



Coronavirus Recovery Curriculum at St John's

What does the new normal look like in the classroom and how do we adapt new strategies in order to ensure every child reaches their potential in all subject areas?

At the heart of the recovery curriculum at St John's School is the trust and mutual respect that is shared between all members of our school community including staff, pupils, parents, St John's church and the wider community of Walsall Wood. School closure has allowed us to work as a closer knit community and all members of this community have adapted in order to put the needs of our children first. School staff extends from teaching staff, support staff, senior leaders, school care takers, kitchen staff, office staff, lunchtime staff, school governors, Reverend Babbington and most importantly our cleaning staff. This community effort is key to the success of the coming academic year. The roles of all staff have evolved and may overlap. A supportive team effort is key to the academic success and health and safety of our children.

Mental Well-being

Mental wellbeing of all members of this community from our new nursery children leaving home for the first time to parents leaving children in the hands of other people for the first time in six months to our senior leaders shouldering such a responsibility is key to our school curriculum. This is embedded into the ethos of the school and links carefully with our school values. In order to support the mental health of all members of our community we have a fully trained Adult Mental Health Lead within school as well as a member of teaching staff who is taking on responsibility for the mental health of our children who will work alongside our subject lead for PSHE.

Barry Carpenter identifies 5 losses, of routine, structure, friendship, opportunity and freedom, which may have triggered the emergence emotionally of anxiety, trauma and bereavement in any child. The overall impact cannot be underestimated. It may have caused a rapid erosion of the mental health state in our children.

Carpenter goes on to identify 5 Levers of Recovery to consider, which may help a school firm up plans that are already in place and give structure to staff.

- **Lever 1: Relationships** – we can't expect our students to return joyfully, and many of the relationships that were thriving, may need to be invested in and restored. We need to plan for this to happen, not assume that it will. Reach out to greet them, use the relationships we build to cushion the discomfort of returning.
- **Lever 2: Community** – we must recognise that curriculum will have been based in the community for a long period of time. We need to listen to what has happened in this time, understand the needs of our community and engage them in the transitioning of learning back into school.
- **Lever 3: Transparent curriculum** – all of our students will feel like they have lost time in learning and we must show them how we are addressing these gaps, consulting and co-constructing with our students to heal this sense of loss.
- **Lever 4: Metacognition** – in different environments, students will have been learning in different ways. It is vital that we make the skills for learning in a school environment explicit to our students to reskill and rebuild their confidence as learners.
- **Lever 5: Space** – to be, to rediscover self, and to find their voice on learning in this issue. It is only natural that we all work at an incredible pace to make sure this group of learners are not disadvantaged against their peers, providing opportunity and exploration alongside the intensity of our expectations.

Carpenter suggests that a Recovery Curriculum is built on the five levers, as a systematic, relationships-based approach to reigniting the flame of learning in each child. Our quest, our mission as educators, should be to journey with that child through a process of re-engagement,

which leads them back to their rightful status as a fully engaged, authentic learner. These levers will therefore, be built into recovery plans at St John's.

Main challenges and changes that may affect mental well-being of any of our school community:

- Anxiety about changes to routine for both adults and children
- Concerns about how to support the needs of all pupils when teaching whole classes
- Concerns about our own family members and how to manage work life balance during a pandemic
- Concerns that children will have dropped back and how to best support them to catch up

Many of these issues, such as changes to routine, have been addressed and carefully thought out as part of the school risk assessment which should be referred to alongside this document. The implementation of this risk assessment relies heavily on the support of our school community. There is a hope and expectation that parents will trust that we have the best interests of their child at heart, there is a trust that senior leaders have the mental well-being of staff at the forefront of planning, there is a trust that teachers are able to adapt to new teaching methods and that support staff will support this alongside taking on extra responsibilities such as additional cleaning routines. We are confident at St John's that this mutual respect and trust is there and that, as we did during lock down, we will again pull through as a strong community to serve every child to the best of our ability. This 'St John's Spirit' is the basis of our 20/21 recovery curriculum.

