

# ST. MARGARET CLITHEROW ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



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## LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY (Non-statutory School Policy)

**Ownership:** Curriculum Committee

Document Date: November 2017

Review Date: November 2018

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the:**

Curriculum Policy  
Behaviour Policy  
Assessment, Marking & Feedback Policy  
PSHE Policy  
DSEN Policy

The School provides an outstanding experience of Catholic worship, prayer and liturgy.  
Pupil achievement in Religious Education is outstanding.  
There is a real sense of unity and purpose.



**Section 48 Diocesan Inspection May 2014**

“Pupils make rapid progress because they are very keen to learn, and because the teaching is highly effective ... Behaviour is excellent. Pupils get along very well and enjoy school, accepting one another’s different views...”



**Ofsted March 2013**

*At St Margaret Clitherow School we are committed to Safeguarding Children  
Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our Church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him*

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## 1. Introduction

St Margaret Clitherow School is a caring, hardworking and cooperative environment for learning where the principle of life-long learning underpins all that we do. Our Mission statement guides daily practice and supports an expectation of personal excellence for everyone in their spiritual, moral, social and academic life. Our Learning and Teaching Policy aims to ensure that teachers, parents/carers and pupils are partners in learning experiences, enabling pupils to develop the necessary skills, values and attributes to fulfil their unique potential.

Our policy and practice is underpinned by the principles of Professor Guy Claxton's Building Learning Power (see Appendix 1).

## 2. Aims and Objectives

Learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone. Through our teaching we equip children with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to make informed choices about the important things in life. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy, rewarding and purposeful lives.

People learn best in different ways. At our school we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.

At St Margaret Clitherow we aim to:

- build learning power;
- develop successful learners who are creative, resourceful and able to identify and solve problems;
- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
- develop lively, imaginative and enquiring minds, the ability to question and reason rationally and apply their understanding;
- foster children's self esteem and help them build positive relationships with other people;
- encourage a respect for the ideas, attitudes, values, feelings and beliefs of others;
- foster skills for life-long learning;
- respect and celebrate diversity;
- encourage a deeper understanding of their community and help them to feel valued as part of this community;
- develop the necessary skills that will enable pupils to act as effective citizens.

## 3. Partnerships

Effective learning requires partnerships:

- peer to peer;
  - between pupils and teachers;
  - between pupils and teaching assistants;
  - between parents/carers, pupils and the school;
  - between staff, parents/carers, pupils and governors;
  - between the school and other agencies;
  - between the school and the wider community.
- Many of these attributes are recognised in our annual Heroic Lives Award in ~~KS2~~.

We work hard to ensure that energy and resources are devoted to developing these partnerships. Good communication between home and school is the key to success in this area. The school operates an 'open door' policy and proactively engages in dialogue with parents/carers to ensure that learning potential is maximised. The school website<sup>1</sup>, blogs<sup>2</sup> and twitter<sup>3</sup> is used as a tool to engage parents/carers with their children's learning.

#### **4. We believe that learning should be:**

##### **Active**

Pupils are encouraged to ask questions, make decisions, select resources, demonstrate and be involved (rather than compliant) in their education.

##### **Reflective**

We use open questions and encourage the pupils to evaluate their learning at various stages throughout a lesson; shared success criteria, sometimes built up by the pupils themselves enabling pupils to evaluate their learning and progress.

##### **Based upon progression**

Pupils are encouraged to practise new skills, evaluate their success and extend their learning which is built up carefully step by step through differentiated learning opportunities.

##### **Open to risk**

Pupils (and teachers) must be willing to take a risk in responding to the challenge of new learning. In order to be open to the challenge of new learning we aim to develop appropriate behaviours for learning (eg. resilience and determination).

##### **Cooperative**

We rarely learn on our own (although we might at times need the space to do this). Shared learning, through group or paired work is a powerful learning tool. Talk partners and sharing in groups will enable pupils the chance to practise their learning in a secure environment. Pupils are encouraged to develop the important skills of empathy, good listening and imitation through working with their peers in a range of situations.

