



St Mary's CE High School

We believe everyone is equal: everyone deserves the best

Curriculum Policy

Date of Next Review: Spring 2022

"Our vision, as a school with a Christian ethos, is founded on The Parable of the Sower, where

Through God's love, we are the rich soil where seeds flourish and roots grow,
based on the Parable of the Sower, Mark 4: 3-9

*This underpins our motto, **We believe everyone is equal, everyone deserves the best,** and is key to what we do. We believe that we are all equal, irrespective of our background and beliefs. We provide a safe, nurturing environment in which we can all flourish. We have the very highest aspirations for our students, their families, our local community, and ourselves, and want nothing but the best. We challenge students by having a rich and exciting curriculum provision and by making learning practical, engaging and enjoyable. We enable students to succeed by providing the best possible personalised support."*

Nicholas Simms – Head Teacher

St. Mary's CE High School Curriculum Policy

St Mary's CE High School, in keeping with our Christian ethos is committed to providing an outstanding quality of education for all students allowing each individual to achieve their full potential regardless of ability, heritage or background.

The Curriculum at St Mary's CE High School entitles young people to access high quality learning opportunities, relevant to their personal talents, needs and aspirations, which will enable them to achieve their full potential.

The Academy Funding Agreement stipulates that the School will provide a core curriculum of English, Maths, Science and RE. In addition, foundation subjects will also be taught either as discrete subjects or across the curriculum. These subjects could include Geography, History, Drama, Technology, Art, Music, PE/Games, Modern Foreign Languages, ICT and Business Studies.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The Governors of St Mary's have made safeguarding a fundamental priority and are committed to ensuring that safeguarding of children and young people remains at the core of their work. For this reason, the principles of excellent safeguarding practice are integral to the culture of St Mary's and every aspect of the school's work. This policy supports this commitment to safeguarding and should be read in conjunction with other school policies as appropriate.

It is every person's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and it remains a paramount concern of all who work in and who are part of the St Mary's community.

Definition of the Curriculum

The curriculum is deemed to be a range of formal and informal courses and experiences to which all students will have access. Curriculum provision will provide stretch, support and challenge, allowing students to make rapid progress and achieve their full potential.

Aims:

- To provide a curriculum provision that supports personal development of students, particularly in respect of ability to make positive relationships with others, understand different cultures and diversity of the world ... to be confident citizens able to make a positive contribute to the world
- to provide a curriculum that is inclusive, challenging, innovative and personalised
- to provide a curriculum that supports a wide range of progression pathways designed to meet the needs of all students

- to provide a curriculum that uses data and student information effectively to develop progress pathways that meet the needs of all students from admission and through each key stage transition
- to achieve the highest standards of educational attainment across all subjects and areas of experience by challenging low expectations and helping students become confident and competent individuals who are increasingly able to take responsibility for their own learning as they move through the school
- to maximise the rate of student progress in learning and attainment
- to create the school as a centre of excellence and share our curriculum provision and teaching and learning practice with our primary and secondary partner schools and the wider community
- to ensure that students develop sound numeracy, literacy and ICT skills, including their functionality, which prepare students for the world of work and create a culture of life-long learning
- to enhance student motivation, aspirations and attitudes to learning
- to monitor the progress of students' attainment through the use of tracking data and reporting regularly to parents/carers
- to provide students at all key stages with the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through a range of accredited (do we need to mention opportunities to gain accreditations as part of academic portfolio to support career pathway?) courses and by taking on roles of responsibility
- to provide students with high quality curriculum provision that extends from ages 11 to 19
- to be flexible enough to meet the needs of the changing national policies whilst keeping the needs of SMHS students at the core

Curriculum Delivery

All aspects of the curriculum will be delivered through the following:

- Timetabled lessons that run from 8.25 3.10pm (4.10pm for Post 16)
- Tutorial sessions
- Timetabled study support activities
- Extra-curricular activities (eg Sport, Drama)
- Enrichment activities (both during and outside of the timetabled school day)
- Homework and extended learning (see Extended Learning/Homework Policy)
- Programmes to extend and challenge learners including those deemed 'high starters'
- E Learning and distance learning opportunities (eg on line programs)
- Using Alternative providers (eg The Education Support Centre, CTC, HRC)
- Saturday and non term time study programmes

The curriculum will be delivered by teaching staff, support staff and by external providers including partners from business and industry where appropriate.

