



St Cecilia's
R. C. High School

Discover • Develop • Rejoice

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy

Next Review Date: July 2026

St Cecilia's Teaching and Learning Policy

At St. Cecilia's, we believe every young adult has the right to the best possible education. We aim to ensure that all pupils, regardless of ability, SEND or circumstances, reach their full potential and gain the skills and knowledge necessary to lead successful lives both at school and beyond.

Through implementing this policy, we aim to embed good practice and consistency in the quality of teaching across the school and ensure we deliver a unified focus to monitoring learning. Through these practices, we aim to continually improve our standards, help every pupil reach their potential and enhance the professional development of staff.

All teachers are leaders of deep knowledgeable learning and demonstrate through their own example that they are lifelong learners. We use this learning to support the continual improvement of teaching and learning and thereby contribute to the school improvement strategic plans.

Professional development is essential for supporting all adults to develop their own learning.

Teachers take an active interest in and responsibility for developing their teaching practice and are supported by the school to do this through tailored ECPD sessions led for staff by staff, full membership to CPD providers such as the National College, collaboration, accessing our teaching and learning PADLET pages, reading a variety of books to develop pedagogy, T&L strategies and professional development as part of appraisal, departmental planning and enjoyment. Departmental CPD tailored to each department's needs is also used.

The Role of Our Curriculum

At St Cecilia's, our curriculum supports our school's mission in empowering pupils to become safe, happy, healthy, and fulfilled adults who actively engage with the world, encapsulated by a knowledge and love of Christ and of our Catholic faith. With that as our destination, we create a curriculum journey that supports all, no matter their personal circumstances, to reach it. It is enriched with opportunity for Catholic Social Teaching, building resilience and personal development. During their time at Saint Cecilia's, we prepare our pupils for when they will live and work with others in adult life. We do this by providing a friendly, disciplined social environment and the support of a caring community. We nurture in them an understanding of rights and responsibilities, respect and tolerance for difference, sensitivity towards the feelings and concerns of others and an active commitment to social justice. We want to show them how to be good citizens who contribute positively towards the wider community.

The curriculum is our progress model. By this we mean that it describes the journey our pupils need to go on to know more and remember more; the journey needed to produce better outcomes and beyond, in all subjects, in their character, in their awareness and in

their appreciation of good. Our curriculum is driven by knowledge, for which there are five key principles in which we believe:

- all pupils are entitled to equal opportunity within our explicit curriculum. This is the 'best deal' for our pupils. Therefore, we strive for consistency in the knowledge delivered and the order it is delivered in
- knowledge is sequenced as a 'path' that can make learning a subject 'easier' by ensuring, where applicable, that what pupils learn next is connected to what they already know, so that they could build connected knowledge, so knowledge expands, and complexity is increased over time
- prior knowledge required to make learning the future knowledge more likely needs to be considered and we are not afraid to 'track back to solid ground' when we find evidence of dysfluency
- understanding of knowledge and concepts must be checked in a variety of formative and summative ways before moving forward, pupils reflect and improve based on this feedback and we reteach and address misconceptions
- essential knowledge should be revisited regularly through planned and thoughtful activities for the retrieval and interleaving of knowledge and concepts.

Our curriculum is the backbone from which great teaching and learning can flourish. Our curriculum enables children to acquire and extend essential skills in literacy, numeracy and communication whilst developing personal, learning and thinking skills, developing resilience, independence, curiosity and engagement. Our approach to teaching and learning is intended to stimulate pupils' curiosity, imagination, and creativity.

Teaching and learning with pupils

We believe that pupils learn best when they:

- are interested and motivated
- clearly understand the task
- are confident, feel safe and secure
- are challenged and stretched to master new skills and knowledge
- are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses as learners and adjust their learning habits accordingly
- are equipped with an arsenal of learning strategies they can emulate and replicate outside the classroom
- are all able to achieve the highest outcomes, with adaptive teaching utilised to scaffold and extend learning
- know the bigger picture and how to get there
- understand the relevance and context of what they are learning
- can reflect on their learning and use this to inform their planning and monitoring of subsequent tasks.

