

Summary of School Priorities 2024-2025

Current Academic Year

Resources, costs etc. for the current year can be found in the detailed priorities later in this document

Priority 1

Implementation of the new RED framework across the school by 2025

Rationale:

The Bishops of England of Wales have implemented a new framework for the teaching of RE across all Catholic Schools. This involves a new approach to teaching and learning of the Catholic and RE curriculum. It has been advised that the new framework is to be in place and embedded by 2026. As a school, we are aiming to provide all staff with the training and resources to implement the RED in all year groups by September 2025 with it being embedded across the school by September 2026. As a Catholic school, our aim is that every child achieves their full potential as an individual made in the image and likeness of God. This encompasses every dimension of the child: spiritual, moral, social, academic, physical and artistic. The new framework will help us achieve our vision, which is that children will learn to be good citizens of the world, enriching society through a positive contribution to their community and beyond. The new RED curriculum is the vehicle through which we will support and nurture children to achieve this potential. We believe that knowledge empowers and enables children to feel and be successful, and that this is the entitlement of every child.

Priority 2

To use the Voice 21 Oracy Framework to develop physical, linguistic, cognitive and emotional skills that enable successful communication

Rationale:

We are proud of the rich and vibrant backgrounds of our children and families. Together, our children can speak over xxx different languages with many children learning more than 2 different languages. Through our AoLE monitoring, as a staff, we highlighted that children's Oracy skills were not developing in line with their reading and writing skills. Children had limited subject specific vocabulary. Children found it difficult to adjust their communication to different social situations. This was evident in how the children communicated with visitors who attended the school; how they conducted themselves when speaking publically during school Masses and Assemblies. We are also aware though, that many of our children need additional opportunities to learn to talk and learn through talk to enhance their proficiency in English. Research highlights that spoken language skills are one of the strongest predictors of a child's future life chances and therefore, one of the best ways for us to close the disadvantage gap is through focussing on Oracy. As a cluster, we all identified Oracy as an area of development. Therefore, we have decided that Oracy would be a school development priority for the cluster and have subscribed to Voice 21 to support us on our journey.

Priority 3

Ensure that learning experiences enable all pupils to improve their creativity and problem-solving skills and to develop as independent learners

Rationale :

Following self evaluation processes and a recent Estyn inspection (Dec 23), evaluations and findings suggested that an area for development across the school, is too ensure that our learners have opportunities to become more resilient learners, who should be given freedom to take risks and learn from any mistakes. As staff, we need to ensure that our pedagogy demonstrates that we are facilitators of learning rather than over directing the learning through the delivery of rigid and structured lessons. Nearly all staff, whilst carrying out monitoring activities, have recognised this. Although, we have began the journey of planning more opportunities for creativity, problem solving so that our learners can become more independent, we as a staff, recognise that we still have work to do to ensure that the learning experiences and skills taught, support our learners to become more independent in their approach to learning. Estyn also identified this as an area that needs further developing in our school: ***“However, most pupils do not develop their independent learning skills well enough as they rely too much on staff to direct their learning.” “Overall, most pupils critical and problem-solving skills are less well developed” “Overall, teachers tend to over-direct learning. The overuse of structured lessons and activities restricts most pupils in becoming independent learners”***

We will be using the work from Guy Claxton, Building Learning Power, to support us in enabling the children to really understand “What it is to learn? What learning looks like? And what they need to do to become independent and self motivated learners. This will support us to develop a curriculum that will enable us to ensure that our learners are life long learners that will be resourceful, reflective, reciprocal and resilient.

Priority 4

To develop an assessment and tracking tool pertinent to St Illtyd’s, in order for AoLE leaders to have a better understanding of the attainment and progress for each individual pupil. To ensure marking and feedback, feeds into our new processes by providing opportunities for pupils to improve and reflect on their learning

Rationale:

With the changes in the curriculum, the school has moved away from using Taith 360 as a tracking and monitoring tool, as it was having very little impact on measuring attainment and progress of our pupils. In line with the development of our new curriculum and planning against the four purposes and skills, we want to develop assessment processes that link closely to how we deliver our curriculum here at St Illtyd’s. Our new processes and procedures will ensure that AoLE leads will be able to identify continuity and progression within their area across the school for individual pupils. As a school, we have finalised the AoLE termly skills tracking and we are now ready to look at how individual children are achieving and progressing across each of the AoLE’s.

