

# St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Date: January 2024

Review: January 2026

## Teaching and Learning Policy

**'Let all that you do be done in love'  
(1 Corinthians 16:14)**



Our Teaching and Learning policy reflects the vision for St. Augustine's to provide the highest quality of education within a Catholic ethos. Our policy is rooted in current, reliable metacognitive research; we have explored a plethora of evidence-informed teaching and learning approaches and carefully considered which methods to implement within our school, to best suit our children and our context. Our policy aims to ensure that all children at our school are consistently provided with the highest quality teaching and learning experiences which meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

For specific information about the Early Years Foundation Stage please refer to the separate policy.

## **I. Intent**

St Augustine's is a place where all people are valued as children of God and where pupils are supported to reach full growth in Christ and achieve their true potential. Through our curriculum we ensure that, with enthusiasm and celebration, the message of Jesus Christ is at the centre of all we do. We aim to live out our mission, "Let all that you do be done in love" throughout all the teaching and learning taking place daily at St Augustine's.

### **I.a. Bishop's Themes**

Teaching and learning at St Augustine's is underpinned by the Bishop's themes of 'Encounter', 'Discipleship' and 'Missionary Discipleship';

#### **Encounter**

*'Because when we truly **encounter** the Lord and his love for each of us, and hear afresh each day his Gospel invitation to change our lives and follow him as his disciples, we will find that we want to share with others the difference that knowing and serving Christ makes to our lives.'*

Pastoral letter of Rt Rev. Patrick McKinney, our Bishop, Dec 2018

The words of Bishop Patrick inspire us to encounter the Lord and become his disciples. Each day, we work together to spread his message of love and friendship in our school, parish and wider community. Throughout our immersive curriculum, we intend for our pupils to encounter the exciting, real-life experiences they need to fully embrace new concepts and develop a life-long love of learning.

#### **Discipleship**

*"The disciple is someone who is trying each day to move from a 'me-centred' relationship with Christ, to one that seeks to hear and respond to what Christ may be asking of them."*

Pastoral letter of Rt Rev. Patrick McKinney, our Bishop, March 2019

Through our personal encounters with Christ, we hear and respond to his invitation to be his disciples. Our curriculum provides pupils with opportunities for personal and spiritual development, to respond to what Christ is asking of them. Through excellent learning and social behaviours, our pupils demonstrate their commitment to being role models in all they do. By recognising, rewarding and restoring virtue-based behaviours, we aim for all pupils to work together to create an excellent learning environment where everyone is enabled and championed to succeed.

#### **Missionary Discipleship**

At St Augustine's, we teach pupils about the important work charities undertake. Though a strong commitment to 'faith in action', we provide opportunities for pupils to serve our local community and the wider world. Pupils, staff and parents understand the importance of showing love and support to those in need.

## **I.b. School Virtues**

The school virtues shape our teaching and learning at St Augustine's and are a central thread interwoven throughout each area of our curriculum intent and implementation.

***We love learning and are determined***

***We are hopeful and confident***

***We are honest and forgiving***

***We are loving and respectful***

***We are friendly and kind***

***We love our neighbour and show self-control***

### **Love and Respect**

We intend to enable everyone to flourish and achieve their ambition at our school. Our knowledge rich, well-rounded, and coherent curriculum aims to equip our children with the information, skills, vocabulary, and personal characteristics which will help to ensure they can become lifelong learners and make a positive contribution to the communities they belong to.

### **Love of Neighbour and Self-Control**

We intend to support our pupils in their personal development, to become responsible citizens who can make sensible life choices. We teach our pupils how to be proactive in supporting our local area, as well as our global family. We equip our pupils with the relevant knowledge and skills to act when faced with inequalities and injustice, recognising their protected characteristics and rights. Our pupils are valued for who they are as aspirational and ambitious individuals and value others.

### **Love of Learning and Determination**

We intend to challenge and support our children through high quality teaching and learning to enable them to be the best that they can be. A wide range of learning opportunities foster children's love of learning and intrinsically motivates them to succeed. Our lessons challenge, support and enable children to overcome barriers and encourages a lifelong love of learning.