The learning environment

Learning takes place in an environment which:

- demonstrates high challenge and low threat
- is peaceful and calm
- is welcoming and caring
- is organised
- stimulates resilience
- makes learning accessible
- is encouraging and positive
- promotes a secure environment where mistakes are not only acceptable, but are welcomed
- provides equal opportunities

We monitor our learning environments closely and ensure the following:

- the teacher decides and plan the seating arrangements for pupils to maximise educational attainment
- seating arrangements will be changed to suit different activities, e.g. group work
- the learning environment will be designed to maximise pupils' opportunities to learn, e.g. forward-facing desks
- the room will be well-ventilated, well-lit, and maintained at a suitable temperature
- pupils will be encouraged to drink water during lessons, except in science laboratories where water could create a risk.

Responsibilities for teaching and learning

Classroom teachers

Classroom teachers are responsible for the progress of pupils in their classes and for self-evaluating their own professional development. This is achieved by:

- self-evaluation of their subject knowledge and understanding of educational initiatives
- monitoring pupil progress to ensure they achieve well against prior achievement and similar groups nationally, including the use of analytic systems such as SISRA
- misconceptions being anticipated and known to ensure no pupil is left behind when required
- classroom teachers are responsible for their own professional development through the continued reading of subject specific and books and journals of up-to-date pedagogy and T&L research
- classroom teachers being responsible for the explicit development of the pupils' academic vocabulary
- planning and delivering lessons where that the needs of pupils with protected characteristics are appropriately met, and all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect


- encouraging and cultivating a classroom environment where pupils with protected characteristics feel safe
- planning and teaching lessons where appropriate provision is made for all pupils with SEND, including adapting teaching, the tailoring of resources and activities to specific needs where appropriate, as well as ensuring the teaching environment is appropriate.
- ensuring pupils engage with lessons and respect others' contributions
- ensuring pupils raise their hands before speaking and to allow their peers the chance to contribute without interruption.
- allowing pupils ample time to think about their response to a question
- allowing pupils time to discuss a response or topic in their group or with a partner, where required.
- adopting a personal approach to teaching pupils as individuals
- setting meaningful homework
- setting sufficient challenge for all pupils through a scaffolded approach
- acting as role models for pupils when speaking and listening, by allowing them the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and feedback without interruption
- responding to and acting on feedback received from pupils, parents and colleagues
- recognising achievement using formal and informal approaches
- recognising and acting on pupils' behaviour when it lacks self-discipline, motivation or a reflective nature.

Teachers should plan lessons:

- which allow pupils to progress in their learning
- that have the bigger picture in mind, ensuring careful thought is given to the sequenced lessons in an overall scheme of learning
- which are scaffolded for varying needs of ALL groups of pupils
- which use stimulating resources, including use of ICT
- which model excellent practice, thought process and skills, through pupil or teacher led demonstrations including the use of a visualiser if appropriate
- which allow pupils adequate time and opportunity to practice their craft
- which take cognitive load into account and are chunked accordingly to avoid cognitive overload
- which provide the correct pace and challenge for all pupils
- which use effective questioning with emphasis on a no hands up approach and responsive teaching techniques to direct and challenge pupils
- which incorporate the use of whiteboards as a tool for questioning, formative assessment and checking progress
- which explicitly develop the pupils' academic vocabulary
- which encourage reading of academic texts
- which practice the long-term memory through recall and retrieval strategies
- which allow opportunities for low stake testing and retrieval practice to exercise the long-term memory

- which incorporate opportunities for pupils to plan, monitor and reflect on their learning process
- which allow Catholic Social Teaching and personal development (including protected characteristics, cultural capital, fundamental British values)

Teachers should follow our examples of research led 'Great Teaching', which comprises of the following:

Knowledge	Support to Automaticity	Adaptive Teaching	Checking for Understanding	Developing Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject knowledge strong • Substantive and disciplinary knowledge for my lesson • In sync with SOL and sequence • Potential misconceptions in lesson known • Dependent prior knowledge known • Planned and interleaved retrieval of knowledge • Explicitly teaching of reading, writing, SPAG and vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning moves from initial support through to independent practice and automaticity <p>I do: show and tell, explanation, modelling, demonstrations, worked examples, linking ideas, dual coding</p> <p>We do: guided practice, reduce scaffold, fade prompts</p> <p>You do: independent practice, similar problems</p> <p>Less teacher dependence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment throughout and after each incremental learning gain • Small steps/chunking and assessment throughout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating plans • Knowledge of pupil need • Teaching assistant relationship and effective use • Significant adaptations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ paper colour, technology • Micro adaptations: moment-to-moment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Scaffolds – modelling (step by step, think aloud, exemplars, interactive), visual aids, prompting, cueing, checklists, written scaffolds) ✓ Questioning – adapt memory demand, TPS, wait time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior knowledge assessed • Track back where gaps • Structured talk • Pupils improving based on feedback (green pen when written-5Rs) • Questioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hinge content (pivotal question) ✓ Thinking time (5-10 seconds) ✓ Whole class feedback (e.g. whiteboards) ✓ Probe for better response/vocabulary ✓ Think, pair, share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiasm, positivity, passion, engaging teacher • Consistent high expectations • Motivated learners • Behaviour management and predictable consequence • Clear routines for on task time, transitions, group work • Ethic of Excellence • Catholic Social Teaching • Personal development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staying safe, mental and physical health, BVs, PCs, equality, SMSC, citizenship, careers) <p>St Cecilia's R.C. HIGH SCHOOL </p>

ICT

Post-lesson, teachers should reflect on the following questions:

- What impact on learning did the use of ICT make in the lesson?
- How did the use of ICT extend pupils' learning in the lesson?
- How might ICT have made greater impact on learning in the lesson?
- In what ways did the use of ICT extend the learning in the lesson?

Assessment

Post-lesson, teachers should reflect on the following questions:

- What opportunities for informal and formal assessment were built into the lesson?
- What assessment information did you derive from the lesson?
- What does the assessment information tell you about the pupils' learning and future needs?
- How can all the above inform your future planning?

In summary, to underpin everything that we do at St Cecilia's the guiding principle that every learner must fulfil their academic and spiritual potential, with all learners, both pupil and adult, aiming at excellence in everything they do.

Senior Leadership Team

The SLT is responsible for:

- visiting classrooms and undertaking lesson observations
- talking to staff and pupils to establish a general overview of the atmosphere in the school on a day-to-day basis
- communicating with parents to ensure all pupils' needs are being met
- undertaking classroom and teaching work on a regular basis, where applicable
- reviewing teachers' lesson planning where applicable
- contributing to setting goals and targets across the school.
- discussing annual reports with staff
- undertaking self-evaluation on the school's quality of teaching
- commenting on the quality of teaching and learning as part of the report to the governing board
- holding heads of department to account for the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment in their subject
- formal lesson observations if required (for those on ISSP/capability)
- quality assurance measures at all levels, including through visiting lessons, speaking with pupils and staff, looking at books, discussions and development opportunity with curriculum leaders through formal and informal opportunity.

EDEN Support

Teachers should:

- be aware of the specific learning needs of their pupils
- consult with SENCO about the needs of individual pupils when appropriate
- work with teaching assistants and other adults to ensure pupils are best supported in their learning
- engage in CPD that encourages the best utilisation of teaching assistants

TAs will be:

- actively involved in the lesson to aid pupils' learning
- involved in prior planning and preparation
- able to demonstrate that they possess a good knowledge of the needs of individual pupils
- expected to support different focus groups, e.g. pupils with SEND and academically more able pupils
- utilised on a one-to-one basis with a child in need of additional help, where required.

Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for:

- contributing to and monitoring the progression and wellbeing of individual pupils in their tutor group
- leading and inspiring participation in collective worship daily
- providing support and advice to those pupils, both social, morally, spiritually and academically as well as supporting pupils with additional learning activities such as reading, mathematical puzzles and the development of academic vocabulary
- delivery of appropriate personal development and Catholic Social Teaching resources
- form quality assurance inspections alongside HoY and SLT
- encouraging and developing the ability of pupils to evaluate and take responsibility for their own learning
- monitoring a variety of information including monitoring attendance, behaviour for learning grades, rewards, sanctions, uniform, punctuality, attendance
- overseeing the delivery of Morpheme Monday and guided reading during form time.

