

St John's Upper Holloway CE Primary School



Teaching and Learning policy

November 2023

Policy on Teaching and Learning

Date: Nov 23
Review: Nov 25

Our Vision

Jesus said: 'Love each other as I have loved you'. John 15:12

As we are loved, so we shall love.

As we are taught, so we shall teach.

As we are nurtured, so we shall flourish.

Our Mission

- St John's is a small, caring Church of England Primary School. It is committed to supporting our pupils to be happy, successful and fulfilled throughout their lives. We believe that everyone is unique and valued by God. We aspire to be a high achieving school that provides an outstanding education:
 - ❖ promoting the highest standards of teaching and learning, with excellent leadership
 - ❖ being inclusive, celebrating diversity and valuing all religions, faiths, cultures and backgrounds
 - ❖ providing a rich and stimulating curriculum that will inspire and challenge
 - ❖ being a happy, healthy and safe place
 - ❖ providing excellent care, guidance and support with a strong partnership between school, parents and the community.

We seek to promote six Christian values of creativity, thankfulness, truthfulness, friendship, perseverance and courage, each linked by our core value of love. We believe these help to prepare our children for a successful and fulfilling life, so being:

- considerate and respectful with excellent manners
- confident, happy, independent and self-motivated
- co-operative and collaborative
- honest and trustworthy
- resilient, hardworking and determined
- highly principled with moral, spiritual, cultural and social awareness, including shared British Values.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At St. John's School, we believe in the concept of lifelong learning, and in the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that 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 their lives. We believe that appropriate teaching and learning experiences help children to lead happy and rewarding lives. The National curriculum document makes it clear that the taught curriculum should:
- be broad and balanced
 - promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and
 - prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 We believe that people learn best in different ways. At our school, we provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows all children to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential.
- 2.2 Through our teaching, we aim to:
- enable children to become confident, resourceful, enquiring and independent learners;
 - foster children's self-esteem, and help them to build positive relationships with other people;
 - develop children's self-respect, encourage them to understand and respect the ideas, attitudes, feelings and values of others, and teach them to respect other people's feelings;
 - show respect for a diverse range of cultures and, in so doing, to promote positive attitudes towards other people;
 - enable children to understand their community, and help them feel valued as part of it;
 - help children grow into reliable, independent and positive citizens.

3 Our definition of learning

- 3.1 Our staff worked towards a shared definition of learning
"Learning is the process by which we acquire, develop and consolidate a range of knowledge, skills, understanding and concepts. True learning occurs when a child has fully embedded new knowledge, skill or understanding in their long term memory and can apply it confidently."
- 3.2 Our children also considered what learning is and believed ..
"Learning makes your brain grow like a tree- it gets fuller"
"Learning is like feeding your brain and doing things better"
"Giving your brain ideas"
"Doing something hard that you don't know but you keep trying"
"Learning is when you get all the facts so that you can express yourself better"
"Learning is when you discover new words like eerie, eager and ecstatic in literacy"
"If you make a mistake and learn from it, then you don't make the same mistake again"
"Learning helps you succeed in life. Learning is persevering and not giving up! It gets you ready for your life ahead"

“You get all the ideas and push them together to get one big fact”

“Learning is important to keep our brains from being like a caveman’s”

