St Margaret of Scotland
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Curriculum Intent

2025-2026

The mission statement for St Margaret's school; ***'Learning with Jesus in Faith, Hope and Love'*** and that for the St Thomas Catholic Academy Trust to which we belong; ***"The glory of God is a human being fully alive!",*** are taken from the teachings of the Catholic church and Gospel Values. These statements underpin our curriculum as we strive for each individual to be recognised as a child of God by supporting their spiritual, moral, academic, social, emotional and physical development and their mental well-being. This prepares our children for life in modern Britain and for future success. We are fully compliant with the Catholic Bishop's requirement to allocate 10% of our curriculum time to RE.

The curriculum at St Margaret's is designed to ensure all children access a broad, balanced and inclusive education. This enables them to become motivated, curious, creative and critical thinkers, developing an innate passion for learning and it reflects the cultural, socio-economic and varied backgrounds that make up our school community. The curriculum is fully accessible to all children, regardless of their particular needs. We are committed to the principle of anti-discriminatory practice. We promote equality of opportunity and the value of diversity for all children and families. *(This statement is also supported by our Admissions Policy, SEND Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Equalities Statement and is in line with the Equality Act 2010).* Our curriculum is well-sequenced and designed so that foundational knowledge and skills are consolidated and challenged. New learning is chunked coherently and built on from previous learning to support pupils in making connections with their knowledge and skills. Teachers embed adaptive teacher practice across the curriculum to encourage pupil self-belief and resilience. Teachers embed cognitive and metacognitive strategies within planning and teaching of the curriculum to support pupil retention and recall of knowledge from their long-term memory. Our curriculum is ambitious for all. The individual needs of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Pupil Premium children (PPG) are planned for and supported effectively to ensure all learners make progress. Teachers adapt planning to meet the needs of all abilities within classes to ensure all pupils can access the learning and achieve the learning objective set for each lesson. Strategies involve scaffolding, differentiation, teacher modelling, dual coding, questioning and rehearsal opportunities for pupils to 'overlearn' concepts and avoid overloading their working memory. Learning is stretched and challenged across the curriculum for all. Learners are brought out of their comfort zone and are encouraged to push themselves beyond what they thought was possible for them to achieve. With this, pupils develop self-belief and confidence in thinking critically and flexibly across the curriculum. Teachers plan for and embed cognitive and metacognitive strategies across the curriculum. Teachers plan for and ask a variety of Blank Level questions within lessons to support with their ongoing teacher assessment. We embrace the wider community, celebrating and benefiting from links with the Catholic church, parishes and families. In addition, we actively seek out other experiences for our children that expand their knowledge of people, places, activities, faiths and cultures that they may not ordinarily encounter, facilitating the acquisition of valuable cultural capital.

<u>Key Drivers of Our Curriculum:</u>

1. **Building blocks for good behaviours for learning:** It is our belief that all children should be enabled to excel and that strong achievement is the preserve of the many, not the few. Sequencing the building blocks for good behaviour for learning begins in the early years by teaching the '*Characteristics of Effective Learning'* and continues throughout the school, in all areas of the curriculum, to accommodate the differing needs and stage of development of our children.

- All are coached to:
  - hold information in their mind and use it **(working memory)**
  - master thoughts and impulses so as to resist temptations, distractions, and habits and to pause and think before acting **(controlling inhibitions)**
  - revise their plans in the face of obstacles, setbacks, new information or mistakes **(cognitive flexibility)**

2. **Broad and balanced curriculum:** Our curriculum is in line with the National Curriculum and underpinned by Age Related Expectations (ARE) of what children need to know by the end of each key stage. We have also designed the curriculum to address social disadvantage by addressing children's gaps in skill knowledge and experiences, since our school is located in Farley; an area ranked as being in the top 10 per cent most deprived parts of the country *(Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2025)*. We believe children need to be fluent in skills of literacy and numeracy and that knowledge of English and Mathematics are an essential foundation for success in all subjects. In EYFS and KS1 we focus on ensuring children can read, write and use mathematical knowledge and skills well so that they can access a broad and balanced curriculum at KS2. However, as the vast majority of children enter the school at all ages, with very low baseline data, many with little or no English and high levels of deprivation there are still gaps in basic knowledge that persist into KS2. Therefore, the emphasis on the acquisition of reading, writing and maths skills continues to take up a large percentage of curriculum time. This will be reviewed annually as our children's gaps are addressed lower down in the school.