##### **Stimulating and engaging**

Pupils are actively involved in their learning and are supported to work in a variety of ways throughout lessons. Pupils learn best in a variety of ways and, therefore, we aim to ensure that there are appropriate opportunities over time to cater for different learning styles (auditory, visual and kinaesthetic). Children are challenged to move their learning on through active participation in learning opportunities. Carefully planned dialogue with their teacher, other adults and peers aims to engage and enthuse pupils.

##### **Motivating**

Children should want to learn and therefore effort, determination and cooperation are praised alongside personal achievement. We encourage children to feel motivated by an internal appreciation of success (it feels good to know that you have helped yourself to learn), as well as through external reward systems (housepoints / headteacher's award / postcard home / stickers / treats / public praise). Children are motivated in different ways and adults aim to get to know what sort of motivation works best for individual children.

##### **Focused on 'how to learn'**

Children need to develop independent learning behaviours which will enable them to cope with the new learning needs as they move through life. We believe that being a resilient, resourceful, reflective and reciprocal learner are the 4 keys to building successful learning power.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.clitherow.herts.sch.uk>

<sup>2</sup> <https://clitherowspeaks.wordpress.com>

<sup>3</sup> [@StMClitherow](#)

## **5. As a result effective teaching should:**

- be dynamic and creative, aiming to inspire and engage all pupils;
- be part of a carefully (but not rigidly) planned sequence of learning;
- ensure that teaching is matched to the needs of individuals and groups;
- enable progress between lessons and within lessons;
- be at an appropriate pace;
- set high but realistic expectations for learners;
- use a range of teaching strategies suited to learners and learning
- build learning power;
- encourage independence, resilience, perseverance and determination;
- make use of established routines;
- be personalised to the interests of the learner;
- make effective use of ICT for learning;
- make effective use of other adults;
- provide opportunities for pupils to work independently, in pairs and in groups;
- make use of skilled and targeted open questioning;
- provide suitable challenge for all;
- develop effective relationships;
- be based upon continuous assessment, building upon prior learning;
- be open to change of direction as required by learning;
- provide opportunities for effective and timely feedback to learners (including peer to peer feedback);
- make use of clear (and sometimes pupil derived) success criteria and learning objectives;
- encourage confidence;
- make learning an enjoyable experience.

## **6. Learning depends upon effective relationships**

We aim to establish good personal relationships by:

- establishing clear expectations, creating trust among the staff, between staff and children and between the children;
- fostering mutual respect among the whole school community where all are friendly and polite at all times;
- valuing our parents/carers as partners and co-educators;
- encouraging good communication where everyone listens to each other and responds in a positive manner;
- enabling children to be aware of their feelings and find appropriate ways to express them;
- being firm but fair and consistent;
- empowering children to express their opinions through knowing that their ideas will be valued (communication boxes, dialogue and school council);
- creating an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding in which children value each other;
- providing a PSHE curriculum supported by a Catholic ethos that underpins the learning and values taught in the school.

## **7. Learning Environment**

The environment is carefully designed to support learning. A good learning environment will:

- support the spiritual, moral, social and educational development of all pupils;
- make use of all areas for learning, including the outdoors;

- be tidy & safe, allowing pupils the necessary room to work and to participate actively in their learning;
- be free from clutter and unnecessary distraction;
- facilitate a range of teaching and learning styles through careful organisation of furniture and equipment;
- be well resourced;
- enable independence through easily accessible, labelled resources and through visible prompts for learning;
- promote the development of basic skills such as reading, writing and maths;
- promote the development of speaking and listening skills (e.g. role play areas in EYFS and KS1);
- enable pupils to evaluate their success;
- celebrate a range of pupils' current work from a range of subjects, promoting good presentation;
- engage pupils through the use of interactive displays which reflect what is being learnt;
- reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the school population wherever possible;
- promote inclusion to meet children's individual needs.

