness, class teachers will be pleased to set tasks they can do at home as soon as they are feeling well enough. However, work will not be set for holiday absence, as holidays during term time are strongly discouraged.

### **Independent Learning**

Over the last two years we have researched and then introduced a more independent approach to learning at St Luke's. This is a long-term project and will feature on our school improvement plan for another two years at least. Alongside pupils we have identified what makes a great learner and have come with several skills, attitudes and dispositions that lead to successful learning. These are grouped under the acronym L.E.A.R.N. Thus, great learners at St Luke's:

- L      Learn for life
- E      Explore new things
- A      Ask good questions
- R      Reflect and Improve
- N      Never give up

Our most recent focus had been on asking good questions – this is pupils asking questions and teachers asking questions in order to take learning forward. Next term the big focus will be reflect and improve – giving and receiving feedback, editing work, sharing ideas.