### **Hope and Confidence**

We intend to offer a knowledge-rich curriculum which is broad and balanced, and which builds on the knowledge and understanding of all children, whatever their starting points. We provide a framework that allows children to encounter opportunities with resilience, perseverance, and self-determination to grow and become responsible independent learners.

### **Honesty and Forgiveness**

We intend for our pupils to understand the importance of taking responsibility for their actions and being truthful, as part of the reconciliation process. We teach our pupils that it's ok to make mistakes and that the value is in learning from them. We help our pupils to understand forgiveness and support them in forgiving others.

### **Friendship and Kindness**

We intend for our pupils to develop their social and communication skills. We teach them the ingredients of healthy relationships and support them in making and sustaining healthy friendships. We support pupils when friendships break down and teach them how to build bridges of friendship between one another.

## **I.c. Curriculum**

Our curriculum intent is set out in our Whole School Long Term Plan which can be found [here](#).

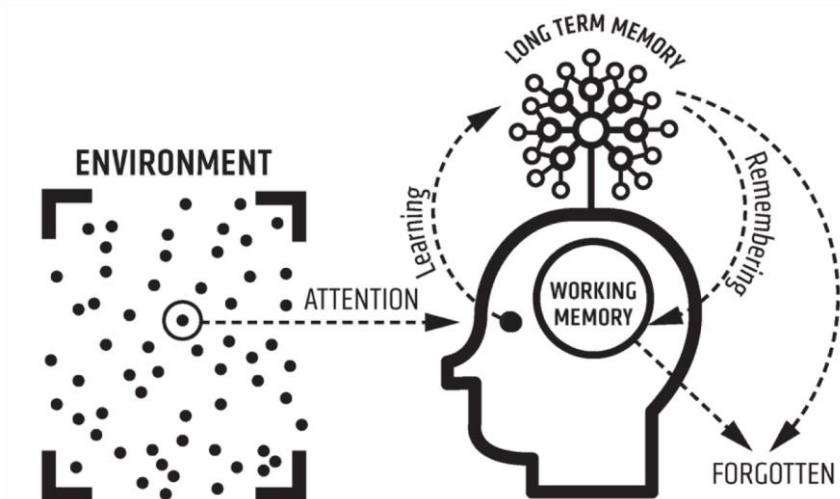
## **2. Implementation**

At St Augustine's, our approach to teaching and learning is rooted in current, reliable metacognitive research. We have developed a secure understanding of how knowledge is acquired and have used this to shape the teaching and learning at St Augustine's.

### **2.a. Metacognition**

**Learning involves a lasting change in pupils' capabilities or understanding.**

Willingham's Simple Model of Memory demonstrates how we learn. We reach out into the environment and bring new information into our working memory. Thinking about that new information and linking it to prior knowledge helps it to move from our working memory to long-term memory. In cases when this doesn't happen, information can fall out of working memory and be forgotten. Once in long-term memory, we can remember information as required, or, with insufficient use, we may lose the ability to retrieve it, and it is forgotten.



## 2.b. Metacognitive Strategies

To optimise learning at St Augustine's, we apply the following strategies:



### Concrete Examples

Teachers use concrete examples when teaching abstract concepts. Furthermore, they may ask pupils to come up with their own examples, correcting any examples (or parts of examples) that aren't quite right, and look for more.

### Dual Coding

Dual Coding is used by teachers when presenting information to pupils. It's about presenting information in dual forms, so it is processed more effectively in pupils' working memory. For example, providing a verbal explanation accompanied by a well-judged image to support it.

### Elaboration

This method asks pupils to go beyond simple recall of information and start making connections within the content. Pupils are asked open-ended questions about the material and encouraged to answer in as much detail as possible, then check the materials to make sure their understanding is correct. We encourage pupils to use a range of oracy skills to support this process. **Thinking and linking.**

### Interleaving

Common knowledge tells us that to learn a skill, we should practice it over and over again. While repetition is vital, research says we will learn that skill more effectively if we mix our practice of it with other skills. This is known as interleaving. We take this into consideration when planning and teaching our curriculum, for example, making cross-curricular links.