Progression Pathways

St Mary's is committed to preparing students for their future careers in a wide variety of employment sectors. Hence, the careful planning of the curriculum to support a wide range of different pathways whilst meeting the needs of students.

With Raising Age of Participation (RPA), the curriculum will provide a range of progression pathways, allowing all students the choice of being able to remain at St Mary's after Year 11/Year 12. Students will have access to personalised and individual progression pathways from Year 7 through to Year 13/14 (refer to Year 9 Options Booklet, KS3 and KS4 Information Booklets and Post 16 Brochure).

Literacy and Numeracy

At St Mary's there is an identified lead for literacy and for numeracy. The rapid development of sound literacy and numeracy skills is vital to the attainment of our students and the progress they will make in their learning.

Literacy and numeracy skills are firmly embedded and underpin the delivery of all curriculum subjects. Intervention programmes are used where students are at risk of falling behind or where literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed to access the curriculum.

See Literacy Policy and Numeracy Policy (are both in place? Or are they together?).

Cross Curricular Themes

Just like CEIAG would we want to insert a paragraph about Safeguarding and how we teach students to keep themselves safe?

CEIAG- There is an extensive spiral programme that supports students in providing information, advice and guidance about a wide range of progression pathways and career information.

Students have access to CEIAG from Year 7 through to Year 13 and are supported by YC Herts and other external agencies. All students have an Individual Career Plan that is used to support the achievement of their aspirations and academic targets.

Citizenship- Students will be taught about Life in Modern Britain and British values and what it means to be a good citizen in a multicultural society.

Life in Modern Britain will be included in the programmes of study for Personal, Social and Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE), Humanities and Religious Studies. Student Support Days (drop days) and special curriculum events, that include visiting speakers and focussed

workshops, provide enrichment and further opportunities to study British Values and how they impact on life in Modern Britain.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) supports the personal development of young people. It is delivered in one lesson per week and covers a wide variety of issues and topics such as healthy eating and sex and relationship education. In Year 10 and 11 PSHCE (Personal, Social and Health and Citizenship Education). is delivered through the tutorial programme as well as through Humanities subjects.

BLP- BLP skills (Building Learning Power) are delivered through the tutorial programme. The concepts permeate throughout the delivery of all curriculum subjects. BLP focusses on the life skills of learning and as a result students will understand how they learn best and know how to be independent and resilient learners.

Curriculum Structure

The Curriculum for Years 7, 8 and 9

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 follow a subject based curriculum that is becoming increasingly skills and competency based. The chart below indicates the proportion of time given to each subject in each year.

Year 7, 8 and 9 Curriculum Overview

Subject	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9
English	8	8	8
Mathematics	6	6	6
Science	6	6	6
Technology	4	4	4
ICT	2	2	2
History	3	3	3
Geography	3	3	3
MF Languages	4	4	4
PE	4	4	4
RE	2	2	2
Art	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2
Drama	2	2	2
PSHE	2	2	2

(Figures represent average hours per fortnight).

Cross curricular themes and topics are delivered using a range of strategies including timetabled lessons, student support days, workshops and focused activities.

Throughout Years 7, 8 and 9 some subjects will be taught to mixed ability groups while others such as Maths will be taught to students with a similar ability or within a range of ability. During Year 9 extensive consultation takes place between students, parents/carers and staff to determine which option courses students should follow in Years 10 and 11.

Alternative Education Programmes

There is an Alternative Curriculum offered to Key Stage 3 students. The Alternative Curriculum aims to provide intensive literacy and numeracy support. The curriculum is flexible to allow students to move in and out of mainstream lessons and can mean disapplication from Modern Foreign Languages or Humanities subjects.