4 Effective learning

- 4.1 Research tells us that people learn in many different ways, and respond best to different types of input; we must therefore deliver teaching in different ways to address the needs of all our learners.
- 4.2 We ensure the best possible environment for learning by developing a positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe to take risks without fear of failure, in which they enjoy being challenged, but in which they enjoy learning, and know that they can succeed (because they know the challenge will have been set at the right level). We therefore play music when appropriate to accompany learning, provide 'brain breaks' at various points in the lesson to refocus children's attention, and make sure that the children have access to drinking water. We also recognise the importance of good health on children's ability to learn effectively and promote healthy lifestyles at school and home.
- 4.3 All teaching will be structured to maximise learning opportunities and lessons will be planned in accordance with the following principles:
- Curriculum maps should enable children to explore key themes and **vocabulary** both horizontally (ie between subjects), vertically (ie between year groups) and diagonally (ie between subjects and year groups) helping children to develop a denser and more nuanced understanding of them. Key vocabulary for each unit of learning is set out on the knowledge organiser as well as displayed in the classroom and children have regular opportunities to use it in a range of contexts.
 - the teaching should **build on previous learning**. We encourage teachers to use the principles from solo taxonomy (Biggs and Collis) to develop units of learning through increasing complexity e.g. in humanities (appendix 1). Teachers will reflect with the children on their prior learning at the start of each new lesson or unit of work to ensure continuity and progression. Spaced retrieval of prior learning is also built in to lesson sequences. (see appendix 6)
 - it should give pupils the '**big picture**' of the lesson e.g. through use of **knowledge organisers** and mind maps
 - **cross curricular links** should be used in a creative and logical way to enhance learning
 - the teacher should explain/ discuss the **learning objectives & steps to success** with the pupils and why the lesson is important (see assessment policy)
 - the lesson should be presented in a range of styles to engage and inspire. Information should be explained clearly and clarified through the use of **shared and modelled activities**
 - **assessment for learning**, including through effective questioning (appendix 3), should be woven throughout each lesson to establish children’s understanding and adapt what is taught
 - it should allow opportunities for the pupils to develop their own understanding through varied and stimulating activities that challenge and engage all learners. Providing opportunities for children to develop their oracy, using appropriate vocabulary, is also essential and helps children refine and embed their understanding of what has been taught (appendix 7)
 - topics are often ‘knowledge rich’ and teachers should provide regular opportunities for children to **revisit and retrieve** this knowledge through quick activities and ‘self checks’ (knowledge ‘hide and seek’!) This can include through the use of Kahoot and

other quizzes. To extend into deep learning, each unit has a 'driving question' which children investigate in depth

- it should allow opportunities for the children to review what has been learnt through self and peer assessment and formative marking
- it should have built-in opportunities for feedback to the children, celebrating success and reviewing learning strategies
- the teaching should indicate what the next step in the learning will be (see appendix 2 for key things teachers should consider in terms of planning, teaching and books)

4.4 We encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, to be involved as far as possible in reviewing the way in which they learn, and to reflect on how they learn – what helps them learn, and what makes it difficult for them to learn. Children are taught about a range of behaviours that enable them to be effective learners (appendix 4). This includes developing their emotional resilience and 'Growth Mind Set' in order that they see occasional failure as an important part of being a good learner. These are displayed in all classrooms and celebrated through the brilliant book. Children also have opportunities to gauge how well they have achieved against the learning objectives and steps to success at the end of most lessons.

5 Further factors in effective teaching and learning

5.1 When we are teaching, we focus on motivating all the children, and building on their skills, knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, so that they reach the highest level of personal achievement. We use the school curriculum map to guide our teaching. This sets out the aims, objectives and values of the school, and details what is to be taught in each year group. Rigorous monitoring by the leadership team and subject leaders ensures continuity and progression.

5.2 Teachers make ongoing assessments of each child's progress, and they use this information when planning their lessons. It enables them to take into account the abilities of all their children. Our prime focus is to develop further the knowledge and skills of all our children. We strive to ensure that all tasks set are appropriate to each child's level of ability. When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children's Pupil Passports (PPs), SEN Support Plans or EHC Plans, including using advice from a wide range of outside professional agencies. Teachers modify teaching and learning as appropriate for children with disabilities. We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion. (see inclusion policy). We aim for as many children as possible to achieve 'mastery' or greater depth in their learning. Our staff consider that for pupils to achieve greater depth they should be able to:

- confidently achieve the vast majority of objectives for that unit
- talk coherently, using topic specific vocabulary accurately (this can include explaining their learning to their peer or an adult)
- apply their knowledge, skills or understanding to a range of contexts or problems
- make connections with other aspects of their learning and recognise patterns
- show engagement, flare and enthusiasm for their learning

5.3 We set academic targets for the children in each year and review these with teachers termly through pupil progress review meetings. Termly 1:1 pupil- teacher conferences also

take place to identify what they have achieved as well as next steps. Records of these are kept in their books/ reading files.