3. **The Core Curriculum:**

Religious Education – Our curriculum has Christ at the centre of everything we do. We follow the 'Come and See' programme of study for RE, which is in line with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Each pupil's knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith is nurtured through a spiralled curriculum and includes the study of Church tradition, scripture exploration, the Church throughout the world, meditation and prayer. The Islamic and Jewish faiths are also studied, giving pupils a sense of tolerance of differences in belief in the wider community. Each half-term, pupils develop their understanding of the Catholic Social Teaching principles, following the Caritas Programme.
These principles are:

- Care of creation
- Preferential option for the poor
- Solidarity and Peace
- Community and Participation
- Dignity of workers
- Dignity

Pupils draw from and build their understanding of each principle annually, forming connections with their lives and with new learning across the curriculum. These principles are planned for across all subjects, allowing for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and actions.

RHE - The Ten Ten programme is embedded across the school to deliver a well-sequenced RHE curriculum for all. The RHE programme and our collective worship opportunities use a range of visitors who explain their roles and beliefs to expand pupils' experience of a world view. Children are also taught Relationship and Health Education through a curriculum which is in line with the teachings of the Catholic church and nationally recognised expectations. The emphasis of this curriculum is to recognise and develop healthy, loving relationships.

The prayer life of our school enables pupils to experience a relationship with Christ at a personal level and happens through individual prayer, collective worship, Mass and other liturgies. Pupils are encouraged to organise, design and lead these activities.
Our charitable work involves helping others in a variety of ways at local, national and international levels. This fosters empathy in the pupils as well as nurturing a sense of justice and morality.

Maths - We use the Herts for Learning maths programme because of its 'spiral' approach to learning. It helps children to understand and remember mathematical concepts, knowledge and procedures appropriate for their starting point in learning and it is carefully sequenced to build mathematical skills and knowledge, systematically to mastery level. The planning supports the acquisition of new information, sequence by sequence and teachers annotate their plans to ensure that the delivery is broken into manageable steps meeting the needs of individual children.
We also work with the Enigma Maths Hub to ensure that the school is teaching for mastery and addressing the following:

- Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract (CPA) approach to mathematics teaching
- Pupil discussion, including full stem sentences and speaking frames
- Whole class teaching approach
- Small steps in learning
- Children and staff using precise and accurate mathematical language
- Children applying knowledge in a variety of ways
- Regular rehearsal of concepts and vocabulary

The maths curriculum develops mathematical fluency, reasoning and problem solving. For children to be able to experience success when problem-solving and in order to become proficient mathematicians, teachers adapt planning and embed HfL rehearsal and reasoning resources to develop declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge for all. Rehearsal and reasoning resources provide opportunity for 'overlearning' concepts and challenging pupils to extend their understanding further. These resources are carefully selected and planned for by teachers to address targets for all pupils and to develop flexibility in thinking skills. Pupils from Year 1-6 are provided with logins for Times Table Rockstar, an online, engaging resource for pupils to rehearse multiplication and division facts in school and at home. This provides regular opportunities for rehearsal and recall, which pupils can apply to the context of their mathematical learning. To support pupils that are working significantly below age-related expectations or those with significant gaps in their learning, teachers are able to 'track back' to review or build on previous learning. In addition to this support, pupils working significantly below age-related expectations access a Numberstacks programme that aids in building base facts and foundational knowledge of Mathematics. In the wider aspect of the curriculum, there are annual opportunities for pupils to engage with the HfL Maths Challenge; a competition (for Year 3, 4 and 5) where pupils can apply their mathematical knowledge and oracy skills to solve problems. By work in teams of 4, pupils compete against other schools nationally.

