



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Executive Head: Mrs Clare Tickel

Head of School: Mr Simon Thomas

Diocese of Plymouth



Thrive Policy

The Education Reform Act states that the curriculum should:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

Aims

At St Mary's School, we believe that children have the right to flourish in a safe inclusive environment, and we seek to provide opportunities for spiritual and personal growth and emotional health and wellbeing.

Rationale.

Children learn who they are and how the world is, by forming relationships with people and things around them. The quality of a child's relationship with significant adults is vital to their healthy development and emotional health and wellbeing.

A number of children at St Mary's School need to access the THRIVE programme, in order to support their emotional development. (see Appendix A). Those children, who require support from the THRIVE programme, for a number of various reasons are below the age related expectations for social and emotional development. Although the PSHE (Life to the Full) programme is well embedded throughout the school, children who struggle to the vital social and emotional skills are not always able to access this curriculum and so need further support from the THRIVE programme.

THRIVE

- Is a dynamic developmental approach to working with vulnerable children that provides physical strategies to address their needs
- Is an approach based on relationships with caring, consistent adults
- Finds the earliest missing experience and fills the gaps in the developmental stages
- Recognises that if children do not get experiences positively they will seek them negatively

Purpose.

It is our purpose at St Mary's School to provide a secure caring atmosphere of trust and stability, giving all children the necessary support and guidance for their social and emotional development.

We hope to achieve this through the following:

- A promise of confidentiality in order to support children and parents alike
- A fair and consistent approach towards requests for support
- All school staff to be aware of the theory, underlying principles and assessment procedures of THRIVE
- All staff to use THRIVE techniques and strategies on a daily basis when encountering children
- Designated time slots throughout the week for group and/or 1:1 work with the THRIVE TA's.
- A developing bank of resources for activities agreed in the action plan
- A lunchtime DOING club for children who find the unstructured time difficult to deal with

The THRIVE process.

- Identify vulnerable children to THRIVE trained staff (not necessarily disruptive children) or children raised as a concern on a whole class screening
- Obtain parental consent
- Online Assessment and Action Planning Tool used based on observations and/or class teachers views
- Action Plan created (if possible with parents and key workers) based on assessment outcomes
- Sessions carried out on a weekly basis
- Review Action Plans (approx. every 6 – 8 weeks)

THRIVE assessments

When a child has been identified by a class teacher and once parental consent has been obtained, the assessment can be completed following the online process.

Due to the delicate nature of THRIVE, assessment must be carried out under the guidance of the THRIVE licensed practitioner. (Mrs Campbell or Mrs Brain)

Once a minimum of 2 assessments have been completed under guidance, further assessments may then be carried out independently (under distant supervision).

Results from any assessment must be passed to the THRIVE licensed practitioner. Copies of the assessments must be kept in the THRIVE file.

THRIVE in practice.

Level 1: carried out in the classroom through strategies that will benefit all children in the class but in particular the child who requires THRIVE. Strategies can be built into daily rules and routines, tutor time and when supporting the child with learning. Strategies for the teacher will be provided by the THRIVE licensed practitioner.

Level 2: will consist of group interventions led by one of the teachers/HLTA. Groups will be made up of children who have the same 'interruption'.

Level 3: will consist of 1:1 sessions, within the group session, (or individually if this is deemed to be in the best interests of the child). If the child has a 1:1 HLTA they will be given strategies to use outside of the THRIVE sessions by the practitioners.

The progress of children at levels 2 and 3 is reviewed on a 6-8 week basis. Their actions plans will be adjusted accordingly.

Appendix A. The Development of the brain

Thrive identifies 6 developmental building blocks of healthy brain development:

- **Being** 0 – 6 months
- **Doing** 6 – 18 months
- **Thinking** 18 months – 3 years
- **Power and Identity** 3 – 7 years
- **Skills and Structure** 7 – 11 years
- **Separation and Sexuality** 11 – 18 years

Although most pupils fall into 4 – 18 years age bracket (4 – 25 for pupils with SEN), some may be operating within the 0 – 3 years strands of development and may need a carefully planned and implemented approach in order for them to successfully engage in learning. When a child's life is interrupted by fear or anxiety, his thinking brain will be disengaged as how we feel is closely linked to how we behave and emotions are key to the learning process.

For pupils who are operating within the:

- **Being** stage of development (physiological), the key foci are: safety; having needs met and being special. The adult takes the role of regulator/container.
- **Doing** stage of development (relational/emotional), the key foci are: exploring safely; knowing body limits; experiencing doing and learning about options. The adult takes the role of co-adventurer.
- **Thinking** stage of development (cognitive), the key foci are: thinking about feelings; problem solving; learning about cause and effect and expressing a view. The adult takes the role of co-constructor of meaning.

The Vital Relational Functions (VRFs)

In all interactions with pupils, staff endeavour to use the VRFs outlined in the Thrive Approach. These are drawn from the teachings and findings of leading commentators on emotional, psychological and child development (Sunderland, Kohut, Stern). These skills provide a relational basis for a child's emotional, social and neurological development.

They are:

- **Attunement** – demonstrating an understanding of how they are feeling by “catching and matching” their emotional state.
- **Validation** – demonstrating that their feelings are real and justified.
- **Containment** – Offering their feelings back to them, named and in small pieces.
- **Soothing** – Soothing and calming their distress repeatedly.
- **Regulation** – Communicating the capacity to regulate emotional states by modelling how to do it.

The provision of emotional containment by the adult who is working closely and regularly with the child, is a significant contributing factor to the child's developing capacity to contain and regulate his/her own emotions. The relationship between a child and a significant adult can be an under-recognised and under-used resource so, by using Thrive,

this relationship is enhanced. It can help a child get ready to learn and enhance their learning, build positive relationships between a child and their peers and it can improve attainment.

Review: Autumn 2023

Adopted by the Governing Body: November 2023

Next review: November 2025