- 5.4 We plan our lessons with clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the National Curriculum and they are clearly shown in our knowledge organisers and progression of skills documents. Our lesson plans contain information about the activities, key questions, challenge and targeted adult support. We reflect upon all lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching.
- 5.5 Every member of staff establishes good working relationships with all the children in their care. We treat the children with kindness and respect. We recognise that they are all individuals with different needs, but we treat them fairly, and give them equal opportunity to take part in class activities. All of our teachers follow the school policy with regard to discipline and classroom management. We have "Golden Rules" for the whole school and individual class teachers also set classroom rules with their pupils. We have a clear behaviour management policy that has clear guidance and procedure on sanctions and rewards. This is followed by all staff.
- 5.6 Safety of our pupils is paramount in everything we do. When we plan to take children out of school, we follow a strict set of procedures to ensure safety: the venue is visited, risk assessments are completed, and parental permission obtained before the visit takes place (see educational visits policy and health and safety policy)
- 5.7 We strive to ensure that teaching assistants and other adult helpers are deployed effectively; this can include working 1 to 1 with children, working with small groups (depending on the children's needs), or leading specific intervention programmes. Our aim of adult support is that it has a positive impact on learning and progress (see TA policy).
- 5.8 Our classrooms are attractive learning environments. We change displays at least once a term, so that the classroom reflects the taught curriculum and showcases not only examples of best work but also the learning process, including working walls for writing, maths and RE. All classes have displays across the range of core and foundation subjects and all children have at least one piece of work displayed at any one time. All classrooms have a well organised reading area with a range of quality texts to inspire a love of reading. We believe that a stimulating and exciting classroom environment sets the climate for learning, and this ensures high-quality work from all children (see classroom organisation and display policy).
- 5.9 Professional development of all our school staff is planned by the leadership team on a termly cycle. Targets are set in line with school development priorities as well as each member of staff's training needs and skills. Teachers are also encouraged to be proactive in considering their training needs as part of their performance management.
- 5.10 We promote a teaching and learning atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

6 The role of governors

- 6.1 Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school's approach to teaching and learning. In particular, they:
 - monitor the attainment and progress of pupils, ensuring any areas of concern are addressed quickly through a clear plan of action;
 - work closely with the school leadership team to ensure funding, including pupil premium, recovery premium and the PE and sport grant are used effectively to raise standards in key areas
 - support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;

- ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning;
- seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good-quality teaching;
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's teaching and learning approaches through the school's self-review processes, which include reports from subject leaders, the annual headteacher's report to governors, and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff. Reviews by external specialists, including the LA and LDBS, are also shared with governors. Data analysis also indicates the success of teaching and learning. An anonymised performance management summary is also provided to governors.

7 The role of parents

“Parents are children's first and most enduring educators” (QCA document 2009)

7.1 We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We keep our parents informed about what and how their children are learning:

- by holding parents' evenings to review their child's progress and to discuss how they can further support this at home;
- by holding “open afternoons” for parents to see their children's books and to give the pupils opportunity to share their achievements with their parents;
- by sending curriculum information letters to parents, at the start of each term, which outlines the topics that the children will be studying during that term at school;
- by sending parents detailed annual reports in which we explain the progress made by each child, and indicate how the child can improve further;
- by explaining to parents how they can support their children in a range of curriculum areas including reading, phonics, maths, homework and e-safety (see homework policy).

7.2 We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents:

- to ensure that their child has the best attendance record possible;
- to ensure their child is in school on time every day;
- to ensure that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and PE kit;
- to do their best to keep their child healthy and fit to attend school;
- to inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child's performance or behaviour;
- to promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
- to fulfil the requirements set out in the home–school agreement.

8 Monitoring and review

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually

Signed by _____ (head) on _____ (date)

Signed by chair of C&S committee _____ on _____ (date)

Appendix 1 development of a unit of learning/topic

Topic name

The hook – “tuning in”- trip, role play, scenario, film clip, artefacts etc

Finding out – use of skills and knowledge to gain important information about the unit. Use of range of information sources- artefacts, trips, research, books, internet, visitors, field trip (observation and measures)- limited use of worksheets! Use of a topic web to identify key aspects studied

Sorting out- making links between information, making comparisons, linking information to the topic web

Going further – exploring one aspect in more detail, looking at learning in different contexts or from different view points, collaborative learning. Can a homework project also be part of this phase?