Phonics - We believe that the key to children's success is their ability to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. We ensure that we have well trained staff teaching phonics and the system for teaching reading, starting at the very beginning of EYFS, is well organised. Read, Write Inc, is taught with fidelity in EYFS and KS1 (and for any new arrivals who require phonics intervention). Any child at risk of not passing the phonics screening test receives 1:1 RWI tutoring. In KS2, pupils that require intervention with their phonic knowledge access 1:1 or small group tutoring session led by a member of staff trained in teaching RWI.

Reading - We aim to develop children's speaking and listening, vocabulary, language comprehension and a love of reading by developing a language rich curriculum. All children are exposed to a variety of stories, traditional tales, poems, rhymes, non –fiction and different authors. We have daily story time in our EYFS and is also a regular feature in KS1 and KS2.
In KS1, pupils access a daily Phonics lesson, focusing on developing phonic knowledge and reading fluency. By the end of Year 2, pupils begin to access Guided Reading lessons focusing on developing fluency and building comprehension skills. This curriculum ensures children practice reading daily with books that are matched to their current phonic knowledge or reading level, backed up by reading daily at home. Guided reading is taught daily from Y2 onwards (when children have completed the RWInc programme) to ensure children become fluent readers with good comprehension skills. It is our aim that by the end of KS1, all children are reading at ARE and effective support is given to those children who may need it e.g. Daily Readers, interventions, booster sessions. Teachers plan for Guided Reading by following the HfL guided reading spine and curriculum statements; aligned with the National Curriculum. Within these lessons, pupils are provided with regular opportunity to read independently or with a partner. Teachers model read and embed a variety of adaptive teaching strategies to support all pupils with achieving learning objectives for each lesson. In Year 2, pupils are taught in smaller groups within the class (carousel style) to ensure teachers can identify and address misconceptions for individuals regularly. From Year 2-6, we have introduced the Accelerated Reader Programme, to encourage and monitor independent reading practice among children; providing them with books at their individual reading level (ZPD) and assessing their comprehension through regular quizzing. Children are assessed for updated ZPD levels half-termly and teachers consistently monitor their accuracy of responses from quizzing to guide the children's appropriate choice of book level when selecting new home readers.

Writing - The Herts for Learning writing curriculum develops the children's ability to produce well structured, appropriately detailed writing in which the meaning is made clear and which engages the interest of the reader. Due attention is paid to the formal structures of English, grammatical detail, punctuation and spelling. The school has developed detailed medium-term plans for structuring lesson foci to provide guidance for teachers in understanding how their children will progress through the National Curriculum. Children are given frequent opportunities in school to write in different contexts using quality texts, visual media and real-life experiences.
Writing is developed across the curriculum by:

- considering a range of different audiences and purposes
- responding to stimuli such as written and visual texts across a range of media
- building upon visits or events
- using drama, role play, hot seating
- producing writing on their own or as part of group

Lessons are sequenced to ensure children have the opportunity to plan, draft, write, evaluate and edit their writing to produce final pieces of work for a purpose. A combination of approaches to developing writing are used, including modelling, shared, guided and independent sessions.

Grammar - The school follows the Programme of Study for grammar as outlined in the main body of the National Curriculum as well as the grammar appendix (including terminology for pupils) and the glossary of NC 2014. Sometimes, an aspect of grammar is taught or revised in a discrete lesson session but more often it is embedded in other lessons to provide meaningful contexts for children in which they apply their learning in their writing.

