



Curriculum Policy

Created: September 2019 Reviewed: December 2022 Review by: Spring 2024



Statement of Intent

St Mary's Catholic High School recognises the importance of offering a broad and balanced curriculum which is underpinned by our shared school vision.

Our curriculum consists of activities designed to promote the intellectual, personal, social, physical and cultural development of pupils. It includes the formal programme of lessons, based on the national curriculum, and the informal programme of extracurricular activities that we organise to enrich pupils' experiences of their lives and education.

Through this policy, the school aims to:

- Put pupils at the centre of all curriculum decisions, putting their needs above those of the school.
- Have a curriculum that is fit for purpose, offering differentiation and personalisation.
- Prepare all pupils for the next stage of their education and for life in modern society.
- First achieve and then exceed national standards in achievement, attainment and progression.
- Be committed to excellence and continuous improvement.
- Provide courses which meet the needs of pupils.
- Nurture the talents of all and celebrate success.
- Work with feeder schools to ease transition.
- Involve the stakeholders, including parents, in curriculum development.

1. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2020) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE (2014) 'The national curriculum in England'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Examination Policy
- Careers Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Homework Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

2. Curriculum Aims and Intent

What the curriculum is designed to do

St Mary's Catholic High School is committed to delivering the best quality education for all our pupils.

We believe that our curriculum should allow pupils to be engaged at every stage of their time with us, meeting the needs of each learner and offering appropriate challenge to all.

We strive to deliver outcomes which will fulfil every child's talent and secure the best possible future for them. We recognise the importance of examination success, and celebrate both individual and collective achievement, in whatever form success takes for each pupil. However, we believe that secondary education is about much more than results.

We want every young person in our care to have access to opportunities not always available to them away from school, delivering rich and varied experiences both within the school building and beyond.

Ultimately, we aim to deliver this education with Jesus Christ, our divine teacher, acting as our example. Pupils will experience dignity and respect, and we will develop young minds that will impact positively on society both during and after their time at St. Mary's.

How the school intends to deliver the curriculum

The curriculum will be delivered through a variety of methods, both classroom-based and extracurricular.

- **Classroom-based learning:** The school encourages teachers to make cross-curricular links where possible within their lesson plans and use different learning resources to teach core content. One-to-one teaching sessions are carried out for pupils who require additional support.
- **Extracurricular activities:** The school provides a variety of extracurricular activities for pupils that enhance their learning experience.

A full list of subjects available to pupils in each year can be found in the Curriculum overview section on the schools website.

How the school involves stakeholders in curriculum planning and delivery

The school values the input of its pupils, parents and the local community with regard to the planning and delivery of the curriculum. The school believes that pupils receive a well-rounded education if everyone is involved in shaping it; this is why pupils and parents complete questionnaires at parents evenings.

The school engages with the wider community by ensuring there are opportunities for pupils to participate in community projects and embed each project within the curriculum into the relevant subjects.

The overall aims of the curriculum are to:

- Enable all pupils to be successful learners and achieve high standards.
- Enable pupils to understand the skills and attributes needed to be a successful learner.
- Enable pupils who are not achieving age-related expectations to narrow the gap and catch up with their peers.

- Enable pupils to develop and be able to use high-quality functional skills, including key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- Enable pupils to develop their own personal interests and develop a positive attitude towards learning, so that they enjoy coming to school and acquire a solid basis for lifelong learning.
- Enable pupils to value their learning outside of the curriculum and relate this knowledge to the taught curriculum.
- Teach pupils to be able to discern right from wrong, that actions have consequences, and the value and importance of forgiveness.
- Enable pupils to be creative and to develop their own thinking.
- Help pupils to develop an independent approach to their learning.
- Teach pupils about their ever-changing world, including how the environment and society have changed over time.
- Help pupils understand the fundamental British values and enable them to be positive citizens in society who can make a difference.
- Help pupils understand the importance of truth and fairness, to ensure they grow up committed to equal opportunities for all.
- Enable pupils to have respect for themselves and others, and to be able to live and work cooperatively with others.

