

An outstanding enterprising curriculum, equipping children for their lives: St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Falmouth

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Brief description

St Mary's Catholic Primary School in Falmouth demonstrates how enterprise education, including the development of pupils' financial capability and their economic and business understanding, not only prepares them for their future life as consumers, producers and citizens, but contributes to outstanding achievement throughout the school. Children are introduced to economic ideas in the Early Years Foundation Stage and there is progression through to Year 6. Many primary schools undertake highly effective good work in enterprise. St Mary's is special because of the extent to which enterprise education is planned and progressive throughout the school.

Overview – the school's message

'Education for economic wellbeing and financial capability improves motivation and progression by helping pupils see the relevance of what they learn in school to their future lives. We are developing in them skills and attributes to be resilient and successful in our ever-changing technological world. This learning starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progresses through to Year 6 and beyond!



Our exciting topic-based curriculum was planned to integrate progression in skills along with the five 'every child matters' outcomes. Initially this ran alongside a dedicated Business and Enterprise Week which we then embedded into our topics. This led to global and local money- and work-related learning, enriched with trips and visitors to the classroom. The positive impact is reflected in the consistently above-average standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and the pupils' enjoyment of their learning, demonstrated in their response to termly evaluations.

A school bank was set up to promote the importance of savings and money management. This is run weekly by the children, who applied and were interviewed for roles in the bank. Every child and member of staff has a bank account which is used predominantly for saving for school trips. After four years over £40,000 has been deposited. This has resulted in real enthusiasm in our pupils in managing their money, raising money for others and heightened awareness of global economics. This coupled with the exceptionally high academic and moral standards reached when they leave St Mary's equips them well for their future.'

*Jacqui Scarborough, Headteacher
Helen Bancroft, Deputy Headteacher*

The good practice in detail



Enterprise education is planned throughout the school. The whole curriculum is taught through the [interesting contexts of 'topics'](#).

The staff say that all writing is within the context of the topics studied. There are no stand-alone literacy lessons.

The school argues that as a result, pupils see a 'purpose for learning in everything they do.'

Below are a few snapshots of activity for different ages.

The School Bank

From 8.30am on Tuesday mornings, Year 6 pupils take their places in the IT room ready to receive customers. Supervised by a member of staff, a highly efficient operation is soon to begin, which, on a typical morning, sees nearly £500 deposited within 20 minutes. The pupils working in the bank had to apply for their roles through letters of application.

Pupils, often with their parents, enter the room. They are greeted by a customer service assistant. The assistant's job is to greet all of the customers, make sure the customers queue sensibly and quietly, hand out the customer account books and very importantly to collect back and reorder the customer account books. The money is then paid in and a clerk manually records the transaction. The amount is entered in the savings book, and finally a running total is kept by another pupil on the IT system.



At the close of business, the amount of money physically handed over is counted. It must equal both the record of money paid in and the total added to the savings books. On the morning of the inspector's visit there was a small discrepancy. The system of triple checks enabled pupils to quickly discover the problem and all was well but an important lesson was learnt during those few moments of concern.

The bank has been running for over four years and is used for a variety of purposes, including saving for school trips. It is instilling habits of saving among both pupils and their families.

Real business engagement

A local product development company worked with the school to develop a range of toys based on the *Horrible Histories* books. Children's ideas and feedback directly influenced the design. The school benefited from the designer visiting the school to work with the children while the business benefited from free market research. In assembly it was illustrated how three specific ideas from individual pupils could be seen in the characters.



Early Years get to grips with the key economic concept of specialisation

As part of a 'giants and castles' topic, children talked about the different roles in the castle and trading in simple terms. The children set up a castle kitchen role-play to re-enact some of these roles.

The children are taken to Newquay Zoo where they are introduced to the world of work by

exploring the many people that are needed to look after wild animals: zoo keepers, cleaners, feeders, zoo guides, demonstrators, gardeners, safety teams and vets.

Under the heading of 'plant-hunters and mini-beasts', the children set up a garden centre and now sell the plants that they grow to their parents and families.

Chocolate

Chocolate is popular with children and adults. Its study can provide a lot of excellent learning opportunities.

In Year 3, pupils look into issues surrounding fair trade and how people may be prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential. They gain an understanding of how markets work and consider the global economic impact of the cocoa bean.

They make chocolates and think of how they should be packaged and advertised.





In Year 5, pupils build on their earlier learning about fair trade through costings and comparisons of what farmers are paid for their exports. They revisit business and marketing, the chain of business from producers, manufacturers, exporters, buyers, sellers. Included in this topic is the study of the slave trade, highlighting basic human requirements for dignity and justice. The topic includes a fair trade coffee morning where pupils promote fair trade products and explain the impact of

purchasing them. This is followed up by pupils surveying local businesses regarding stocking fair trade products.

Year 6 financial planning to stage a concert

By Year 6, pupils have developed economics and business skills that equip them very well for the study of business in secondary school. For example, pupils use spreadsheets to work out costings for a theatre production. They calculate outgoings and break-even analysis – approaches often taught in Year 10.

The school's background

[St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Falmouth](#) is broadly average in size. It is located in Falmouth (in Cornish: Aberfala) on the south coast of Cornwall. The town has a population of 21,635. Self-employment rates in Cornwall are significantly above average, while incomes are significantly below average. Pupils at the school consistently achieve outstanding results. In 2012 all pupils in Year 6 gained level 4 in both English and mathematics and nearly a half gained level 5 in both subjects. The school holds Healthy School, Activemark, Primary Quality Mark and Investors in Work-Related Learning awards.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

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