This work will link closely with the marking and feedback policy which will also be updated in line with the school's vision. The recent Estyn report stated '***In most classes, pupils are beginning to assess their own work, so that they know how well they are doing. All teachers provide pupils with regular, suitable verbal feedback but written feedback for older pupils does not support pupils to understand.***' All stakeholders hold the view that effective marking is an essential part of the education process. At its heart, it is an interaction between teacher and pupil: a way of acknowledging pupils' work, checking the outcomes and making decisions about what teachers and pupils need to do next, with the primary aim of driving pupil progress. Through the development of this priority, we are hoping to demonstrate the impact marking and feedback has on our pupils
'Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement'
(Hattie and Timperley 2007)

Priority 5

To ensure that the vision for outdoor learning is embedded across the whole school

Rationale:

In the UK, research has shown that many children spend as little as 16 minutes in nature a day. Increasingly, children are spending more time using technology and less time outdoors, this means that an entire generation is rapidly disconnecting from nature and being deprived of the opportunity to explore and learn outdoors. Outdoor learning breaks down the boundaries of typical classroom-based learning in education, acting as a strategy to connect people with the natural world and engage them in the outdoors. Children of all ages and abilities are offered the opportunity to learn new skills, develop personally and socially, and establish a positive connection with nature. Here at St Illtyd's we are fortunate to have extensive grounds, in which can be developed to provide opportunities for pupils to explore the outdoor environment. Outdoor Learning has been part of our three-year plan of school improvement. **Estyn also recognised that outdoor learning experiences were under developed."**
Across the school pupils do not develop their learning outdoors, independently or with purpose." As a school, we recognise that this area of learning that needs to be improved and staff need to be upskilled to deliver a purposeful outdoor curriculum. At St Illtyd's, we want to ensure that our pupils have a healthy lifestyle, making the most of the benefits of learning outdoors to both physical and mental health. We want to ensure that our pupils are able to express themselves creatively, problem solve, investigate and explore. We would like all pupils to be aware of and take care of their environment as well as to take ownership of their learning, allowing their minds and bodies to thrive.

'High Level' Priorities for years 2 & 3 of this plan

Priority

Progress along Language Continuum (a million Welsh speakers & Our National Mission)

Rationale

The national priority has to be a focus for pupils at St Illtyd's

Staff & school resources (including financial) provisionally assigned to meeting this need

Consideration to teaching or support staff attending a Welsh sabbatical to improve staff confidence/skills

Priority

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Rationale

National priority for CfW to be fully in place by September 2022. School to complete this journey following implementation of new curriculum guidance.

Staff & school resources (including financial) provisionally assigned to meeting this need

Training for staff new to school, new curriculum leaders

Priority

Evaluation of impact of implementation of emotional and mental wellbeing framework

Rationale

The new national framework for emotional and mental wellbeing will be implemented in 21-22. The framework will continue to be implemented and monitored. Interventions will be in place to support pupils who are identified as needing extra support. .

Staff & school resources (including financial) provisionally assigned to meeting this need

Cost of PASS survey; Boxall Assessment; scheme of work, HAPPEN survey for teaching support; pastoral support and trauma informed schools training. Baxter therapeutic dog and counselor. Nurture provision provided by trained staff.

Priority

Supporting learner progression : assessment guidance

Rationale

Following on from the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales, AoLE leads will be focusing on assessment as part of their action plans.

Each AoLE will identify next steps for monitoring and gathering evidence for the five principles of progression

Gareth Coombes – AoLE lead training. Monitoring weeks to identify strengths and areas for development. Cluster work to ensure consistency across progression steps.