

# St Joseph's Catholic Academy



## Curriculum Intent KS3/4



Updated: 18/06/2024

**School context:**

St Joseph's Catholic Academy is a Roman Catholic secondary school with academy status, located in Hebburn, South Tyneside. South Tyneside has a population where 20.6% of residents are living in an income deprived household and 17.2% of working age adults in employment deprivation (2019). Our proportion of pupil premium (21.0%) and special educational needs (15.7%) is broadly in line with the national average.

## **Our Overarching Intention - “The Why”:**

At St Joseph's we believe that education is about teaching children the knowledge, skills and values they will require to be effective life-long learners. Through our curriculum we embed our school principles of faith, learning and respect.

St Joseph's Academy is founded in its mission to support each member of our community to live life to the full. Our vision is for students to leave St Joseph's as resilient, confident and well-rounded individuals, with the knowledge to make informed future choices. This underpins the Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education trust vision of “Christ at the Centre”.

In addition to our focus on individual subject's curriculum and developing cross-curricular skills, St Joseph's Academy has an extensive extra-curricular offer to enhance wider personal development and promote positive attitudes to learning. We strive for our students to not only develop their talents in each of the individual subjects they study, but also to help their personal skills and character qualities flourish in order that our students may grow into positive, responsible young adults who can work and cooperate well with others.

Our ambitious curriculum is well understood by staff and students, well planned and well thought out at all levels to meet the needs of each individual student. In order to facilitate long-term learning, the skills and content for each subject are spaced and interleaved throughout our curriculum. Additionally, classroom pedagogy is built around the effective use of retrieval practice in order for students to remember knowledge over time. Subject curriculums are aligned and sequenced effectively to ensure maximum efficiency and this allows a broad curriculum that stretches children and enables outstanding outcomes.

We understand that all schools are on an improvement journey and that the curriculum, amongst other things, must continually be reviewed to reflect the relevant challenges and aspirations of each community at each specific point in time. Our curriculum will be reviewed, adapted and updated in line with any updated government policy, the latest education research, and to ensure that it is meeting our aims and curriculum intent.

## **St Joseph's and BCCET Curriculum Aims:**

Our curriculum aims to ensure that:

- All learners, including the most disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, are provided with the knowledge, skills and cultural capital they require for future learning and employment.
- Academic rigour stretches and challenges as appropriate to each pupil and phase.
- Learners have access to a vibrant, broad and balanced curriculum for as long as possible, narrowing the curriculum for subject specialisms only when it is appropriate to do so.
- Educational enrichment opportunities, including experiences, visits and visitors are central to our vision.
- A clear strategy for pupil progression is in place.
- Teaching for mastery is promoted across all subjects and disciplines.
- A love of reading, for pleasure and academic excellence, is embedded throughout our school and curriculum.
- The mastery of grammar, spelling (including phonics) and vocabulary is developed to ensure accuracy of writing.
- Metacognition and critical thinking are planned for and taught across the curriculum.
- Learning as a shift of knowledge from short-term to long-term memory is prioritised.

## **Evidence informed:**

Young and Lambert (2014) wrote about powerful knowledge and the idea of access to powerful knowledge for all as the primary purpose of education. Young states that powerful knowledge “is an approach to the curriculum that recognises that the way in which teachers relate to pupils, and the task a teacher encourages their pupils to undertake, may be as important as what is stipulated in the school's curriculum”.

Acquiring knowledge is a sequential journey over years immersed in the subject. Dylan Williams (2018) wrote that “the purpose of the curriculum is to build up the content of long-term memory so that when students are asked to think, they are able to think in more powerful ways”.

To support all of our students in this journey we have taken the principles of Barak Rosenshine and the evidence reviews Great Teaching tool kit to inform our planning, teaching strategies and adaptive teaching: for example, taking the principle of teaching in small steps, building key elements of information, carefully sequence retrieval and checking for understanding to support mastery and pupils who will learn and remember.

## **Curriculum Design:**

Our well-planned and ambitious curriculum is fluid and tailored to meet the needs of our students and combat the social disadvantage experienced by a significant number

of our student population. Our curriculum offers a range of pathways, which we believe will broaden rather than narrow the offer at different stages in a student's progression through school. We aim to remove barriers to learning for our students through a wide range of targeted support strategies.