Spelling - The school follows the Herts for Learning Essential Spelling scheme, in line with the programme of study for spelling as outlined in the spelling appendix of NC 2014. In EYFS and

KS1, phonics is taught discretely in class during daily 40min *Read Write Inc lessons.* As children progress, phonics and spelling is taught in discrete 15min daily sessions using the Essential Spelling, as well as embedded into English lessons and across the curriculum. Children are grouped according to their spelling ability to ensure gaps in knowledge are addressed, with the expectation that accelerated progress is made so children reach ARE. Children are supported to spell common exception words and given resources and strategies to support them embed their spelling and phonics knowledge. From Y2, children are taught to proofread their own work and self-correct.

Handwriting – The school aims to develop the ability to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed through the Herts for Learning Handwriting Toolkit, aligned with the National Handwriting Association. The scheme follows statutory guidance of the National Curriculum 2014. The school's aim is that pupils recognise that letters formed in similar ways belong to certain handwriting 'families'. Handwriting is explicitly taught across the school, Yr1-Yr6. EYFS focus on supporting the development of the foundational motor skills required for achieving Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in Literacy, Gross motor skills and Fine motor skills. This is the beginning of each child's handwriting journey. Year 1 builds on this by teaching the correct way in which pupils must sit at tables, holding a pencil correctly and comfortably. Handwriting formation begins with forming lower case letters in the correct direction and size in relation to one another, form capital letters and digits 0-9 accurately. We aim for pupils to begin to use diagonal and horizonal strokes needed to join letters by the end of Year 2. Year 3-6 builds the skill of fluency and consistency of the quality of their handwriting. By Year 6, pupils will be able to choose the standard of handwriting is best suited for a task. For example, quick notes or a final handwritten version, labelling a diagram or writing an email address.

Spoken Language – Pupils are taught to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using Standard English through the Voice 21 Oracy programme. They develop an ability to solve problems, justify ideas with reasons, ask questions to check understanding, work collaboratively, develop vocabulary and build knowledge, negotiate, evaluate, build on the ideas of others and select appropriate registers of communication. Spoken language is supported for all pupils across the curriculum, by embedding Voice 21 strategies. This enables pupils to develop their oracy skills into each aspect of school and work life, including building positive, healthy relationships with others. Across the academic year, pupils engage with opportunities for presenting in front of an audience by applying spoken language skills, including pace, tone, vocabulary, turn-taking, listening, etc. Teachers assess these skills formatively throughout the year using the Voice 21 Oracy framework strands - physical, emotional and social, linguistic and cognitive. Teachers use this framework to plan for 'talk opportunities' across the curriculum and plan for prompt questioning and provide live feedback for pupils to develop their spoken language.

Science – Our Science Curriculum is planned and sequenced to inspire children to experience awe and wonder about natural phenomena; the sensation of feeling part of God's creation and something much bigger than ourselves. It stimulates curiosity, creativity, innovation and guide our children to become enquiry-based learners. Aligned with the National Curriculum, the curriculum is planned so that foundational knowledge and experiences are built upon, providing regular opportunity for pupils to ask and answer questions. The planning is sequenced so that new knowledge and skills are built on from what has been taught before and towards clearly defined, ambitious end points e.g. understanding theories of Evolution and how genetic characteristics are inherited. The Working Scientifically aspects of our Science curriculum help children to become accurate, careful and confident practical scientists. Skills and knowledge are explicitly taught throughout our curriculum through exploration, predictions, investigations, questioning, gathering data and drawing conclusions form recorded findings. Though a spiral

curriculum, topics are revisited each year but with increasing difficulty and with a slightly different focus each time.

4. The Foundation Curriculum:

History, Geography, Art & Design, Design & Technology – Our foundation curriculum is planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been learned before and builds towards clearly identified end points. It also reflects the local context of the school and the cultural capital our children will need to succeed in life. In order to achieve a consistent approach and to support our teachers with strong subject knowledge, we have developed detailed medium-term plans for all curriculum subjects. These plans are designed so that children can embed key concepts into their long-term memory and apply them fluently, making links between previous learning and from subject to subject.