Through the aims outlined above, pupils will benefit by:

- Learning how to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.
- Understanding that failure is part of the road to success.
- Being rewarded for academic successes.
- Being supported with their next stages in education or training and feeling prepared for life after school.
- Becoming responsible individuals who contribute to community living and the environment.
- Achieving to the best of their ability.
- Acquiring a wealth of knowledge and experience.
- Becoming critical thinkers.
- Finding a sense of belonging to the school and its community.
- Learning how to cooperate with their peers and respect one another, inside and outside the classroom.
- Developing personal moral values, respect for religious values and tolerance of others' beliefs and ways of life.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for:

- Approving and monitoring the content of this policy.
- Liaising with the headteacher, subject leaders and teachers with regard to pupil progress and attainment.
- Contributing towards decisions made about the curriculum.
- Formulating a curriculum committee that assists the school with the creation and implementation of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Devising long- and medium-term plans for the curriculum in collaboration with subject leaders, teachers and other members of the SLT.
- Communicating the agreed curriculum to the governing body.
- Producing reports for the governing body advising on the standards achieved by pupils and any alternative arrangements made to ensure all pupils could access the curriculum.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Assisting teachers with the planning and implementation of the curriculum, ensuring their workload is manageable.
- Ensuring the curriculum is implemented consistently throughout the school and ensuring any difficulties are addressed and mitigated as soon as possible.
- Making any necessary adjustments to the curriculum where required.
- Keeping up-to-date with any relevant statutory updates and taking action where required.
- Creating and maintaining an up-to-date Curriculum Intent Statement.
- Updating and maintaining this policy.

Subject leaders are responsible for:

- The overall provision of the curriculum at the school.
- Developing a curriculum that provides pupils with a range of opportunities and the skills they need to prepare for later life.
- The strategic leadership and management across their curriculum areas, developing and implementing plans, policies, targets and practices within the context of the school's aims and policies.

- Managing subject leaders and staff within their curriculum areas, providing appropriate support, challenge, advice and information as necessary.
- Implementing the school's schemes of work.
- Supporting and offering advice to colleagues on issues relating to the subject or curriculum area.
- Monitoring pupil progress within the department and reporting on this to the headteacher.
- Providing efficient resource management for their department.
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Ensuring there are specialist resources available for pupils in need so that everyone can have full access to the curriculum.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy consistently throughout their practices.
- Devising short-term lesson plans that are reflective of the school's curriculum.
- Implementing the curriculum in creative ways, appealing to different learning types and keeping pupils engaged in content.
- Creating short-term plans for the curriculum with fellow colleagues and reporting these plans to the headteacher where required.
- Creating weekly lesson plans in collaboration with colleagues and sharing these with the SLT where required.
- Collaborating with the headteacher and the SENCO to ensure that the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.
- Working closely with the SENCO and TAs to ensure those in need receive additional support in lessons.
- Ensuring academically more able pupils are given additional, more challenging work to celebrate their talents.
- Celebrating all pupils' academic achievements.
- Reporting progress of pupils with SEND to the SENCO and ensuring any difficulties identified are discussed and resolved.
- Monitoring the progress of all pupils and reporting on this to the headteacher.
- Working to close the attainment gap between academically more and less able pupils.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Collaborating with the headteacher and teachers to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all.

- Ensuring teaching materials do not discriminate against anyone in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Carrying out SEND assessments where necessary and ensuring pupils receive the additional help they need.
- Liaising with external agencies where necessary to ensure pupils who require additional support receive it.

4. Organisation and Planning

The school's curriculum will be delivered over 190 days and equally throughout the school week. Each school day will be split into two sessions and pupils will receive at least one break (lunch).

In collaboration with subject leaders, teachers and other members of the SLT, the headteacher will devise the following plans:

- **Long-term plans** that deal with the major areas and strands of the national curriculum to be covered across all key stages.
- **Medium-term plans** that deal with the activities within units of work that are set out termly.
- **Short-term plans** that are concerned with individual lessons or sessions and address issues of curriculum differentiation and access for individual pupils.

Where possible, teachers will look for links between areas of learning that will support one another and allow pupils to reinforce their skills from one subject within another.

Teachers will plan lessons which are challenging for all pupils and ensure that there are provisions in place for more academically able pupils.