### Retrieval Practice

Many people think of "studying" as simply re-reading notes, textbooks, or other materials. But having the information right in front of us doesn't force us to retrieve it from memory; instead, it allows us to trick ourselves into thinking we know something. Recalling information without supporting materials helps us learn it much more effectively. Opportunities for retrieval practice are built into every lesson. We use Kate Jones strategies to provide a variety of retrieval opportunities for our pupils.

## **Spaced Practice**

Every time you leave a little space between practice, you forget a bit of the information, and then you relearn it. Forgetting helps to strengthen the memory - you need to forget a little bit in order to then help yourself learn it by remembering again. We include spaced practice by revisiting topic areas several times throughout the year to support pupils in embedding knowledge into long-term memory.

### **2.c. Oracy**

Oracy is used as a tool at St. Augustine's in three main areas; to deepen knowledge, to present information and to maintain/restore emotional regulation. Oracy permeates all lessons at St. Augustine's.

These strategies help pupils to be aware of their role within discussions and develop skills they would not usually have the opportunity to use. The development of oracy skills also gives pupils a toolkit to use to explore and express difficult emotions and regulate appropriately.

### **2.d. Retrieval Practice**

Retrieval is a teaching and learning strategy, not an assessment strategy. It is a planned opportunity for children to recall key prior learning to build fluency.

*'Retrieval practice boosts learning by pulling information out of students' heads, rather than cramming information into students' heads'.  
retrievalpractice.org (2022)*

We support our children to know more and remember more by incorporating retrieval strategies into our everyday teaching and learning. When planning for retrieval, teachers carefully consider the focus of the retrieval practice, and which strategy is most appropriate for the content. We support the pupils in retrieving key knowledge from the current term's learning, previous topics, and, where appropriate, content taught in previous year groups. We use a range of strategies to support pupils in retrieving key prior knowledge. We utilise the Kate Jones retrieval resources which can be found [here](#).

### **2.e. Spaced Practice**

Metacognitive research suggests that the more times we revisit content over time, the more likely we are to commit the knowledge to our long-term memory. At St Augustine's, we build in spaced practise to ensure pupils have several opportunities to revisit learning and are therefore more likely to 'know more and remember more'.

## **Weekly Spaced Practice**

Each lesson begins with a review of prior learning to bring knowledge back into the working memory. This can take the form of 'true or false' activities, flash back 4s, quizzing, or using knowledge organisers.

## **Half-Termly Spaced Practice**

Every half term, pupils revisit key knowledge and skills from a topic they learnt about in the previous term. Teachers deliver a 20-minute learning review on a Friday, with a different subject focus each week, to ensure all areas of the curriculum are covered during each half term. Learning reviews take the form of retrieval activities which are designed specifically for the type of knowledge it aims to retrieve. This could include labelling a diagram, answering questions, or writing a summary.

Example Spaced Learning timetable:

### Class Spaced Learning Timetable

	Advent Term 1	Advent Term 2	Lent Term 1	Lent Term 2	Pentecost Term 1	Pentecost Term 2
	Originally taught in Pentecost 2, Y2	Originally taught in Advent 1, Y3	Originally taught in Advent 2, Y3	Originally taught in Lent 1, Y3	Originally taught in Lent 2, Y3	Originally taught in Pentecost 1, Y3
<b>Week 1</b> Science	Plants	Rocks and Soils	Light and Shadows	Nutrition and Movement	Magnets	Roots and Shoots
<b>Week 2</b> Hist/Geog	Compass points	Stone Age-Iron Age	Europe	Ancient Egypt	Volcanoes and Earthquakes	Ancient Greece
<b>Week 3</b> French	n/a	Greetings	Adjectives of colour, size and shape	Playground games	In a French Classroom	Transport
<b>Week 4</b> RE	Treasures	Promises	Visitors	Journeys	Giving All	Energy
<b>Week 5</b> ICT	Logging on	Networks and the internet	Programming: Scratch	Emailing	Journey inside a computer	Video Trailers
<b>Week 6</b> Art/DT	Joining materials	Using charcoal	Sewing	Shape and Colour	Carving	Weaving and sewing
<b>Week 7</b> Music	Call and Response	Rhythms	Stave Notations	Layering and Ostinato	Improvisation	Performance

### Yearly Spaced Practise

At the end of each academic year, pupils revisit knowledge from across the year in all subjects. Teachers host 'The Big Fat Quiz of the Year' which aims to support pupils in retrieving key knowledge from all areas of the curriculum.

