



# St John's Church of England Academy

## Our Curriculum

Our mission 'Guided by God to be the best that we can be' is at the core of everything we do. We recruit staff who are passionate about making a difference in our community to ensure that our children get the very best educational provision and opportunities to discover and then pursue their talents. In order that every child has the opportunity to shine, staff go the 'extra mile', reaching beyond curriculum expectations and what is typically provided. This is evident in our curriculum enrichment, high levels of pastoral care and extra-curricular provision which is free of charge.

Through our curriculum, we express high expectations and raise aspirations relating to education, the world of work and social mobility so that children are aware of the vast range of opportunities open to them. We encourage children to work hard, have a positive mind-set, have the confidence to make mistakes, persevere in order to succeed and to feel good about themselves.

All curriculum developments are rooted in Christian values to promote spiritual and moral development and personal, social and health education are given high priority so that children will be well equipped to face their future. We respond to findings from school data and pupil feedback to ensure our curriculum is bespoke to children's needs. In response to the 'Healthy Lifestyles' questionnaire, our curriculum will raise awareness about the importance of a 'healthy lifestyle' and support children to take individual responsibility for this. A continued high focus on sport and activity promotes the benefits, not only on physical health, but also on mental well-being. We are one of the few schools to have a Platinum Award for promoting sport and activity.

We ensure that children are ready for their next phase of education by focusing on a high standard of basic skills within a broad, exciting curriculum with knowledge and vocabulary at its heart so that the vast majority of children achieve at least age related expectations. Every opportunity will be used to help children develop as confident communicators.

Through creating and maintaining links with the local community children will have a greater sense of their place within it and a fuller understanding of how they can make a difference. Our children are regularly involved in programmes to improve their community.

We are an inclusive school where everyone is valued as part of our school family. To support this, we will develop a consistency of approach in order that children feel safe and secure while providing flexible provision when it is necessary. Our children readily welcome all newcomers to our school and demonstrate tolerance and compassion towards each other.

The experiences that we consider to be 'childhood essentials' will be planned throughout the school and will include a residential visit. These experiences will raise awareness of the local area and our cultural heritage, provide engaging and relevant purposes for reading and writing and build cultural capital. For example, in Year 1 the children will take a train ride to a Victorian seaside resort during which they will learn about George Stephenson, the role of Darlington in the development of the railways and enjoy a trip to the beach while in Year 5 the children will undertake a Victorian town trail to consolidate and extend knowledge about Quaker families and their influence in developing Darlington and enjoy a picnic in South Park.

We want our children to thrive and leave us as confident and resilient individuals who will make a positive contribution to their local community and the wider world. We strongly believe that children should know God's love and be able to show God's love and our children access many opportunities to do this through charitable giving of their choice, supporting community initiatives such as food banks, Christmas boxes for vulnerable children and visits to our nearby residential home for the elderly.