Making conclusions – pulling the different strands of learning together.

Consider “The big question” linked to P4C (although this can be generated at any point in the unit)

Taking action/ exit lesson – is there anything that the children are inspired to do as a result of the topic? E.g. after a fair trade unit, do local shops sell fair trade produce? - if not, write a letter to suggest they do! Is there a practical task at the end of the unit that pulls all their learning together, provides valuable information for assessment and is fun?

Things to consider:

How can a core text in literacy/guided reading support the unit?

Will there be opportunities to produce a piece of high quality writing linked to the topic?

Will there be opportunities to explore maths concepts through the topic? E.g. census data, field study work, using scale on maps etc

Which other subjects can link to the topic in a meaningful way e.g. music, art, drama, dance.

How does our curriculum reflect our vision statement, British values etc?

Are there generic skills (not subject specific) or characteristics of effective learning that we want to develop through our curriculum?

Appendix 2- teacher checklist

What will we see in quality weekly planning?

- Links to the curriculum maps and MT plan - is part of a unit of work with clear context and progression
- Has clear LO and learning outcome with steps to success
- Lesson is accurately pitched and differentiated
- Structure of the lesson is thought through- how will the knowledge, skills or understanding be built up in small steps?
- Activities are engaging and provide opportunities for discussion and sharing of ideas
- Key questions are identified to support assessment
- Focus groups for teacher and TA are evident
- Opportunities for child initiated learning are planned for (EY)

What will we see during a lesson?

Was there pace, engagement and pride in learning throughout the lesson?

- Clarification of context and purpose - what are they learning and why?
- LO and steps to success, with the involvement of pupils where appropriate
- Clear explanation of task, including modeling
- Resources are carefully considered to engage and support learning
- Opportunities to clarify and extend pupils understanding- AFL including white boards, talk partners, questioning
- Structure and scaffolding of tasks as well as challenge in order that pupils make progress
- Clear focus groups for teachers and TAs
- Time within the lesson to develop and refine ideas and work independently
- Time for pupils to reflect on their learning – self and peer evaluation based on LO and steps to success as well as at the end of a unit of work?
- Staff engage children in sustained shared thinking through open questions and encouraging children to reflect on prior knowledge and experiences

What will we see in books?

Books show a stimulating and challenging curriculum with pupils making progress

- Pride in work- neat handwriting and presentation
- Development of each unit of work- continuity and progression
- Suitable pitch and challenge for all pupils (limited number of worksheets)
- Pupils have opportunities to self and peer evaluate – can they show where they have met the steps to success in their work? (mainly KS2)

- Marking in line with policy- promptly marked and pupils have time to respond to marking comments which are then checked by the teacher.
- Pupil conference sheets inside the back cover (writing and maths), child friendly key objectives sheets inside the cover?

Subject specific

Writing books- one piece of extended writing each week, this may relate to the core text or topic work