### Curriculum Design

Our whole school non-core curriculum is designed so pupils revisit key knowledge and skills multiple times throughout their time at St Augustine's. Our substantive knowledge overviews for each subject demonstrate how key knowledge strands are revisited each year from EYFS-Y6.

Example substantive knowledge overview:

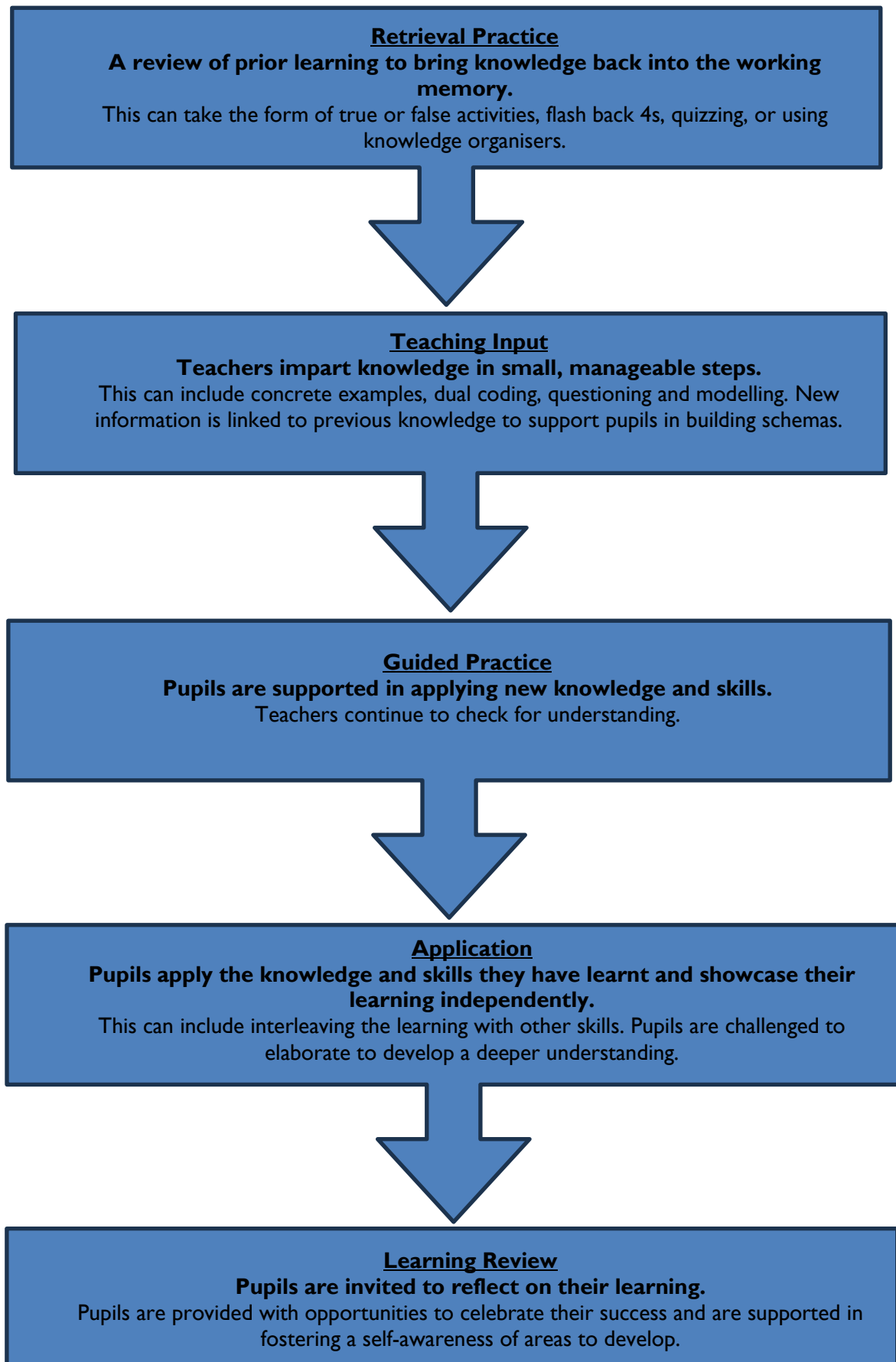
Computing Substantive Knowledge – 2023-2024						
	Computing Systems and Networks Identifying hardware and using software, while exploring how computers communicate with each other	Programming Understanding that a computer operates on algorithms, and learning how to write, adapt and debug code to instruct a computer to perform set tasks	Creating Media Learning how to use various devices – record, capture and edit content such as videos, music, pictures, and photographs	Data Handling Ensuring that information is collected, recorded, stored, presented and analysed in a manner that is useful and can help to solve problems.	Online Safety Understanding the benefits and risks of being online – how to remain safe, keep personal information secure and recognising when to seek help in difficult situations.	
	Advent 1	Advent 2	Lent 1	Lent 2	Pentecost 1	Pentecost 2
Cedar EYFS		<b>Using a computer</b> Learning the main parts of a computer and how to use the keyboard and mouse. Learning how to log in and out	<b>All about instructions</b> The children learn to receive and give instructions and understand the importance of precise instructions.	<b>Exploring hardware</b> Tinkering and exploring with different computer hardware and learning to operate a camera.	<b>Programming Bee-bots</b> Children learn about directions, experiment with programming a Bee-bot and tinker with hardware.	<b>Introduction to data</b> Children sort and categorise data and are introduced to branching databases and pictograms.
Sycamore Y1/2	<b>What is a computer?</b> Exploring what a computer is by identifying how inputs and outputs work and how computers are used in the wider world to design their own computerised invention. To know what the techniques are for creating a strong password.	<b>Algorithms and debugging</b> Developing an understanding of; what algorithms are, how to program them and how they can be developed to be more efficient, introduction of loops. To know that you should tell a trusted adult if you feel unsafe or worried online.	<b>Word Processing</b> Developing touch typing skills, learning keyboard shortcuts and simple editing tools. To know that the internet is many devices connected to one another.	<b>Programming ScratchJr (option 1 - using tablet devices)</b> Exploring what 'blocks' do' by carrying out an informative cycle of predict > test > review. Programming a familiar story and make a musical instrument. To understand the difference between online and offline.	<b>Stop Motion</b> Learning how to create simple animations from storyboarding creative ideas. To know that 'sharing' online means giving something specific to someone else via the internet and 'posting' online means placing information on the internet.	<b>International Space Station</b> Learning how data is collected, used and displayed and the scientific learning of the conditions needed for plants and humans, to survive. To understand that not everything I see or read online is true.