Physical Education – *Get Set 4 PE*, a comprehensive scheme of work aligned with the National Curriculum for Physical Education, develops pupil competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, ensures pupils are physically active for sustained periods of time by encouraging participation in competitive sports and activities.
In EYFS, pupils begin to learn basic principles of PE including using and sharing space and equipment safely, stopping safely and working individually as well as in a group. Through the topic of 'everyday life' and 'fantasy/adventure', pupils learn to develop fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping and skipping. Pupils play games throughout PE lessons to begin to understand and use rules. In KS1 and KS2, further understanding of movement, games and safety develops with increasing complexity by building co-ordination, balance, agility, throwing, catching, dodging, defending and striking skills, promoting accuracy, flexibility, strength, technique, control and balance. When engaging with units, pupils are encouraged to compare their performance with previous ones and demonstrate improvement to achieve their personal best.
Pupils build confidence in PE, emotional regulation and social skills through repetition and rehearsal of skills and understanding of a variety of games and rules.

Music – Our school follows the Charanga Musical School Scheme, in line with the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Music. This builds skills and knowledge over time systematically and explicitly so that children have consistent opportunities to recall and rehearse musical knowledge and skills.
In EYFS, our children begin to learn musical skills and knowledge through singing songs such as nursery rhymes, actions, a repertoire of songs and through dance. KS1 and KS2 pupils follow the Charanga Music Scheme for 2 half-terms each academic year. For one half-term, Charanga provides pupils with the opportunity to listen and appraise a variety of music styles and genres. Following this, pupils spend a second half-term learning to play instruments through the Charanga 'First notes to First band' sequence of learning. The third half-term in the year, Year 1-6 are taught by a musical specialist from the Luton Music Service. This provides pupils the opportunity to build on their musical foundations, vocabulary and experiences.
Pupils will learn to play a new instrument each year such as, Boom whackers, Recorders, Djembe, PBones and more. All sequences of Musical learning result in pupils performing their skills and knowledge acquired to their desired audiences.

MFL – Through Kapow, a scheme of work in line with the National Curriculum end of KS2 attainment targets, we aim to inspire a love of language learning and develop an awareness of other cultures. Kapow follows a spiral curriculum and builds pupil confidence to communicate in French for practical purposes, using both written and spoken French language. Pupils are provided with balanced opportunities to rehearse spoken and written

French through familiar contexts. Year 3, whilst providing writing opportunities, focuses on developing oral skills before incorporating written French (Year 4-6). Key skills and vocabulary are revisited from previous topics and year groups with increasing complexity. Cross-curricular links are included throughout French units, allowing children to make connections and apply their language skills to other areas of their learning.

Computing – Our computing curriculum follows the Kapow scheme of work, aligned with the National Curriculum. Units of work have been carefully selected to reflect the local context of the school and the cultural capital of our children. Computer literacy is developed through a spiral curriculum as key knowledge and skills are built on from prior learning. Pupils are encouraged to explore how Computing shapes our lives across different time periods and in a variety of scales. Planning is structured to ensure that the strands of computing are explicitly taught and explored within each unit - *Computer science, Information technology* and *Digital literacy*. These strands are balanced and sequenced to support the delivery of both substantive knowledge (e.g understanding networks, algorithms and data) and disciplinary knowledge (e.g. applying skills to program, creating digital content and evaluating online information responsibly). Annually, each year group engages with an Online Safety unit within their Computing lessons. With the transformation of technology and software ever-growing and developing around our children, it is vital that they understand how to use these resources safely and responsibly. While children explore links between their computing knowledge and the skills required for future careers, these safety units ensure pupils identify what to do when concerns arise online, including online bullying and using trusted websites. As part of Anti-bullying week, pupils engage with an additional online bullying lesson to promote Safer Internet Day, reminding pupils of what steps to follow if they are concerned about anything when using the Internet.