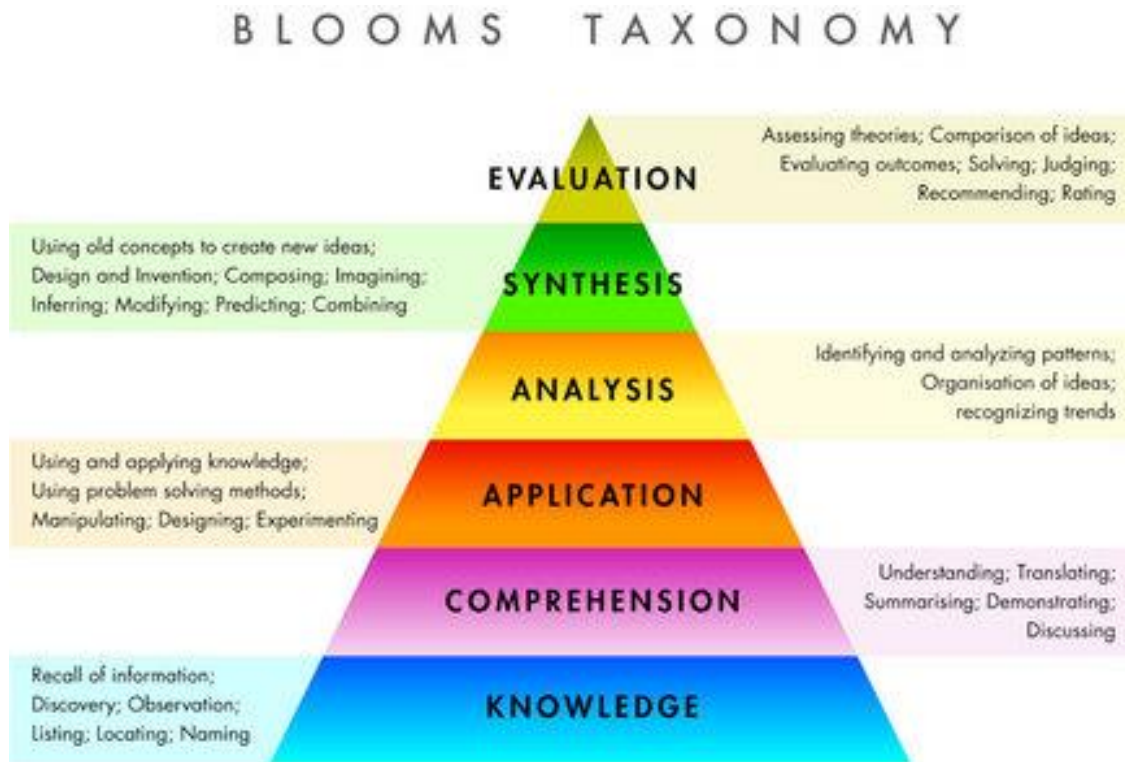
Maths –evidence of using and applying maths in a range of contexts, sufficient evidence of pupils developing fluency, reasoning and problem solving. Limited use of worksheets.

Topic books – knowledge organisers at start of unit with outline of prior learning, the Big Question', key concepts and learning. Evidence of trips, practical and cross curricular work. Time to reflect on their initial questions at the end of the unit.

Appendix 3- questioning

Bloom's Taxonomy

The questions need to be planned and linked to the objectives. Bloom's taxonomy is very useful both in planning objectives and in planning increasingly challenging questions.



CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

1 Knowledge Identification and recall of information	define fill in the blank list identify	label locate match memorize	name recall spell	state tell underline
	Who _____? What _____? Where _____? When _____?		How _____? Describe _____? What is _____?	
2 Comprehension Organization and selection of facts and ideas	convert describe explain	interpret paraphrase put in order	restate retell in your own words rewrite	summarize trace translate
	Re-tell _____ in your own words. What is the main idea of _____?		What differences exist between _____? Can you write a brief outline?	
3 Application Use of facts, rules, and principles	apply compute conclude construct	demonstrate determine draw find out	give an example illustrate make operate	show solve state a rule or principle use
	How is _____ an example of _____? How is _____ related to _____? Why is _____ significant?		Do you know of another instance where _____? Could this have happened in _____?	
4 Analysis Separating a whole into component parts	analyze categorize classify compare	contrast debate deduct determine the factors	diagram differentiate dissect distinguish	examine infer specify
	What are the parts or features of _____? Classify _____ according to _____. Outline/diagram/web/map _____.		How does _____ compare/contrast with _____? What evidence can you present for _____?	
5 Synthesis Combining ideas to form a new whole	change combine compose construct create design	find an unusual way formulate generate invent originate plan	predict pretend produce rearrange reconstruct reorganize	revise suggest suppose visualize write
	What would you predict/infer from _____? What ideas can you add to _____? How would you create/design a new _____?		What solutions would you suggest for _____? What might happen if you combined _____ with _____?	
6 Evaluation Developing opinions, judgements, or decisions	appraise choose compare conclude	decide defend evaluate give your opinion	judge justify prioritize rank	rate select support value
	Do you agree that _____? Explain. What do you think about _____? What is most important?		Prioritize _____ according to _____? How would you decide about _____? What criteria would you use to assess _____?	

Socratic questions

Richard Paul (1993) identified six types of questions that probe the underlying logic or structure of our thinking. These questions are very useful when helping students learn how to learn.