Planning will be used to identify any possible difficulties within the curriculum and will break down barriers to learning. Any difficulties identified will be addressed once curriculum planning has commenced.

Pupils who are identified as needing additional support will receive it, e.g. those with SEND – this will include dedicated time with TAs and access to specialist resources and equipment where required. TAs will be deployed within lessons strategically so that they can assist with pupils who require additional help, but are also able to minimise disruptions where necessary.

Pupils with EAL will be given the opportunity to develop their English ability throughout lessons where necessary.

Classrooms will be organised so that pupils have full access to resources and equipment – they will be provided with a rich and varied learning environment.

5. Curriculum Content

The school will have due regard to the national curriculum at all times throughout the academic year.

The school will ensure every pupil has access to the following core subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- RS
- RSHE

The school will ensure pupils also have access to the following foundation subjects:

- Art and design
- Citizenship
- Computing
- Design and technology
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Geography
- History
- Music
- PE

Pupils will choose their subjects for their GCSEs at KS4 in Year 9.

PSCHEE

As part of the curriculum, the school will make provision for PSCHEE where everyday topics, such as raising awareness of different cultures or anti-bullying, can be addressed.

All provisions made regarding PSCHEE lessons will be made in line with the school's PSCHEE Policy.

6. Careers Education

The school will work to encompass careers education and guidance into subjects across the curriculum, in line with the Careers Policy.

The school will ensure that every pupil is exposed to the world of work by the age of 14.

The school will engage with and ensure pupils have access to local employers, businesses and professional networks, and providers of post-14, post-16 and post-18 education and training, including by inviting visiting speakers with whom pupils can relate.

The school will ensure pupils can participate in meaningful encounters with employers. These encounters will include:

- Careers events such as careers talks, careers carousels and careers fairs.
- Transition skills workshops such as CV workshops and mock interviews.
- Mentoring, including online mentoring.
- Employer-delivered employability workshops.
- Business games and enterprise competitions.

7. Reporting and Assessment

All reporting and assessments will be conducted in line with the school's Marking and Feedback Policy.

Homework will be set on a regular basis in accordance with the school's Homework Policy. Homework set will be challenging and assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of concepts covered within lessons.

The school's assessment processes will be used to plan for differentiation within curriculum delivery, to ensure all pupils can access each lesson, and to inform individual teaching programmes.

Individual pupil performance and progress will be regularly monitored and reviewed. Informal assessments will be recorded and reported back to the headteacher, pupils and pupils' parents. Pupils will also complete national assessments. The results of these assessments will be reported back to the headteacher, pupils and their parents. Evaluations and assessments will feed back into future or modified curriculum plans.

Special considerations will be given to pupils who require them, e.g. pupils with SEND, pupils who are ill, or pupils who suffer from conditions that inhibit their academic performance. Assessment of pupils with EAL will take into account the pupils' age, length of time in the UK, previous education and ability in other languages.

8. Equal Opportunities

There are nine protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010, which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

When planning and implementing the curriculum, the school will have due regard to the Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy at all times. Care will be taken within all schemes or work to ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum content.

The school's curriculum will celebrate diversity and the SLT has a responsibility to ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against any of the above characteristics.

11. Supporting Children with SEND

The curriculum is designed to provide access and opportunity for all pupils who attend the school.

Where required, pupils with SEND will receive the additional support they require both academically and with their personal development, in line with the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy. This may include:

- Working with TAs in smaller groups to work on topics covered in lessons to ensure they do not fall behind their peers.
- Taking measures to ensure pupils with SEND are not discriminated against in any way.

- Teachers monitoring the progress of pupils with SEND and reporting this to the SENCO.
- Adopting a close working relationship between the SENCO and teachers to help them break down any barriers pupils with SEND have to education.

12. Extracurricular Activities

The school will offer pupils a wide range of extracurricular trips and activities to enhance their academic learning and personal development. Extracurricular trips and activities occur outside school hours and can include overnight stays both in the UK and abroad.

The school will ensure that all pupils are able to participate in the activities and trips available. Wherever there is an instance where a pupil cannot participate, the trip or activity will be adapted so that the pupil can take part.

All extracurricular activities and trips will be planned and executed in accordance with the school's Extended Services Policy.