## 8. Curriculum Planning

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that their planning meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Subject leaders are responsible for ensuring that there is an appropriate coverage and progression of skills within their subjects and therefore should monitor the planning files on a regular basis. Subjects are taught discretely as well as through cross curricular opportunities as part of the 'creative curriculum' (see curriculum policy).

### **Long Term Planning**

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that the long term plan for their year group is up to date in the Year Group Planning File (kept on the staff shared area). This is used to update the whole school curriculum map each year. The long term plan is made available to parents/carers at the start of each term and is available on the school website. Such plans show broad coverage in each of the subjects throughout the year.

### **Medium Term Planning**

Medium Term Planning, will indicate how objectives for a subject (or subjects) will be covered over time and will indicate briefly how the objective will be covered and assessed.

Termly plans for Literacy & Numeracy are updated before the beginning of each term and should be placed in the Year Group Planning File (on the staff shared area).

Medium Term plans for RE are created according to the needs of 'The Way, the Truth and the Life Scheme', taking into account the Levels of Attainment for RE and the Curriculum Directory.





All other subjects are planned on a termly or half-termly basis according to the topic covered; some by their nature may be cross curricular; subject coverage must be made clear.

### **Short Term Planning**

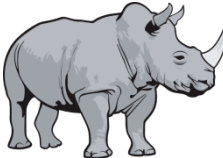



Short term planning will indicate what the learning will look like over the course of the week. This will include differentiated objectives and tasks, groupings and how adults / peers / ICT will be used to support the learning.

Plans will be annotated by teachers and are subject to change necessitated by the learning taking place. Effective annotations will be used to inform assessments and also to plan for the following lessons.

**Our focus on Building Learning Power involves developing 17 characteristics as follows**

<b>Resilience</b>	<b>Resourcefulness</b>	<b>Reciprocity</b>	<b>Reflectiveness</b>
			
Absorption	Questioning	Interdependence	Planning
Managing Distractions	Making Links	Collaboration	Revising
Noticing	Imagining	Empathy & Listening	Distilling
Perseverance	Reasoning	Imitation	Meta-Learning
	Capitalising		

## Understanding the Characteristics of Learning

Characteristic	Involves ...
<p><b>Resilience</b></p> 	<p style="color: red;">Being ready, willing and able to lock onto learning, even in the face of shifting feelings &amp; distractions</p> <p><b>Absorption:</b> being engrossed in your learning  <b>Perseverance:</b> keeping going in the face of difficulties  <b>Managing distractions:</b> creating your own best environment for learning  <b>Attentive noticing:</b> immersing self in patterns, details and nuances of what is going on; being perceptive</p>
<p><b>Resourcefulness</b></p> 	<p style="color: red;">Being ready, willing and able to be proactive and smart in learning; making flexible use of resources</p> <p><b>Questioning:</b> being curious &amp; puzzling things out  <b>Making links:</b> making connections between events &amp; experiences, looking at the bigger picture  <b>Imagining:</b> playing with possibilities creatively  <b>Reasoning:</b> organising systematically, critiquing sensitively own and others' arguments  <b>Capitalising:</b> drawing on all kinds of external resources (books, internet, other people) to support thinking &amp; learning</p>
<p><b>Reflectiveness</b></p> 	<p style="color: red;">Being ready, willing and able to be strategic about learning; have a good sense of 'me as a learner'</p> <p><b>Planning:</b> thinking about what I will need, future steps.  <b>Revising:</b> being flexible as learning progresses, changing ways  <b>Distilling:</b> mulling over learning, taking on board learning for future tasks &amp; being a 'learning coach'  <b>Meta-learning:</b> being able to talk about how we learn</p>
<p><b>Reciprocity (relationships)</b></p> 	<p style="color: red;">Being ready, willing and able to learn from and with others, as well as on own</p> <p><b>Interdependence:</b> knowing what balance of sociable and solitary suits the learner  <b>Collaborating:</b> being a good team player, able to draw on the strengths of the group  <b>Empathy &amp; listening:</b> being ready to put yourself 'in others' shoes' to enrich the learner's experience  <b>Imitation:</b> being open to other people's smart ways of thinking and learning</p>