In Year 9 students are supported through the process of selecting their options for KS4 at St Mary's. The options booklet provides comprehensive information about the different courses offered in KS4. In addition, three pathways have been set up to help guide students, and parents/carers, which are as follows:

Blue Pathway

GCSE Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Triple Science (some with study Double Science), Religious Education and core Physical Education. Students also choose one Modern Foreign Language, one Humanities subject, Business or ICT and one further option subject.

Yellow Pathway

GCSE Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Double Science, Religious Education and core Physical Education. Students also choose one Humanities subject or a Modern Foreign Language, Business or ICT and two options subjects.

Green Pathway

GCSE Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Double Science, Religious Education and core Physical Education. Students also choose one Humanities subject or a Modern Foreign Language and three options subjects. Within this pathway there is the opportunity to follow a vocational programme of study at a provision off site.

The Curriculum for Years 10 and 11

A wide range of subjects is offered in the option blocks including subjects that lead to traditional GCSE and vocational accreditation at Level 2.

Accreditations include:

- GCSE
- BTEC
- CIDA
- Technical courses
- L1/L2 vocational courses

Students in Years 10 and 11 have personal timetables that comprise core subjects (English, Maths and Science, Religious Studies and Physical Education) and four option subjects chosen by the student. In keeping with our Christian ethos, all students study courses that lead to accreditation in Religious Studies.

KS4 Curriculum Overview

Subject	Year 10	Year 11
English Language & Literature	8	8
Mathematics	8	8
Science (double)	8	8
Religious Studies	4	4
PE	2	2
Option 1	5	5
Option 2	5	5
Option 3	5	5
Option 4	5	5

(Figures represent average hours per fortnight)

Sixth Form (Post 16) Provision

The Sixth Form (Post 16) Curriculum

Students studying in Years 12 and 13 can study a personalised curriculum that could include traditional A Level courses and BTEC National Diplomas at Level 3. There are also opportunities for students who have not met the entry requirements for Level 3 courses to study Level 2 courses in Year 12.

Students who do not have a grade 4 in English Language or Literature and/or Maths must study for Level 2/GCSE Maths and/or English as part of their Post 16 courses.

Post 16 Curriculum Overview

Qualification	Lessons
A Level qualifications	8
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	2
BTEC National Diplomas Level 3	8
BTEC Level 2	12
Professional Learning Placement (PLP)	2
GCSE/Level 2 Core English	6
GCSE/Level 2 Core Maths	6
Academy provision	8*

There are four Learning Pathways in the Sixth Form, each of which is specifically designed to meet the needs of students with differing aspirations and prior learning.

Academic Pathway

Expected entry level: Eight GCSE at C/5 grades or higher including English and Maths. Students on this route will study three or four AS/A2 qualifications plus an enrichment course provision including leadership qualifications.

Professional Pathway

Expected entry level: Five to seven GCSE at C/5 grades or higher including English and Maths. Students on this route will study two or three AS/A2 qualifications. There is also an enrichment course provision including leadership qualifications and professional work placements.

Talented Pathway

Expected entry level: Five GCSE at C/4 grades or higher. Students on this route will study two or three AS qualifications and secure Level 2/GCSE English and Maths (where grade 4 is not yet achieved). There is also an enrichment course provision including leadership qualifications and professional learning placements.

Access Pathway

Expected entry level: At least **one** GCSE at C/4 grade or higher. Students on this route will study Level 2 qualifications within a personalised programme securing Level 2 English and Maths. There are also enrichment opportunities within industry/business environments.

Check the entry requirements match the Post 16 booklet

Post 16 Academy Programmes

There are four academy programmes available for Post 16 students:

- Thunder Basketball
- ACE Football
- Aspire Business and Enterprise
- Phoenix Performing Arts

Post 16 students can apply to be a member of any Academy. These programmes complement academic courses and are delivered outside of timetabled lesson time. These programmes are

offered to support student interest or career aspirations and provide access to elite subject material and leadership opportunities.

Parent/Carer Engagement

The School will regularly communicate with parents/carers about the progress and attainment of students. Information about student progress and attainment is provided in/at:

- Progress Review Days
- Annual report
- Parent/carers consultation evenings
- Core subject surgeries
- Options evenings
- Individual parent/carers meetings as required

Parents/carers are expected to support students by attending these events. Full engagement of parents/carers is essential to support the School in ensuring that students are making:

- appropriate choices and decisions regarding progression pathways
- full use of learning opportunities offered to them
- efforts to respond positively to advice and guidance about their learning

The School will communicate regularly with parents/carers regarding changes and developments in the curriculum offer.