This new curriculum is based on extensive research and reading. The key significant event in recent times is the volcano explosion in New Zealand where children missed school for six months. We will learn from this experience and look back on good practice and lessons learnt there. We will also base our curriculum on extensive CPD undertaken by staff in recent years on the importance of attachment and use the principles of emotion coaching to support children and adults where necessary. We will manage pupil's behaviour in a way that supports their fragile emotional state. A policy of no raised voices will help maintain the calm environment that our children will need in order to thrive. We will use our extensive knowledge of quality first teaching in order to differentiate and support the needs of every child at St John's and when we find that additional support is needed for any child we will draw on the bank of expertise that we have within our community. Where necessary we will consult parents and external agencies to seek advice on how best to support the needs of individuals. Class teachers will take on the principle role of key worker. Senior leaders will be aware of the responsibility this carries and will support wherever necessary. Documentation from a range of sources, in particular the EEF will support CPD for staff and help us to make decisions with the needs of our children at the heart of decision making.

Communication is Key

Key to the success of this recovery curriculum will be communication and ongoing dialogue between all members of our school community. Teaching staff will communicate new routines with children and use every available opportunity to build relationships between themselves and their classes. Teachers and senior leaders will be available at the end of the day to reassure parents that their children are in safe hands. Staff will communicate with parents via class DoJo and with pupils in the event of a lockdown via Google Classroom and PurpleMash. Staff will communicate with each other via staff email, team WhatsApp groups, weekly briefings and staff meetings. Senior leaders will communicate with pupils while on break duties or via pre-recorded acts of worship. Senior leaders will

communicate with the wider community including Walsall local authority and local schools via email and video calls and with each other via email and WhatsApp.

How will we support the needs of all pupils when teaching whole classes?

Staff at St John's have for many years taught mixed age classes and have therefore set into ability groups for core subjects. Remaining in class bubbles will bring challenges for staff and must be supported carefully by senior leaders and where available, support staff. We will use the principles set out in a number of documents produced by EEF in order to differentiate appropriately for all pupils. Where there is need for additional support children may be withdrawn by specialist staff in small groups from their class bubble to provide additional support in order to best meet their individual needs. Where this happens, staff will wear visors for the safety of all themselves and the children. During the academic year 20/21 pupils will not have adults sitting within close proximity in the classroom for the safety of all involved.

Ways in which teachers can support the needs of children with special educational needs within the classroom:

Scaffolding

Scaffolding offers temporary supports such as writing frame that is gradually removed as the pupil becomes increasingly independent. Scaffolding is commonly considered part of guided practice in explicit instruction. Scaffolding can also be used to reinforce consistent expectations for behaviour – for example what is needed for each lesson and classroom routines within the day.

Explicit Instruction

Explicit-instruction refers to a range of teacher-led approaches focussed on teacher demonstration followed by a guided practice and independent practice. Explicit instruction is not just teaching by telling or transmission teaching. It usually begins with a detailed teacher explanation, followed by extensive practice, later moving on to independent work.

Technology

Technology can assist teacher modelling. For example, a teacher may use a visualiser to model work examples in English. To increase pupils' practice technology applications such as online quizzes can prove effective. Speech generating apps to enable note-taking and extended writing can be helpful. Technology, as a method to provide feedback to pupils and/or parents can be effective especially when the pupil can act on this feedback.

Cognitive and metacognitive strategies: Chunking

Cognitive strategies are skills like memorising techniques or subject specific strategies like methods to solve problems in maths. Metacognitive strategies help pupils plan, monitor and evaluate their learning, chunking the task into manageable parts.

Flexible grouping

Although free movement of children around the classroom will not be possible within this school year there are still ways in which this can occur. Pupils may be withdrawn within their class bubble on a temporary basis in order to meet their individual needs in a specific subject area and disbanded when this skills has been mastered.

How will we support pupils to catch up and help accelerate learning for all pupils?

