



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

(Mathematics and Computing Specialist School)

CURRICULUM POLICY

Reviewed by Governors Curriculum Committee March 2015
Next review date March 2016
To be reviewed yearly

CURRICULUM POLICY

Rationale

The College curriculum encapsulates students' whole learning experience, both in and out of the classroom, during their time in the school. Curriculum development is on-going. The policy reflects the aims and values of the school and is based on a set of principles that lie at the heart of a learning-centred school:

- First and foremost, we are a Catholic College. We commit ourselves as a community to develop the whole person and the pursuit of excellence. The College curriculum reflects this belief.
- All students are entitled to a broad, balanced, coherent, relevant and personalised curriculum which meets their individual needs and provides them with appropriate qualifications in the future.
- The learning process should be engaging, motivating, exciting and allow students to achieve, as well as to develop lively, imaginative and enquiring minds. All students will be given the opportunity to be creative and take risks with their learning, in a supportive yet challenging environment.
- All students should have full access to the curriculum, irrespective of gender, SEND, ethnicity, academic ability, social or cultural background.
- The curriculum should develop active citizens, both within the school and the wider community.
- Students should be well prepared for their future careers through the development of independence of thought, self-reliance and a questioning approach which challenges prejudice.
- The curriculum should encourage high expectations and aspirations.

Responsibilities

- The Governing body:
 - To review regularly the school curriculum and ensure it reflects students' needs.
 - To have an overview of local and national developments which affect the curriculum.
 - To understand the necessity for strong progression routes. This should include effective transition from primary school and progression within Key Stages 3 to 4 and beyond.
 - To have an understanding of the curriculum model and the impact this has on student progress and achievement, as well as staffing and the school budget.
- The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team
 - To review the curriculum annually making changes in response to any local or national initiatives that will maximise student learning and achievement.
 - To keep abreast of local and national changes and apply these judiciously.
 - To ensure the curriculum allows clear progression through all key stages.
 - To monitor curriculum impact on achievement, learning and progress and adapt as necessary in order to maximise these.
 - To have a broad understanding of the necessary curriculum requirements

- To have a good understanding of the curriculum areas they manage.
- To ensure that the curriculum model leads to a timetable which supports learning.
- Leaders of Subject/Advanced Leaders of Subject
 - To monitor curriculum developments in their subject area and implement these in discussion with SLT line managers.
 - To design and implement a curriculum that ensure students' progression within the subject and meets the principles set out in this policy.
 - To monitor the impact of the curriculum on standards of student learning and progress.
 - To keep abreast of changes which impact on the curriculum at a local and national level.
 - To support the devising of the timetable within their subject.
 - To ensure that the College Teaching and Learning policy and other relevant policies are adhered to.
- Teaching Staff
 - To deliver the curriculum in line with College policy
 - To differentiate and personalise the curriculum to allow all students, through choice and/or appropriately levelled work, to access the learning at the appropriate level.
 - To plan lessons which ensure students make at least expected progress.

We aim to provide all students with a curriculum which meets their needs, and to ensure that access to the right curriculum does not depend on a student's prior attainment, gender, ethnicity, social background or religion.

We will provide a curriculum for all of our students which meets our statutory obligations under the law. Our timetable spans ten days, with each day consisting of five sixty minute periods. We operate a flexible system of allocation to teaching groups that is designed to cater for both the abilities of individual students and the differing requirements of subjects.

- Within Key Stage 3 students follow a broad and balanced curriculum. The following subjects are taught discretely in Key Stage 3: English, Maths, Science, Religious Studies, Music, P.E., History, Geography, Art, Design and Technology, ICT and Computing, Spanish and Mandarin)
- Key Stage 4 (to end year 11) Within Key Stage 4 students follow a core curriculum including: English, Maths, Science, Religious Studies, ICT/Computing. There are a range of optional subjects available to students, which are accredited through either GCSE or BTEC. Each optional subject is studied for 5 hours per fortnight. The optional courses are as follows: Geography, History, Mandarin, Spanish, Music, Art, Photography, Business Studies, Catering, Hospitality, Graphics, Design Technology, PE.
- Students select their optional subjects during the Spring Term of Year 9. See Options Process below. The responsibility for selecting the precise courses which are available to be studied lies with the subject leader; however the Headteacher reserves the right of veto should they consider another course to be more advantageous for our students.
- *There are limited places available for courses. In the event that we have more applications from students for these courses than places available we will judge every application on*

merit. The key considerations will be: The ability of the student to access the course and a student's prior attainment.

THE OPTIONS PROCESS

- Students selecting their Key Stage 4 courses are provided with course details via the 'Options booklet' which is distributed in the Spring Term of Year 9. Responsibility for providing additional advice lies with the Year 9 tutor, the Head of year and Heads of Department / subject leaders. All students in Year 9 complete an options survey identifying their preferences for Key Stage 4 subjects. The outcomes from this survey are used to construct timetable blocks. We reserve the right to re-allocate students by using their reserve choices. Once the blocks are formed the subjects in each block remain fixed.

SETTING POLICY

- KS3
 - Some setting, particularly in the core subjects, takes place in year 7, with more in years 8 and 9, as staffing and timetabling permits. Students are taught in sets in those departments where ever possible. The responsibility for placing students into the correct sets lies with the subject leaders. Often, two or more subjects are grouped together when we design the timetable, meaning they have to operate the same setting arrangements.
- KS4
 - Setting will occur wherever possible, generally where a course has more than one group simultaneously timetabled. This normally happens with the compulsory courses and subjects.

Assessment and Monitoring Target Setting

- Every student is set a realistic target level based on a measure of their ability and potential. Year 7 targets are set using prior attainment from KS2 tests, CAT's data, which students sit in the first week of term and teacher assessments. This target level will be monitored and changed to reflect each student's actual performance. 2 reports are sent home each academic year, indicating whether a student is performing well enough to achieve or exceed their target level. Targets are not about competing with others but about students achieving their own personal best.