

A parents' guide to the primary curriculum at St John's CE Primary School

Introduction

This year, we have redesigned our curriculum to ensure that we provide your children with an exciting, rich, mastery based curriculum that is based on current research. Research shows that children learn more, remember more and can do more if they are taught topics in smaller amounts of time and the same topics are repeated at a more advancing level the following year. For this reason we have moved away from teaching 3 topics a year, 1 per long term (which totals 6 new topics over 2 years) to teaching 6-8 topics in 1 year, approx.1 per half term and repeating these same topics the following year (which also totals 6-8 new topics over 2 years). The topics we have chosen are known as 'themes'. The themes are designed to be exciting and engaging for primary school aged children and have been carefully selected by Chris Quigley, who is a well-known education specialist.

Chris Quigley has provided the following information to help parents understand how it works:

The 2014 National Curriculum is designed around the concept of Mastery.

Think of Mastery being like the process of driving a car.



Novice or beginner
(BASIC)



Qualified
(ADVANCING)

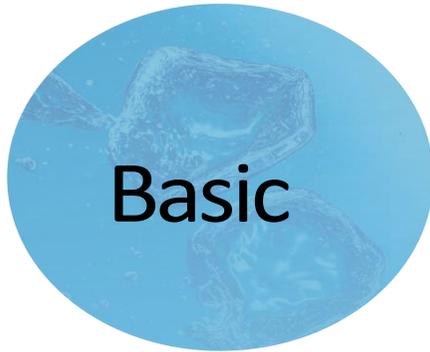


Expert
(DEEP)

The Essentials Curriculum is broken down into 3 milestones.

In each milestone, pupils may demonstrate three levels of understanding of the content: **Basic**, **Advancing** and **Deep** learning.

These three levels of understanding represent 3 cognitive domains:



Low-level cognitive demand. Involves following instructions.



Higher level of cognitive demand. Involves mental processing beyond recall. Requires some degree of decision making.



Cognitive demands are complex and abstract. Involves problems with multiple steps or more than one possible answer. Requires justification of answers.

The diagram below shows progression through these cognitive domains within each milestone.

Milestone 1
The standard to reach by the end of
Year 2

B
Basic

A
Advancing

D
Deep

Milestone 2
The standard to reach by the end of
Year 4

B
Basic

A
Advancing

D
Deep

Milestone 3
The standard to reach by the end of
Year 6

B
Basic

A
Advancing

D
Deep

How do I know if my child is doing well?

There are three things you should ask:

- 1) What are the curriculum expectations for my child?
- 2) Is my child on track to meet expectations?
- 3) Is he or she making good progress?

Curriculum expectations

Children will cover curriculum content appropriate to their year group. There are three sets of curriculum content:

Year groups	Curriculum content
1 and 2	Milestone 1
3 and 4	Milestone 2
5 and 6	Milestone 3

Is my child being challenged?

By the end of Year 2, 4 and 6, it is expected that most children will have reached the Advancing stage of understanding within the appropriate Milestone. This means they will be confident in using and applying their knowledge and skills in a range of situations.

If your child reaches this stage of understanding before the end of Year 2, 4 or 6 he or she will not normally be moved into the next Milestone. Instead teachers will deepen his or her understanding by providing non-routine, rich sophisticated problems. This will challenge your child to inventively and creatively use and apply his or her knowledge and skills.

It is possible that your child may not reach the advancing stage of understanding by the end of Year 2, 4 or 6. The school will identify this possibility early and put in place the most appropriate provision to help your child to do the best they can. Even if your child does not reach the advancing stage of understanding by the end of Year 2, 4 or 6, he or she may still be making good progress.

Is my child on track to meet expectations?

Your child will first develop a Basic then an Advancing and perhaps a Deep understanding of the curriculum content over two years. Your child's teachers will use his or her starting point to set an expectation of where they should be by the end of the Milestone. They will then give you regular updates on whether he or she is on track to meet this expectation.

Is my child making good progress?

If your child is meeting the teacher's expectations, they will be making good progress.

How do I know what my child is learning?

For History, Geography, PE, Art and DT we are following Chris Quigley's Essentials Curriculum (this is available under the curriculum section of our website). The Essentials curriculum meets and exceeds the expectations of the National Curriculum for England and is based on the research of Sweller, Kirschner and Rosenshine.

The themes that your child will be learning this year can be found on our school website on the class pages. The long term plan provides an overview of the year and the theme webs provide a more in depth look at what each theme covers.

For Maths, English, Science, RE, Computing, French and PSHE St John's CE Primary School continue to follow the National Curriculum.

Assessment

Over the course of the year we continually assess and plan for children's next learning steps, using assessment to help build up a picture of each individual child's learning and progress. We will share with you this developing picture over the course of their time with us. This will be through a variety of means, including:

Your child's annual report, Parent consultation evenings, Parent Open Afternoons, Informal consultation meetings.

Children are not machines-their rate of progress will vary over time, sometimes making great advances in areas of their learning and sometimes taking time to consolidate areas of learning and appearing to plateau. This is natural and it was this recognition that progress is not always consistent from one year to the next as to why the National Curriculum levels system was abandoned. The important thing is that your child continues to make progress *over time*, and that they are happy and healthy individuals.

Working together we can achieve this.

You are welcome to come along to our coffee morning at **9am on Tuesday 21st January** or to ask your class teacher if you have any questions about any of this document or your child's learning.