### **Year 7, 8 and 9 Curriculum**

We provide curriculum breadth with teaching of design and technology, art, music and ICT in years 7 to 9 as a core offer.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Year 7 Number of lessons per fortnight</b>	<b>Year 8 Number of lessons per fortnight</b>	<b>Year 9 Number of lessons per fortnight</b>
English	8	8	8
Mathematics	8	7	7
Science	8	8	8
Religious Education	5	5	5
MFL	4	4	4
Geography	3	3	3
History	3	3	3
Art	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2
ICT	1	1	2
Design and Technology	1	2	1
PE	4	4	4
PSHE	1	1	1

<b>Alternative Curriculums</b>	
Spanish	Additional language (2/3 hours) for our higher prior attaining students in years 8 and 9.
Football Academy	2 hours of curriculum time per fortnight.

### **Year 10 and 11 Curriculum**

We offer a broad range of vocational and academic subjects including art, computing, engineering, health & social care, music, BTEC sport and a VTCT in hair and beauty. All students have the opportunity to study a modern foreign language.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number of lessons per fortnight</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PSHE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Guided Pathway Subjects GCSE's and Vocational (5 hours)</b>	
<b>Art</b>	<b>BTEC Business</b>
<b>Computing</b>	<b>BTEC Engineering</b>
<b>Design and Technology</b>	<b>BTEC Health and Social Care</b>
<b>French</b>	<b>BTEC ICT</b>
<b>Geography</b>	<b>BTEC Sports</b>
<b>History</b>	<b>VTCT Hair and Beauty</b>
<b>Music</b>	
<b>Spanish</b>	

<b>Alternative Curriculums</b>	
<b>Triple Science</b>	<b>2 additional hours of science in the curriculum. 3 separate science GCSEs.</b>

## **Curriculum Development**

We are committed to providing our students with the highest quality education that prepares them for success in an ever-changing world. As part of our dedication to excellence, we recognize the importance of constantly reviewing and refining our curriculum to ensure its relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with the evolving needs of our students and society.

Curriculum development is an ongoing process that requires prioritisation and involves collaboration. Our school embraces a culture of continuous improvement, where we actively seek feedback, analyse data, and engage in reflective practices to inform and guide our curriculum development efforts.

## **Maths and English Focus:**

We will always have a focus on English and Maths because we believe these subjects enhance our students' life chances. English and Maths are at the heart of success in learning.

Success in English and Maths qualifications is essential, as these are the key facilitating subjects which empower students to access further education, employment and apprenticeships.

We place great emphasis on these subject areas and provide additional support to students when they need it. This includes encouraging the development of reading, literacy and numeracy skills. We want students to be enthusiastic readers as a springboard to achievement in the curriculum but also as a source of pleasure and lifelong learning.

## **Flexible and Supportive:**

We plan for curriculum flexibility and we care about mental health.

Across Years 7, 8 and 9, students experience a broad range of subjects studying English, maths and science alongside a range of expressive arts subjects, geography, history, design technology subjects, ICT, a modern foreign language, physical education and religious education.

At Key Stage 4 there is the opportunity to study triple or combined sciences, and a wide selection of open subjects are offered including a range of subjects. Year 9 students choose three subjects to study within their Year 10 and 11 progression pathway allocation.

Flexibility and choice is key to our curriculum, balancing breadth and depth with choice and personalisation to enhance student engagement and success. Every qualification is open to all students. Our Guided Pathway blocks are re-shaped each academic year to build our timetable around student choice. This removes the restriction of option blocks and creates greater freedom for students. Advice and guidance underpins our curriculum modelling ensuring our students have regular points of discussion about their current and future study choices and the impact of these on career pathways.

## **Ebacc:**

We ensure that all students have access to the Ebacc because we believe in a strong academic core to our curriculum offering.

As the quality of provision has improved, so has the uptake in the wider Ebacc areas. The ability to study the full suite of Ebacc subjects is open to all of our students, irrespective of their background or personal circumstances. Our ambition is that the numbers of students following the Ebacc has and will continue to increase year on year.

Ebacc subjects broaden the mind and encourage students to be interested in the wider world. We want students to be informed citizens of the world who can play a role in learning from the past to help shape the future.

## **Cycle structure**

Within each year there are 3 school cycles of 13 weeks. These mostly cover the school terms but at times there is an odd week difference.

Our students are continually assessed but there are also more formal key assessments within the cycle. All assessment helps the subject teachers and the student identify knowledge acquisition or gaps and supports learning over time. They also identify next steps needed.

## **Assessment and feedback:**

St Joseph's curriculum is planned to consider the sequencing of assessment and feedback. The quality of the assessment tasks are paramount, and teachers use a mixture of responsive teaching methods to identify understanding, misconceptions and gaps in learning. These include cold calling, mini quizzes, whiteboard, Plickers, and key tasks. Feedback is manageable, meaningful and motivating.