In the first instance the emotional and mental well-being of all members of our school community is a priority. The introduction of our new PSHE programme of study alongside Votes for Schools, the adoption of collective worship delivered in the classroom and the teaching of school values and RE will support this for our children. The primary aim is to settle children into school making them feel safe, happy and confident to learn.

When teaching we aim to achieve this by using the principles of Big Maths in all areas of the curriculum. We will assume all pupils have dropped back in most subjects and start with revision of basic skills. By doing this our skilled staff will be able to assess the needs of all pupils and quickly raise the level of the work where necessary in order to carefully nudge children, particularly those children who have not dropped back into areas of new learning. We recognise this form of assessment will need to be carefully planned and may take time. Class teachers therefore, have been given time to plan this at home without the distraction of trying to work in school. Collaboration and communication between team members and subject leaders will again be key here.

Recovery Curriculum: English

At St John's we will be adapting our existing English curriculum in real time, reacting to the needs of children as they arise whilst ensuring a sense of rhythm and routine to daily life, we want to try to restore something as close to normality as possible. However, we recognise that it may also be necessary to provide something tangibly restorative that brings each bubble back together through collaboration and conversation. We will use quality texts as a starting point for beginning to understand, unpick and hopefully begin to heal the gap between school now and pre-Covid times.

Quality conversation will become embedded into classrooms rather than being part of the English curriculum as teachers build relationships with individuals. This will support their learning in all areas of the curriculum and help build the trust and confidence of our children.

We will begin the year with a good quality whole school text and will move onto carefully selected texts chosen by the class teacher that are able to create quality conversations and in depth discussions. The aim is to reignite the love of learning through good quality literature which will act as a common topic regardless of their experiences while off school. Text choice is key which is why this is being left to class teachers. The right text will act as connect class members and answer bigger questions and create opportunities where the children will have the freedom to write based on their own ability and experiences. Where possible discussions regarding emotions and feelings of characters should be exploited in order for children to recognise and understand the emotions they feel in themselves.

Phonics

At St John's synthetic, systematic phonics is still key to teaching children to read. However, given the length of time children have been away from school it may be necessary to repeat, revisit and recap on previous sounds in many cases beginning again from Set 1 sounds to quickly revise previous learning before moving onto new learning. We recognise that this phonics teaching will need to continue into Year 2 and may have an impact on the Year 2 English curriculum. Our Phonics lead will oversee the administering on Phonics Screening Check to Year 2 in Autumn term and our experienced Year 2 teachers will ensure our children receive quality first teaching in order to close the gaps in Year 2.

Children in Reception and Year 1 will be taught phonics in small groups within their class bubbles and will recap and revise from set 1. Progress will be regularly reviewed and adapted where necessary.

Reading – Decoding

Home reading books are set at the children's own level using Read Write Inc scheme in EYFS and KS1 alongside Oxford Reading Tree. This is tracked and monitored by class teachers. In Key Stage 2 children will continue to be assessed using Accelerated Reader and will take quizzes on texts they have completed. Children will continue to be heard read by adults wearing visors. Progress will be monitored by an HLTA with responsibility for KS2 reading. Reading books will be left in a box once completed for 72 hours and cleaned before being replaced on the shelf by an adult.

Reading Comprehension

The principles of Reciprocal Reading will be followed in whole class groups as stated in our English policy.

Writing

We have recognised that most home schooling was computer based and handwriting and writing stamina may have suffered. Children may have spent more time on electronic devices and a left or right hand dominance may not have developed in some children. With this in mind we will replace our usual Big Write sessions with small chunks of small writing sessions giving children opportunity throughout the week to write freely in order to rebuild their writing stamina. This will be supplemented with handwriting lessons and opportunities to develop finger and shoulder strength through supplementary intervention groups where necessary. Opportunities for outdoor learning and PE will also exploit this where possible. Children will be asked to write about the class text or topics which are familiar to them in order to take away the worry about not knowing what to write.

