



A love of  
learning  
A desire for  
God



## St Mary's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy Learning Environment Policy

Date agreed by governors:	September 2019
To be reviewed:	3 yearly
Policy Holder	Head teacher

### Purpose and Aims

The learning environment has a significant influence on learning. It gives children a clear message about how we value them and how we value learning.

The Catholic ethos of the school, including our mission statement, should be at the centre of the way we plan for and organise the learning environment. The school and classrooms should provide a welcoming, inclusive and stimulating environment where all children feel valued, secure and able to contribute. Learning environments should promote a 'Love of learning' and 'A desire for God'.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- There is a consistent approach to the learning environment across the school, reflecting the high expectations that staff and pupils have for learning and progress.
- The learning environment promotes an inclusive and collaborative approach to learning so that all pupils are supported in achieving their potential across the curriculum.

### General expectations

**Organisation:** *All classrooms and corridors should be kept clean, tidy and free from clutter.* Classroom and school routines should support children value and respect their learning environment and make a contribution to keeping it clean and tidy.

**Language/vocabulary:** All classrooms should be "language/vocabulary rich" environments in order to promote and extend children's understanding and use of language/vocabulary. Displays should include key words and statements, open-ended questions, prompts and scaffolds related to the curriculum or to highlight key learning points.

**Resources:** All resources should be clearly labelled and organised so that they are readily available to the children in order to promote independent learning and choice. Resources should include appropriate books, models and artefacts to support the children's learning in relation to the curriculum areas and current topics.

**Classroom layout:** The physical layout of the classroom should support and promote inclusive, interactive teaching. It should allow for flexibility for working in different contexts (e.g. individual work, paired work, small group work as well as whole class teaching). This is to ensure that speaking and listening and collaborative learning are at the centre of teaching and learning. Every child should be seated so that they have a clear view of the interactive whiteboard/main teaching area.

### Expectations for Display

Display, both inside and outside the classroom, contributes significantly to the creation of a positive school ethos, reinforcing high expectations for success and achievement.

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy, we have two different approaches to display:

- Classroom displays – primarily to promote and support learning
- Corridor/hall displays – primarily to celebrate and value pupils' achievements

### Classroom displays

Classroom displays should primarily focus on supporting learning or exemplifying the learning process rather than on children's final outcomes. However, they may include examples of finished work in order to demonstrate what pupils achieved and how they achieved it.

Each classroom must have the following displays:

- i. Literacy (see guidance below)
- ii. Numeracy (see guidance below)
- iii. Religious Education (see guidance below)
- iv. Any other display boards may be filled with other learning at the teacher's discretion.

### Guidance and Expectations for Literacy and Numeracy display

Each classroom should have a literacy and numeracy display to promote engagement in learning and help pupils develop an understanding of what is expected of them.

- The largest part of the wall should be 'fixed' and not require regular changing (this could include key vocabulary/concepts appropriate to the year group and ones that will be referred to throughout the year) This is to avoid walls being blank. This part of the display should be presented in the same way as hall and corridor displays (See guidelines below)
- A smaller part of the display should be a 'Working wall'. This should be used to record and visualise the learning process.
- Teachers and pupils should refer and add to working walls throughout the unit of work/topic.
- A working wall is a "work in progress"; it is not always necessary to back or mount all work. Mounting of work is at the teacher's discretion when the teacher considers mounting of work contributes to the learning.

### Ideas for 'working wall' element of display:

- Update regularly to reflect the learning journey over a unit of work/topic
- May display learning objectives/success criteria for the unit/topic that can be referred to throughout the process.
- May display a WAGOLL ("What a good one looks like"!) which can be referenced back to success criteria throughout the learning process. This ensures children have a clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve.
- May include children's ideas and work showing progress towards the end goals
- May include What we already know, what we want to know and what we have learnt
- May include Post-it notes
- May include Speech bubbles
- May include first drafts and revisions
- May include examples of self and peer-evaluation
- May include (removable) key vocabulary which you will expect children to use in the lessons. Vocabulary can be supported with definitions, examples, images etc to support understanding
- May include provide scaffolds (e.g. sentence starters, alternatives to "said")
- May include make links to previously taught skills, knowledge or understanding
- May include break down methods or steps, showing them visually

### Guidance on RE display

- a. Linked to the learning in the current R.E topic
- b. Prayer table (refer to R.E policy). Children should be encouraged to contribute their own items of personal significance to the prayer table over the course of the year
  - i. Liturgical cloth colour appropriate to liturgical season
  - ii. Bible appropriate to the children's age
  - iii. Candle
  - iv. Crucifix on or near the table
  - v. Appropriate statues (optional)

- vi. Book of children's prayers or reflections
- vii. A living object (plant/flower)
- viii. A box/basket for children's own prayers or intentions

### Guidance for RE displays

#### Values Vocabulary

All classrooms should display vocabulary associated with the 11 values studied throughout the year. These should be prominent and referred to throughout the year. The value of the month should clearly be identified.

#### Mission Statement

The School Mission Statement should be clearly displayed in classrooms.

#### School Rules

School Rules and Good to be Green Chart should be clearly displayed in all classrooms.

#### Corridor/hall displays

Corridor and hall displays will be used to celebrate and value children's achievements across the curriculum as well as promote the Catholic ethos of the school as exemplified by our mission statement.

These displays will primarily consist of children's final outcomes/finished work but may also include examples of the learning process, in order to demonstrate children's learning and progress over a period of time.

#### Minimum expectations for corridor/hall display:

- The display is backed and has a border
- There is a clear title that references the topic/learning/curriculum area
- A variety of work is displayed which reflects the range of abilities and achievements within the class. This is essential in creating an inclusive learning environment.
- Finished work that is displayed should always be the best that an individual can achieve and it should be largely free from errors. Emergent writing and work in progress are also valuable for display and need to be labelled as such so the context is understood.
- All 2D work is mounted appropriately (e.g. double-backed) with mounts trimmed in a straight line.
- All work should be clearly labelled with the child's name (pupil or ICT label)
- Displays should always be accompanied by labels, which should:
  1. Explain the context of the learning or Explain the learning process
  2. Reinforce learning and key vocabulary
  3. Make links to other topics/areas of learning o Ask open-ended questions
  4. Contain prompts which encourage pupils to interact with the display
- Drapes, hangings and other 3D objects should be used to create visual interest where possible