Communication is via:

- Letters/newsletters
- Curriculum booklets
- Website
- School Prospectus
- Special events
- Text message and email

Monitoring the quality of curriculum provision

Quality of delivery of the curriculum is rigorously monitored by regular evaluation of teaching and learning, which will include:

- Formal lesson observations
- Scrutiny of student books/notes and work
- Learning Walks
- Subject Reviews
- Curriculum reviews
- TLA meetings and curriculum meetings
- Teaching Assessment and Progress (TAP) monitoring
- There is also a framework in place to monitor the quality of provision by external consultants/agencies

Senior leaders and managers will be involved in regular monitoring of curriculum quality and this will be achieved through:

- Line management meetings
- Teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) meetings
- Governor meetings

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation of the policy

The Governing Body will receive regular reports and updates from the Head Teacher and link governors in relation to the curriculum. The curriculum a core element of leadership and management on is closely linked to the quality of teaching & learning:

- The standards achieved at the end of each key stage by groups compared with national and local benchmarks compared to targets
- Curriculum planning in all key stages
- Quality of teaching of the curriculum (including off site provision and aspects of curriculum delivered by external providers)
- Curriculum monitoring, review and updates

This policy will be reviewed every three years (or as appropriate).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teaching and Learning policy
- Extended Learning/Homework Policy
- Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Literacy Policy
- Numeracy Policy – are these together?
- Access Plan
- Equality Policy

Appendix 1

The Teacher and Threshold Standards

Threshold standards are in bold italics

A teacher must:

1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge students

- Establish a safe and stimulating environment for students, rooted in mutual respect
- Set goals that stretch and challenge students of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- Demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of students

2. Promote good progress and outcomes by students

- Be accountable for students' attainment, progress and outcomes
- Plan, teaching to build on students' capabilities and prior knowledge
- Guide students to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how students learn and how this impacts on teaching
- Encourage students to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study
- ***Have teaching skills which lead to learners achieving well relative to their prior attainment, making progress as good as, or better than, similar learners nationally***

3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- Have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain students' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- Demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teachers' specialist subject
- ***Have up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the different types of qualifications and specifications and their suitability for meeting learners' needs***
- ***Have a more developed knowledge and understanding of their subjects/curriculum areas and related pedagogy including how learners progress within them***

4. Plan and teach well structured lessons

- Impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- Promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- Set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding students have acquired
- Reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- Contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s)
- ***Have an extensive knowledge and understanding of how to use and adapt a range of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies, including how to personalise***

learning to provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential in their relevant subject area(s)

- *Be flexible, creative and adept at designing learning sequences within lessons and across lessons that are effective and consistently well-matched to learning objectives and the needs of the learners and which integrate recent developments, including those related to subject/curriculum knowledge*

5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all students

- Know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable students to be taught effectively
- Have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit students' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- Demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support students' education at different stages of development
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of students, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them

6. Make an accurate and productive use of assessment

- Know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- Make good use of formative and summative assessment to secure students' progress
- Use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- Give students regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage students to respond to feedback
- *Have an extensive knowledge and well-informed understanding of the assessment requirements and arrangements for the subjects/curriculum areas they teach, including those related to public examinations and qualifications*

7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- Have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- Have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- Manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to students' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- Maintain good relationships with students, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary

8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- Develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- Deploy staff effectively

- Take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- Communicate effectively with parents with regard to students' achievements and well-being
- ***Contribute significantly, where appropriate, to implementing workplace policies and practice and to promoting collective responsibility for their implementation***
- ***Have sufficient depth of knowledge and experience to be able to give advice on the development and well-being of children and young people***
- ***Promote collaboration and work effectively as a team member***
- ***Contribute to the professional development of colleagues through coaching and mentoring, demonstrating effective practice, and providing advice and feedback***