Curriculum leaders

Curriculum Leaders are responsible for:

- contributing to developing and reviewing curriculum policies and schemes of work in collaboration with colleagues
- taking accountability for the progress of pupils in their department
- reporting on the effectiveness of the curriculum to the SLT and the governing board.
- providing professional advice to the curriculum committee
- keeping up to date with any changes in their subject area and curriculum requirements
- monitoring the effectiveness of how their subject is being taught and assessed in their department
- effective teaching of their subjects, evaluating the quality of teaching and standards of pupils' achievements and setting targets for improvement.
- evaluating the teaching of their subject and the planning of lessons, and using this analysis to identify and share effective practice and to lead action for improvement
- establishing and implementing clear policies and practices for assessing, recording and reporting on pupil progress
- analysing and interpreting data on pupils' performance against school expectations and other comparative data; setting expectations and targets and implementing actions for the achievement of individual pupils
- monitoring pupils' work through work scrutiny, regular sampling of homework, classwork and pupil voice to make a comparative evaluation of pupils' work against other classes and year groups to ensure quality and consistency and to implement strategies for improvement
- producing robust, diverse and challenging Schemes of Learning

- ensuring curriculum coverage, continuity and progress for all, and is sequenced to allow for interleaving and retrieval of deeper knowledge
- ensuring opportunities are made available to enable pupils to develop their personal development (including their cultural capital)
- embedding the discussion of personal development and catholic social teaching within the curriculum
- promoting reciprocal reading within departments, including the use of subject specific newspaper, magazine and journal articles to use as resources
- providing opportunities in the curriculum for oracy in the classroom
- ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND, and adapted accordingly.

Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- being on time for school
- being prepared to learn, with the correct equipment
- keeping their learning environment organised and tidy
- being attentive and contributing to lessons.
- listening to and following all reasonable instructions
- treating everyone with respect
- aiming for a resilient and determined attitude in their learning
- completing homework to enhance their learning
- taking pride in their work through consistent expectations across the curriculum
- aiming for neat and accurate presentation of their work
- writing in black pen
- making positive contributions to class discussions
- taking responsibility for improving their own learning
- reflecting on their learning and engage in self-evaluation tasks to inform subsequent learning
- asking for help if required
- following instructions at all times
- speaking politely to everyone
- respecting others
- following the behaviour code in all lessons, working silently unless instructed not to
- catching up on work missed through absence before the next lesson.

Pupils with SEND

Pupils with SEND will be supported through effective teaching and learning by being:

- treated as individuals, with their additional needs known and understood
- provided with the appropriate support
- taught the same ambitious curriculum as all pupils
- supported through adaptive teaching to learn the same knowledge as all pupils
- provided with additional professional support, where necessary
- asked for feedback (or their parents' feedback) on the effectiveness of the support they receive
- supported in line with procedures and strategies set out in the SEND Policy

Teachers will discuss, informally, the needs of individual pupils, enabling all teachers to be aware of pupils who require support.

Continuous professional learning

Teachers should:

- continuously update their subject knowledge and pedagogy in line with current developments, research and initiatives, through the books provided to all staff, books available in the T&L library, T&L Padlet, appraisal targets, the courses available as part of collaboration partners and external providers
- read academic literature over the year as part of the appraisal process
- aim to participate in the delivery of the choice ECPD groups and Friday Focus.

Overview of Quality Assurance:

- an open door policy
- lesson and form time drop ins regularly SLT, T&L lead, SENDCO
- curriculum reviews, 3 times a year
- curriculum days once per year
- book scrutiny (6 times per year)
- pupil, parent and staff voice (both in lesson visits and pupil survey)
- appraisal reviews
- regular progress checking against the DSEF and SIP
- student council, senior prefects, and ambassador group feedback to SLT
- requested drop-ins to try new strategies.

Homework Policy-An extension of the pupils learning. To develop independent mature learners

Introduction

Homework will be set and collected on a regular basis and is designed to:

- encourage independent learning and skill development

- encourage pupils to take ownership of their education
- be meaningful, age- and ability-appropriate, and linked to the curriculum
- enable pupils to explore their own learning style
- allow pupils a chance to practice and consolidate skills they have learned in lessons.

St Cecilia's aim is to create an environment in which learning is valued to such an extent that homework is seen as a natural and important part of the learning process.

