

## Our Curriculum

Our curriculum seeks to fulfil our Mission Statement...

‘As a church school, within the Staffordshire University Academies Trust, we strive to ensure the best possible learning journey for the children in our care; encouraging the development of values and attitudes, skills and knowledge, that will ‘release the potential’ in each individual, for the benefit of others, in an ever changing world.’

...and ensure we are ‘Helping Lights Shine for All’.

### What does this mean though?

**Helping** – providing a culture, and opportunities that make learning irresistible (for the children to reach out and grab rather than passively receive); learning opportunities which follow a constructivist approach (not one where children are seen as empty vessels to be filled up with knowledge but where children explore learning in collaboration with others and embed knowledge developed in their shared experience).

**Lights** – this can be understood in terms of their reflections on their beliefs and values, developed in an environment with gospel principles and teaching to the fore; and, in terms of their own unique gifts, talents and interests.

**Shine** – the unique qualities in their characters (shaped by their values, beliefs and personalities), and their gifts and interests, are nurtured, guided and cultivated, to be the best they can be. (Polished, if you like?).

**For All** – meaning, this is the intention *for all* of the children in our care but also that *all* people (irrespective of age, gender, location, culture, beliefs, status) benefit from the characters and talents of our children. It demonstrates the desire for a positive impact at both a personal (to the child) and global (for society) level.

### How is this achieved?

We provide a whole-school curriculum, addressing the programmes of study in the National Curriculum 2014, by following six core themes across each class (one for each half term): Water, Food & Health, Shelter & Environment, Education & Travel, Leaders & Voice, Peace+. Within these themes, topics will be led by a core question, which will have an emphasis on considering issues of social justice. The topics will help build the children’s understanding within each theme, year on year, developing the range of contexts within which the themes are covered, and seeking to consolidate and extend the skills sets the children use to support their future independent learning.

At St Luke’s we recognise ‘curriculum’ as being constituted of both content (knowledge) and pedagogy, and we understand ‘knowledge’ as being both skills and information (facts that require interpretation & accumulation from a range of sources, voices and perspectives). Our curriculum seeks to embed a breadth of knowledge in our children, drawing on local, national and international contexts of knowledge, and recognising the links between them.

Children will be engaged in their learning by a focus on People, within Places, acting within significant Events. This approach seeks to emphasize the role of people as creators and vehicles of knowledge, the importance of people within society and their individual and collective power to effect change. Children will be supported in their learning through the application of Thinking Hats (de Bono), Thinking Maps (Kestrel International) and Science Shapes. Using these tools children will have a shared means of communication, opportunity to demonstrate their understanding, have a sense of inclusion through an approach supported by numeracy and literacy but not driven by it.

Learning will be driven by enquiry and exploration though investigative and problem solving approaches to learning. This approach recognises that what is learned practically supports what is retained mentally, and what is retained mentally can be understood in practical application. With this in mind, and supported by Philosophy for Children, children will be encouraged to both answer and raise questions. Where new learning/knowledge may be currently beyond the children’s sphere of experience, we will seek to provide living experiences, either by inviting visitors into school or taking the children beyond the school gates. This is intended to support the development of new language

and vocabulary, which will enhance their ability to share their understanding clearly and articulately for a range of audiences.

This stated intent of our curriculum is further supported through extra-curricular opportunities, including: sports events, musical and dramatic performances, exhibitions of art and technology, community events; and leadership responsibilities across the school, including: Eco-committee, School Council, Worship Leaders, Sports Crew, House Captains, Charity Event Co-ordinators and Playground Leaders. The skills and knowledge required to be a successful leader are developed and extended through weekly Learning Forums where children learn how to exercise their voice to create change and have a positive impact within society at a local, national and global level.