Flexi-Schooling Learning Strategy

St Thomas à Becket CE Primary School

Our Vision

At St Thomas à Becket CE Primary School, we recognise that flexi-schooling can be a positive educational arrangement for some children and families.

Flexi-schooling is a parental choice whereby a child receives their full-time education through a combination of school attendance and education provided by their family. The arrangement is built on a partnership between home and school, with both contributing to the child's educational experience.

Many of our pupils, including some who access flexi-schooling, have experienced disruption to their education before joining our school. Some have attended multiple schools, experienced periods of home education, faced barriers to regular attendance or developed anxieties linked to previous educational experiences. As a result, we place a strong emphasis on belonging, stability, inclusion and positive relationships, alongside high expectations for achievement.

For some families, flexi-schooling provides a successful route back into education following previous negative experiences of school attendance, unmet needs or disrupted educational journeys. We recognise this whilst maintaining our commitment to high academic expectations, regular engagement with learning and full participation in school life.

We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those who are flexi-schooled, access an ambitious curriculum, achieve well from their starting points and remain fully included within our school community.

Our approach seeks to:

- Maintain high expectations for all pupils.
- Provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.
- Minimise the risk of gaps in knowledge and skills.
- Support strong attendance within agreed arrangements.
- Promote inclusion, belonging and participation.
- Maintain sustainable expectations for staff.
- Ensure that flexi-schooling remains in the child's best interests at all times.

Our Principles

Flexi-schooled pupils remain full members of our school community and access the same curriculum as their peers.

We recognise that, within a small mixed-age primary school, important learning takes place across all days of the week. It is neither possible nor desirable to reserve all new learning for particular days. Instead, our curriculum is deliberately designed to be resilient, ensuring that pupils revisit important knowledge, concepts, vocabulary and skills regularly over time.Our aim is not to provide extensive catch-up following absence. Instead, we ensure that pupils can successfully reconnect with learning through effective curriculum design, retrieval practice, assessment and responsive teaching. Flexi-schooling should provide a full-time education through the combined contribution of home and school.

How We Prevent Learning Gaps

Retrieval as a Core Curriculum Strategy

Retrieval practice is embedded across the curriculum.

In English and mathematics, lessons routinely begin with opportunities to revisit learning from previous lessons as well as key knowledge from earlier units and year groups. Flashbacks, arithmetic review and retrieval activities help pupils strengthen long-term memory and reconnect with learning following periods away from school.

In foundation subjects, pupils complete *Activating Prior Learning* activities. These revisit key knowledge, vocabulary, concepts and learning questions from previous lessons, units and year groups before new learning is introduced.

These approaches benefit all pupils while reducing the likelihood that flexi-schooled pupils develop significant gaps in learning.

Knowledge-Rich Curriculum Design

Each curriculum area identifies the essential knowledge, vocabulary and concepts that pupils need to know and remember. Key content is revisited deliberately within and across units, allowing pupils to strengthen understanding over time. Learning is therefore not dependent upon attendance on any single day.

Foundation Subject Rotation

Where possible, foundation subjects are rotated throughout the timetable and academic year to reduce the likelihood that pupils repeatedly miss the same areas of the curriculum due to their flexi-schooling pattern. This helps ensure continued access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Curriculum Information for Families

Curriculum overviews are available to families through the school website. This enables parents to understand the learning taking place in school and make informed decisions about educational opportunities provided at home. Parents are not expected to replicate classroom teaching, deliver the National Curriculum or provide evidence of completed learning from flexi-school days.

Curriculum Adaptations and Entitlement

Early Years

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers place increased emphasis on revisiting phonics, early reading and number fluency.

Where possible, Understanding the World, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development teaching is prioritised during core attendance days.

Staff provide additional opportunities through provision and adult interaction to develop:

- communication and language;
- friendships and social interaction;
- self-regulation;
- independence;
- fine motor skills;
- mark-making and early writing.

This helps ensure children develop the strong foundations required for future learning.

Phonics and Early Reading

Through Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS), review lessons are taught on Mondays, ensuring children regularly revisit and consolidate previously taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences.

In Reception and Year 1, teachers place particular emphasis on:

- review of taught GPCs;

- common exception words;
- reading fluency;
- phonics assessment;
- preparation for the Phonics Screening Check.

Assessment information is used to identify and address gaps as early as possible.

Mathematics

In Reception and Key Stage 1, Mastering Number has been organised so that all five weekly sessions are delivered within the core attendance week.

Across the school, pupils regularly revisit:

- number facts;
- arithmetic strategies;
- mathematical fluency;
- previously taught concepts.