Following assessment, feedback should focus on moving learning forward, targeting the specific learning gap identified by the teacher, and ensuring that a student makes progress.

Specifically, high quality feedback can focus on the task (its outcome and advice on how to improve when doing that specific type of task), the subject (and the underlying processes within that subject), and self-regulation strategies (how pupils plan, monitor, and evaluate their work).

We understand that it is not the form of delivery (written or verbal) but the principles of effective feedback which have the greatest impact on pupils' progress. There is a recognition of the importance of verbal feedback, which can have a significant impact on progress and attainment. Responsive teaching following live assessment for learning in lessons is part of school practice. Verbal feedback can be given one to one to set individual short term targets based on current achievement. This can be carried out during the main body of the lesson and in more structured interview situations. It can also take the form of group or whole class interventions by a member of staff to clarify processes and direct the focus of the lesson

## **Grading and Reporting:**



At Key stage 3 students' progress through the curriculum is reported at the end of each cycle using one of 3 descriptors; surface, deep or transfer.

Pupil progress through the curriculum will be monitored using the following terminology:		
SURFACE	DEEP	TRANSFER
This indicates that a pupil can demonstrate <b>surface knowledge of key concepts, skills and/or strategies within the curriculum covered.</b>	This indicates that a pupil can demonstrate a <b>deep understanding, application and extension of the key concept knowledge within the curriculum covered.</b>	This indicates that a pupil can transfer/apply their deep knowledge to <b>new scenarios and different contexts.</b> Pupils <b>reflect on their own learning and understanding of the covered curriculum and beyond.</b>
<i>"Surface learning does not mean superficial learning, surface learning is a time when students initially are exposed to concepts, skills, and strategies. Surface learning is critical because it provides a foundation on which to build as students are asked to think more deeply."*</i>	<i>"We define deep learning as a period when students consolidate their understanding and apply and extend some surface learning knowledge to support deeper conceptual understanding. We think of this as a 'sweet spot' that will often take up more instructional time but can be accomplished only when students have the requisite knowledge to go deeper."*</i>	<i>"Transfer learning is the point at which students take their consolidated knowledge and skills and apply what they know to new scenarios and different contexts. It is also a time when students are able to think metacognitively, reflecting on their own learning and understanding."*</i>
*Quotes from Hattie, Fisher and Frey, Professors of Educational Leadership		

At the end of each cycle in Key stage 4 students are awarded a 1-9 'working at grade' (WAG) and a 'predicted final grade' (PFG). These results are used to intervene with individuals and groups, and where necessary identify priority areas. This information is reported to parents and other stakeholders in order to supply information on progress of students in each subject area.

At the end of each cycle we also report on students' attitude to learning. Attitude to Learning grades focus on students becoming more independent in their learning and are measured against success criteria to encourage students to develop specific habits that will enable them to succeed academically and progress to their next stages of education or employment with confidence.

Grade	Descriptor
5	Consistently above school's expected high standard and takes ownership of their learning inside and beyond the classroom.
4	Sometimes above school's expected high standard and has gone beyond expectations in efforts to extend their learning inside and beyond the classroom.
3	Always at school's expected high standard and engages in the curriculum inside and beyond the classroom.
2	Sometimes below school's expected high standard when engaging in the curriculum inside and/or beyond the classroom.
1	Consistently below school's expected high standard and fails to engage routinely with the curriculum inside and beyond the classroom.

**Enrichment, targeted support and revision:**

We provide opportunities for extended learning, revision, targeted support and diverse enrichment.

Our intent is to deliver a student learning experience which is appropriately challenging and meets the needs of individual students. We are proud of our wider enrichment offer, open to all students, which allows students to access a range of activities designed to broaden horizons and to equip our students with the confidence to face the future. As a Catholic school our mission is to support our students in their holistic development so that they can grow into the person God is calling them to be.

In the wake of C19 we have an opportunity to review and develop how we support our students in developing their character - social, emotional, physical, moral, and spiritual - particularly where we need to respond to the disruption and impact of lockdown on students' relationships with themselves and others, ensuring our most vulnerable students are actively encouraged to access this provision. We are extending our provision of student leadership opportunities so that students actively lead and support one another. We are ensuring provision and supported access to a rich range of extra-curricular and personal development opportunities.

We offer targeted support and intervention for identified students to ensure all individual needs are met. Students joining the school in Year 7 who are not at age-related expectation for reading or maths are provided with targeted support, with their progress being measured through both the testing of reading age as well as through other assessments.