Questions of clarification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you mean by that?</i> • <i>Can you give me an example?</i>
Questions that challenge assumptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why would somebody say that?</i> • <i>What is that person assuming?</i>
Questions that probe reason and evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why do you say that?</i> • <i>What evidence have you based that on?</i>
Questions that probe implications and consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you think are the consequences of that thinking?</i> • <i>Where do you think that person is likely to end up if they go ahead with that idea?</i>
Questions about viewpoints or alternative perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why do you think that person would have that point of view?</i> • <i>What would be another way of saying that?</i> • <i>Why would her answer be better than his answer?</i>
Questions about the question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How is that question going to help us?</i> • <i>Can you think of any other questions that might be useful?</i>

Some general principles about effective questioning

Planning the session

If a question and answer session is an important component of your lesson, it is a worthwhile exercise to plan the line of questioning in advance. This allows you to carefully scaffold the cognitive understanding of

your students. It is often useful to plan questions with certain students in mind, to ensure that the range of questions you will be asking meets the abilities and learning needs of all of the students in the group.

One question at a time and time to think!

Don't bombard children with multiple questions- choose one and let them think it through.

Time to share and refine ideas

Provide opportunities for children to share and develop their ideas together. Encourage children to respond to each other's ideas and give them the language to do this in a consistent way e.g. I would like to build upon what XXX said, I agree with XXX but also think, I disagree with XXX because I think ...

No hands up

A good way to avoid the same students dominating the session is to inform them in advance that you will not be calling on volunteers, but choosing people around the class. This also keeps all of the students on their toes. If students are unable to answer your question, allow them to ***phone a friend*** in class for help and invite them to respond afterwards.

Invite children to develop their own questions

Use strategies from P4C to enable children to develop their own big questions that can be explored further. This can happen in any lesson, not just a 'P4C' lesson.



Have a go!
Have a “growth mind set”. If something is difficult, you just can’t do it yet!

Active listening
Listen carefully to your teacher and each other and respond.

Persevering
Don’t give up, find different ways to overcome a problem



Being cooperative
Share ideas, learn from each other.

Successful learning means...



Being curious
Ask questions and begin to think what the answers might be.

Appendix 6

How we enable children to embed learning in their long-term memory

We know that children need regular planned opportunities to retrieve prior learning in order that it is embedded in their long-term memory. At St John's we do this through:

- Planning our curriculum so that children have opportunities to revisit and build upon topics they have studied previously. When starting a new topic, children are encouraged to share what they know and remember from a prior unit to ensure all children have a solid base on which to build new learning
- Designing units of study to ensure pupils have opportunities to apply their new knowledge and skills in a range of different engaging contexts
- Having a 'Big Question' at the heart of each topic. Children return to this question each lesson, building upon prior learning and deepening understanding. The Knowledge Organisers in their books and the Big Question display in the classroom helps to reinforce this process
- The use of 'spaced retrieval' at the start of most lessons. This may take the form of '4, 3, 2, 1' in maths and other subjects where children are encouraged to remember key knowledge from the previous 4 weeks.
- The use of quizzes using Kahoot or Quizlet to encourage children to retrieve key knowledge. Children also have the opportunity to devise these quizzes for each other.
- The use of 'morning work' to revisit work they found 'tricky' based on marking the previous day
- Teachers and subject leaders review learning with pupils, exploring both current and previous topics. How confidently can they talk about what they have learned and are they able to use subject specific vocabulary from the Knowledge Organisers?

Appendix 7 – Strategies for developing pupils' oracy at St John's

Strategies we have agreed include:

- Adults modelling correct use of language and vocabulary consistently
- Expectation that children answer and respond to questions in a full sentence
- Focus on subject specific vocabulary from knowledge organisers and topic displays; providing opportunities for pupils to use it in context
- Use of sentence stems e.g. from Destination Reader
- Providing opportunities for pupils to respond to each other - ABC (agree/build-on/challenge)
- Talk partners within sessions, with each child reporting on what their partner said
- Concept cartoons – using images as a prompt for discussion, including misconceptions
- using ICT to record children's explanations and discussions
- Use of P4C to explore curriculum areas in more depth and provide opportunities for talk
- Use of SLT support
- EAL support groups