In Key Stage 2, multiplication and division facts are practised regularly through Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS), Learning by Questions (LBQ) and classroom retrieval activities.

Additional retrieval opportunities support readiness for the Multiplication Tables Check, Key Stage 2 assessments and future mathematical learning.

Reading, Writing and Vocabulary

Reading lessons routinely revisit vocabulary, background knowledge and comprehension skills.

Teachers provide repeated opportunities for pupils to strengthen:

- reading fluency;
- comprehension;
- inference;
- vocabulary development;
- reading confidence.

Writing instruction places strong emphasis on:

- handwriting fluency;
- presentation;
- spelling;
- grammar and punctuation;
- writing stamina;
- independent application of skills.

These areas are revisited regularly through retrieval and practice.

Inclusion and Social Development

We recognise that disrupted educational experiences can affect children's confidence, relationships and engagement with learning.

Teachers ensure that flexi-schooled pupils are fully included in classroom life and wider school opportunities. Particular attention is given to developing:

- positive peer relationships;
- oracy skills;
- confidence;
- resilience;
- independence;
- a strong sense of belonging.

We believe that successful inclusion supports both academic achievement and personal development.

Assessment, Monitoring and Support

Teachers use ongoing assessment to identify misconceptions, emerging gaps and barriers to learning.

Where appropriate, pupils may receive:

- targeted retrieval activities;
- brief pre-teaching;
- focused teacher support;
- additional practice opportunities;
- short-term intervention.

Our approach focuses on enabling pupils to successfully access future learning rather than routinely providing extensive catch-up for lessons missed during flexi-schooling.

The progress and wellbeing of flexi-schooled pupils are monitored through:

- classroom assessment;
- pupil progress meetings;
- work scrutiny;
- attendance monitoring;
- pupil voice;
- discussions with families;
- safeguarding oversight.

Leaders compare the attainment, progress, attendance and wider participation of flexi-schooled pupils with their peers to ensure that flexi-schooling does not become a barrier to achievement, inclusion or future success. Where concerns arise regarding progress, attendance beyond agreed arrangements, safeguarding, wellbeing or inclusion, leaders will work with families to review the arrangement. The school reserves the right to amend or terminate a flexi-schooling agreement where it is no longer judged to be in the child's best interests.

Attendance, Inclusion and Belonging

Flexi-schooling is not considered part-time education.Pupils are expected to attend all sessions within their agreed arrangement and to participate fully in school life.

Flexi-schooled pupils remain full members of the school community and are encouraged to engage fully with:

- classroom learning;

- collective worship;
- educational visits;
- enrichment activities;
- clubs and events;
- wider opportunities available within school.

Strong relationships, belonging and positive experiences of education are fundamental to our approach and are particularly important for pupils who may have experienced disruption within their educational journey.

Evaluating Success

At St Thomas à Becket, flexi-schooling will be considered successful when:

- pupils are safe, happy and included;
- attendance remains strong within the agreed arrangement;
- pupils make at least expected progress from their starting points;
- pupils continue to access an ambitious curriculum;
- pupils participate fully in school life;
- relationships between home and school remain positive;
- the arrangement supports the child's academic, personal, social and emotional development.

Flexi-Schooling Learning Entitlement

All flexi-schooled pupils at St Thomas à Becket CE Primary School are entitled to:

High Expectations

- Access to an ambitious curriculum.
- The same high expectations as their peers.
- High-quality teaching and learning.

Curriculum Continuity

- Daily retrieval practice in core subjects.
- Regular review of prior learning in foundation subjects.
- Repeated opportunities to revisit key knowledge and vocabulary.
- Support to reconnect with learning following periods away from school.

Well-Planned Provision

- Foundation subject rotation where possible.
- Monday ELS review lessons.
- Mastering Number delivered across the core attendance week.
- Curriculum information shared with families.

Inclusion and Belonging

- Full participation in school life.

- Access to trips, enrichment and wider opportunities.
- Positive relationships with peers and staff.
- A strong sense of belonging within the school community.

Monitoring and Support

- Regular assessment of attainment and progress.
- Early identification of emerging gaps.
- Targeted support where needed.
- Regular review of the educational impact of flexi-schooling.

Shared Responsibility

- A full-time education delivered through the combined contribution of home and school.
- Open communication between families and the school.
- A shared commitment to acting in the best interests of the child.
- Ongoing review to ensure the arrangement continues to support successful outcomes.

Key Principle

Flexi-schooling at St Thomas à Becket CE Primary School provides a full-time education through the combined contribution of home and school. Through ambitious curriculum design, retrieval practice, careful assessment and strong pastoral support, we seek to ensure that all pupils remain included, achieve well and thrive both academically and personally.