Identified students in Years 10 and 11 are also afforded a range of targeted support sessions, including our after-school Sessions To Enhance Progress (STEP).

## **Culture/Ethos and British Values:**

Inspired by our Christian faith, our mission is to provide the highest standard of education and opportunity for all our students, enabling them to live their lives to the fullest.

In pursuing this aim, we create a curriculum in which the intellectual, physical, social, moral and spiritual development of every student is able to flourish. As a result, students strive for the highest standards in all endeavours, being able to achieve success and prepared to make their own positive contribution to our world.

The Gospel values form the core of the ethos of St Joseph's. Students in the school are taught through the mission statement to respect and support others. The programme of assemblies and PSHE are planned to provide opportunities for students to explore and challenge stereotypes regarding gender, equality, diversity and inclusion.

St Joseph's students live out their faith through witness within the community; work explored through RE, and the wider school developing students' spiritual, emotional, social, physical and moral intelligence through contributions to the common good.

Through PSHE and the curriculum of individual subjects students should gain an appreciation of the British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect for those of other faiths and beliefs, as well as a commitment to promote the Equality duty.

## **Careers:**

St Joseph's has a strategically planned whole school provision in place for careers education, information, advice and guidance that is designed to inspire all students to make informed choices about their future aims and ambitions. The careers programme consists of a mix of teacher-led activities, online resources and engagement with external employers and professionals. It has been developed following Gatsby Benchmark and Careers Development Institute guidelines.

The careers curriculum is delivered through PSHE lessons in years 7-13 and developed with explicit links in subject areas. The triangulation of the careers curriculum in PSHE and links to subject areas form a comprehensive overview of careers across the school.

Themes are developed through year groups with appropriate focuses in relation to transition points. Additional opportunities are provided during enrichment week and at key points in the school calendar to provide information for pupils to make informed choices and confidently adjust plans to manage change and transition.

## **Literacy:**

We believe that students have the right to develop confidence in reading and the use of spoken and written language across the curriculum to prepare them for the challenges of the curriculum and wider world. This is embedded in our curriculum by:

- The development of spoken and written language across the curriculum to prepare students for the challenges of the curriculum and wider world.
- Creating a word rich school where students confidently understand and use more complex and sophisticated vocabulary related to context in order to close the vocabulary gap.
- Ensuring reading is part of the school culture where students read widely and often with confidence and enjoyment.
- Scaffolding students' use of and response to questioning, in order to improve both their knowledge and communication skills.

## **Numeracy**

As a school we understand that mathematics and numeracy is an area of the curriculum which gives students a wider understanding of how the world around them works and prepares them for making decisions, solving problems and processing everyday information. Teachers in all subject areas play a role in enabling students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in:

- Processes in mathematics (including logical thinking and problem solving).
- Number.
- Measures.
- Shape and Space.
- Handling Data.

“Processes in Mathematics” should be at the heart of all mathematics and numeracy learning as these focus on how children learn rather than on the content that they cover.

As a school our curriculum aims to build confidence in numeracy and continually raise its profile across the school. Cross curricular topics should be carefully sequenced, and we should explore with students the similarities and differences across subject areas (e.g. graphs in maths, science and geography). At a school level, and within each subject discipline, we need to take advantage of any appropriate opportunity to make links to the learning of mathematics and numeracy.

Our numeracy curriculum is intended to make clear the links between in school learning and real life. To make explicit the role of numeracy across in our day to day lives and careers, further emphasising its importance.

## **Cultural Capital**

Cultural capital is defined as the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a student can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a pupil will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work.

We recognise that for students to aspire and be successful academically and in the wider areas of their lives, they need to be given rich and sustained opportunities to develop their cultural capital. The hinterland knowledge and cultural capital is considered across curriculum subjects within the taught and enriching curriculum.

## **Character**

As a Catholic school our mission is to support our students in their holistic development so that they can discern and grow into the person God is calling them to be.

In the wake of C19 we have an opportunity to review and develop how we support our students in developing their character - social, emotional, physical, moral and spiritual - particularly where we need to respond to the disruption and impact of lockdown on their relationship with themselves and others, ensuring our most vulnerable students are actively encouraged to access this provision.

### **Our character aims are to:**

1. Develop a whole school culture which is founded on respect and kindness in our relationships with others.
2. Extend our provision of student leadership opportunities so that students actively lead and support one another.
3. Provide provision and supported access to a rich range of extra-curricular and personal development opportunities.