In providing homework:

- teachers are supporting pupils' learning beyond the classroom
- pupils are given the opportunity to consolidate what they have learnt and begin to explore new learning opportunities
- parents have the opportunity to become more involved in their child's learning through the use of SchoolSynergy.

The Purpose of Homework

- allowing practise and consolidation of work done in class - repetition is vital for both short and long-term memory to enhance the learning process, especially regarding the increased content at GCSE
- developing explicit academic vocabulary
- allowing preparation for future class work via flipped learning
- offering access to resources not available in the classroom
- developing skills in using libraries and other learning resources, for example the internet
- providing opportunities for individualised work
- allowing assessment of pupils' progress and mastery of work
- providing evidence for the evaluation of teaching
- training for pupils in planning and organising time
- developing good habits, self-discipline and self-regulation
- encouraging ownership and responsibility for learning
- providing opportunities for parental co-operation and support.

Teachers should:

- set work using SchoolSynergy
- ensure the homework is set before 3.15pm of the same day in order to support pupils' use of homework club and typically aim to set the homework with the pupils present for further explanation if required
- record on SchoolSynergy whether the homework has been completed, via the assess section of the VPL

- provide varying types of homework, with varying levels of difficulty, set within a pupil's capabilities, for example, project-based work, research, revision, exam questions and re-drafting of work
- provide homework tasks which parallel or feed into Schemes of Learning
- support pupils who have trouble in completion of homework tasks to ensure a sense of achievement and to allow their self-esteem to grow. Departments are encouraged to seek assistance and advice from the ASL Department wherever appropriate
- ensure that homework tasks are chunked to avoid cognitive overload e.g. use of video instruction and modelling and step-by-step instruction
- use retrieval exercises to provide pupils with the opportunity to exercise their long-term memories
- be sensitive to the social environment in which each child lives
- make available any resources required to complete the homework task on SchoolSynergy
- ensure feedback is positive with constructive criticism where necessary and marked using St Cecilia's assessment and feedback policy, including the use of HP grades
- ensure that pupil commitment to homework should be recognised in the same way that they recognise other successful aspects of the pupils' work.

Pupils should:

- have a personal log in and password to access SchoolSynergy
- if absent, find out what work they have missed through SchoolSynergy. Being absent on the day it is set is not an excuse for not completing homework as it is available on the VLP
- see the member of staff concerned if there are any problems with completing the homework before the deadline. Unless this is set for the following day, this should not be on the hand-in date
- complete all homework to the best of their ability and have pride in its presentation
- accept that it is their responsibility to complete homework, including the consequences if it is not completed on time or to a good standard (see behaviour policy)
- use SchoolSynergy as a method of communication between pupil and the teacher if required and appropriate. Tone of the messages to staff should be respectful
- be mindful of the time they are sending messages to teachers and not expect an immediate response.

Parents should:

- support their child by regularly monitoring SchoolSynergy to ensure homework is being completed and what is expected of their child
- use SchoolSynergy to communicate with school if major problems arise regarding homework in advance of the hand in date. Tone of the messages to staff should always be respectful
- encourage their child to seek help in school before the completion date if they are struggling to do the homework

- support their child in completing the full allocated homework as specified by the class teacher, including specified learning durations such as with Maths Sparx
- remind their child of the resources available to them, such as homework club, especially for IT based or group work homework
- seek to take on an active interest in their child's homework. Guidance for parents to reinforce their child's learning is on the school website
- be mindful of the time they send messages to teachers and not expect an immediate response.

A Guideline on Home Learning Time Allocation

Based on current good practice, we recommend pupils spend the following amount of time on homework and should aim to top up to these recommendations with self-study and revision when possible. Some tasks have specific duration criteria as specified by teachers, such as some of our online programmes eg. Sparx. Others may be spread out over the allocated time to ensure retrieval is spaced, e.g. revision tasks.

Years 7 to 9: 1 - 2 hours per day

Years 10 & 11: 1 - 3 hours per day

Pupils may be expected to undertake a variety of homework activities. These activities will differ depending on the teacher and subject. Examples include: Reading tasks, numeracy tests, spelling tests, quizzes, project work, classwork extensions, online activities such as Sparx, essays and research activities. As a general rule, teachers will not usually set substantial homework tasks to be completed for the next day, pupils will have at least two days to complete any work set.