Grammar and spelling skills

Class teachers will recap and revise skills learnt in previous year groups before quickly bringing children up to their own year group. National Curriculum appendix will be used as a guide to support this.

Differentiation

Class teachers are now teaching English in class bubbles rather than sets. Differentiation should be through careful questioning based on quality texts. Texts should be read by an adult to ensure all pupils regardless of decoding ability can access the text. Where possible children should have a copy of the text to follow. A visualiser may be used for this purpose. Teachers should use word mats, spelling sheets, dictionaries and thesaurus mats where possible to provide support for pupils or to extend where necessary. A knowledge of the previous year groups will be necessary in order to pitch work at the appropriate level for all pupils in the class. Work is being checked and read by teachers in the usual way and therefore personalised feedback should be used to differentiate where possible.

Recovery Curriculum Maths

The principles of Big Maths are fully embedded in our school and during Lockdown we also increased our use of the White Rose resources; a combination of the two is what will ensure a successful recovery of any missed learning in maths and ensuring all children achieve their full potential.

Referring to the DFE Mathematics Guidance, it highlights the importance of;

- **Representations** Use of the White Rose teaching resources along with the 'Connect and Challenge' from Big Maths will give children exposure to the core set of representations. In addition, practical manipulatives will aid the children's understanding and opportunity
- **Language Structures** This is already embedded in our maths curriculum with a range of vocabulary and language consistently being demonstrated by teaching staff and being encouraged in pupils when they explain, reason and justify.
- **Making connections** With the use of the PIM principle in Big Maths and the 'It's Nothing New' part of our Big Maths lessons, links and connections are explicitly made to the children, encouraging an independent learner that begins to make these connections for themselves.
- **Assessment** Use of the guidance example assessment questions, the continued use of our CLIC, SAFE and Learn It challenges and accurate AFL in lessons will give teachers a range of continued opportunities to recognise when children are ready to progress.
- **Calculation and Fluency** The very nature of the Big Maths Learning Steps will ensure smooth and rapid development of calculation methods. The Factual Fluency Progression in the maths guidance document works in line with the Learn It schedule already embedded in our maths curriculum. The Learn It's are sent home and in school daily practice of this alongside weekly testing will ensure children have automatic recall of the core multiplicative and additive facts.

Planning and Delivery

As has always been the case, continuity and consistency in the delivery of maths will ensure our pupils will progress and transition confidently. The daily and weekly structure of a maths lesson will remain as before so children will feel secure in their usual maths routines.

When planning, time will be more heavily weighted towards the ready-to-progress criteria though full coverage of the curriculum will be ensured. Big Maths will identify the smaller steps necessary for prior learning that lead to the achievement of the ready-to-progress criteria. We will be fully aware of the yearly expectations of the children but will begin our delivery at least 12 months prior; this will give children confidence and security of what they already know and explicitly demonstrate the skills they are building on. Continual assessment will be made to ascertain gaps in learning are addressed, rapid progress is being made and breadth and depth of understanding is secure.

Differentiation

As St John's have taught maths in ability sets previously, whole class teaching will open up new challenges. Where possible, TA's are to work within maths lessons to support or challenge. Teaching staff will consider whether all parts of the delivery are suitable for all children. Certain groups of children may begin an activity whilst others are being taught; this could be a task that embeds or extends prior learning. As we have always done, differentiated support and challenge may be given by use of manipulatives, resources or scaffolds or by independent reasoning tasks. The aim is to provide all children accessibility to their year groups expectations.

TA's may also withdraw from class bubbles to give small group or 1:1 intervention.

CLIC and SAFE

Continuing with weekly CLIC and SAFE challenges will not only aid assessment and the identification of learning gaps but will continue to embed a range of skills and knowledge across the curriculum. There will be personalised support during these sessions from the class teacher and, where possible, Teaching Assistant, to give individual support and celebrate successes.

Bibliography

<https://www.evidenceforlearning.net/recoverycurriculum/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9F_weIYkkGs