Olive Y3	<p><b>Networks and the internet (option 2 – Microsoft Office 365)</b> Learning what a network is and how devices communicate and share information.</p> <p>To know that not everything on the internet is true: people share facts, beliefs and opinions online.</p>	<p><b>Programming: Scratch</b> Exploring the programme Scratch, following the predict &gt; test &gt; review cycle. Learning about 'loops' and programming an animation, story and game.</p> <p>To know that apps require permission to access private information and that you can alter the permissions.</p>	<p><b>Emailing (option 2 – Microsoft Office 365)</b> Sending emails with attachments and understanding what cyberbullying is.</p> <p>To know that privacy settings limit who can access your important personal information, such as your name, age, gender etc.</p>	<p><b>Journey inside a computer</b> Assuming the role of computer parts and creating paper versions of computers to consolidate understanding of how a computer works.</p> <p>To know that the internet is many devices connected to one another</p>	<p><b>Video trailers (option 2 – using iPads)</b> Developing digital video skills to create trailers, with special effects and transitions.</p> <p>To know what social media is and that age restrictions apply.</p>	<p><b>Comparison cards databases</b> Learning about records, files and data and sorting and filtering data.</p> <p>To know what the techniques are for creating a strong password</p>
Willow Y5 Acacia Y4	<p><b>Collaborative Learning (option 2 – Microsoft Office 365)</b> Learning how to work collaboratively and exploring a range of collaborative tools.</p> <p>To know that not everything on the internet is true: people share facts, beliefs and opinions online.</p>	<p><b>Further coding with Scratch (option 2 – Microsoft Office 365)</b> Revisiting the key features and beginning to use 'variables' in code scripts.</p> <p>To know that apps require permission to access private information and that you can alter the permissions.</p>	<p><b>Website design (option 2 – Microsoft Office 365)</b> Learning how web pages and sites are created and how to embed media and links.</p> <p>To know what social media is and that age restrictions apply.</p>	<p><b>HTML</b> Learning about the markup language behind a webpage; becoming familiar with HTML tags, changing HTML and CSS code to alter images and 'remix' a live website.</p> <p>To know that privacy settings limit who can access your important personal information. Information, such as your name, age, gender etc.</p>	<p><b>Computational thinking</b> Solving problems effectively using the four areas of abstraction, algorithm design, decomposition and pattern recognition.</p> <p>To understand that technology can be designed to act like or impersonate living things.</p>	<p><b>Investigating weather (option 2 – Microsoft Office 365)</b> Researching and storing data on spreadsheets and designing a weather station.</p> <p>To understand that the internet can affect your moods and feelings.</p>
Juniper Y6	<p><b>Search engines (option 2 – Microsoft Office 365)</b> Learning about how page rank works and how to identify inaccurate information.</p> <p>To know different ways we can communicate online.</p>	<p><b>Programming music (option 2 – Scratch)</b> Building-on programming and music skills to create different sounds, beats and melodies which are put to the test with a Battle of the Bands performance!</p> <p>To understand how online information can be used to form judgements.</p>	<p><b>Mars Rover 1</b> Learning about the Mars Rover, exploring how and why it transfers data including instructions, and how messages can be sent using binary code.</p> <p>To understand some ways to deal with online bullying.</p>	<p><b>Micro:bit</b> Creating algorithms and programs that are used in the real world. Using the 'predict, test and evaluate' cycle to create and debug programs with specific aims.</p> <p>To know that apps require permission to access private information and that you can alter the permissions.</p>	<p><b>Stop motion animation (option 1 – Stop motion studio)</b> Creating animations, storyboard ideas and decomposing a story into small parts before putting together to create the illusion of a moving image.</p> <p>To know where I can go for support if I am being bullied online.</p>	<p><b>Mars Rover 2</b> Exploring how the Mars rover: moves, follows instructions, collects and sends data; understanding how computers work, what data is and how it is transferred.</p> <p>To understand what it means to have a positive online reputation.</p>



## 2.f. Lesson Model



## **2.h. Scaffolding and Challenging**

The level of pupils' prior knowledge and relevant expertise has a major influence on the relative effectiveness of a particular learning activity. Pupils with minimal prior knowledge, have multiple elements of information they will need to process in the working memory to complete a task. In contrast, the more information the learner already knows, the fewer the number of elements they need to process during the learning task. These pupils need minimal scaffolding, as this can add unnecessary cognitive load and hinder learning. This is called the expertise reversal effect. The expertise reversal effect suggests that learning materials and tasks should not be considered in a one-for-all fashion.

At St Augustine's, teachers foster an adaptive learning environment, in which learning materials are tailored in accordance with learners' current levels of achievement, based on an understanding of different levels of learners' prior knowledge. Teachers carefully consider which pupils may benefit from scaffolded learning tasks and which pupils would benefit from minimal scaffolding and more challenging learning opportunities. Teachers use Assessment for Learning strategies regularly throughout lessons and make informed decisions on adaptive teaching based on pupil feedback and adjust their lesson accordingly.

## **2.i. Supporting SEN**

As an inclusive school, we work in partnership with parents and professionals to identify and support children with additional needs across the four areas of SEND. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) works closely with the class teachers and outside agencies to ensure that children's needs are identified early, accurately assessed, carefully planned for and that progress is regularly reviewed. Parents are encouraged to engage with school as we support children through an individualised program. All children with SEND are fully integrated into school life and are educated within the classroom setting to ensure they have access to a full and broad curriculum.

## **2.j. Evidence of learning**

We record evidence of learning outcomes in a variety of ways at St Augustine's. Children record learning in their own personal exercise books. Scrapbooks are used to showcase the knowledge and skills children have acquired throughout a topic. We regularly use SeeSaw to upload evidence of practical learning opportunities and share these with parents. Our teaching and learning expectations differ across the curriculum subjects we teach at St Augustine's. See appendix.

## **2.k. Learning Environment**

The learning environment can have a significant impact on pupils' ability to learn and make progress. We know that the working memory is limited and, therefore, in order for us to optimise learning, we need to optimise intrinsic load (the content we want the children to be thinking about) and reduce extraneous load (the cognitive load associated with the manner and structure of how the information is presented). We aim to minimise classroom distractions as much as possible, to support pupils in focussing on the information to be learnt.

Teachers and leaders are responsible for ensuring that the school learning environment:

- Is safe and welcoming
- Is accessible and meets the needs of all learners
- Is well-organised, tidy and clutter-free and children are taught to take care of, select and return resources appropriately

- Is well-resourced with items to support learning and that resources are clearly labelled and accessible
- Has furniture and resources arranged so they are conducive to learning
- Has high-quality displays in classrooms, including working walls for core subjects that support current learning, and opportunities to celebrate pupil achievements in classrooms
- Has high-quality displays around school which display prior learning and provide information about wider whole-school activities e.g. school council
- Has in place clear routines that maximise learning time
- Uses consistent and positive behaviour management techniques (See Behaviour Policy)
- Is an environment where relationships between staff and pupils are positive and supportive

### **3. Impact**

#### **3.a Assessment**

We set the highest expectations for pupil progress, attitudes to learning, welfare and behaviour. Our staff set challenging targets and encourage children to value aspirations and achievement, facilitating our pupils' curiosity for learning and nurturing their talents. Senior leaders, teachers and support staff work together closely to regularly track progress and identify misconceptions and areas for development; this in turn informs and adapts day-to-day learning, medium term planning, support, and challenge. For more information, see the Assessment Policy.

#### **3.b. Quality Assurance**

We monitor the teaching and learning at St Augustine's through:

- Learning walks- visiting classrooms to assess learning behaviours and delivery of the curriculum.
- Book Looks - to ensure the designed curriculum is reflected in the children's books.
- Pupil Voice- speaking to pupils about their learning experiences

#### **3.b Governors**

Our governors support, monitor and review the school's approach to teaching and learning. In particular, they:

- 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 headteacher's report and school visits.
- Monitor that the school facilities 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 how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment.

#### **3.c. Parents & Carers**

Parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. We inform parents about what and how their children are learning by:

- Inviting new parents to induction meetings to explain our school's approach to teaching the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage

- Sending a 'Curriculum Offer' to parents at the start of each term that outlines the curriculum that their child will be studying that term, accompanied by a video with the class teacher explaining the curriculum for the term
- Using 'SeeSaw' to provide regular updates about learning in the classroom throughout the term
- Holding 'Open Classroom' sessions, where families are invited into the classroom to explore the learning environment, talk to teachers and provide an opportunity for children to share their learning with their families
- Inviting families to assemblies, liturgies, masses and productions throughout the year
- Inviting families to join the classes on trips and visits out of school
- Arranging parent-teacher meetings to inform parents of their child's progress and attainment
- Providing an annual written report for families that outlines their child's achievements and areas of development
- Holding termly meetings with families of SEND children to discuss their child's SEN targets and progress towards these targets

Families have the responsibility to support their children and the school to implement this policy by:

- Ensuring their child arrives at school on time and has the best attendance record possible
- Ensuring that their child is equipped for school with the correct uniform and P.E. kit
- Informing school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect the child's performance or behaviour
- Promoting a positive attitude towards school and learning in general