



Social Sciences at St John Henry Newman Catholic School- Curriculum Statement

We aim to inspire students to reflect on the world they live in, giving them a sense of something more than themselves. The aim of the Social Sciences curriculum is to equip students with the appropriate knowledge and skills needed to be able to understand and explain the causes of human behaviour and the impact of this behaviour on wider society and develop caring and compassionate individuals who develop a passion and desire to work within the social sciences arena.

We do this using quality first teaching which ensures students understand underlying principles in every subject and can apply them in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts. We want students to be able to think logically and analytically and reach conclusions based on evidence, including their own experience.

Our curriculum at SJHNCS goes far beyond what is taught in lessons, for whilst we want students to achieve the very best examination results possible, we believe our curriculum goes beyond what is examinable. Our curriculum in each subject supports the mission statement of the school, for students to achieve academic excellence together with an appropriate sense of social responsibility. To enable this, students are constantly challenged to work collaboratively and think independently when engaging in all lessons and class debates.

Through teacher modelling, we encourage our students to demonstrate manners, respect and tolerance in social sciences lessons. This allows students to express themselves in a confident manner. Lesson materials are engaging to promote topical discussion and encourage students to develop an enquiring mind.

We believe that knowledge underpins and enables the application of skills; both are entwined. Content is delivered to students and then built upon through a variety of practice questions, with regular quality feedback being given to support student progress. The knowledge acquired then allows students to develop their analytical and critical thinking skills.

Cultural Capital is embedded throughout the Social Sciences curriculum. Our students are introduced to a wide variety of viewpoints from some of the most influential Psychologists, Sociologists and Care Professionals throughout history. We study the impact that their work has had on the world we live in and students are encouraged to make links between their studies and real-life examples. They are expected to analyse the relative contributions of competing theories to discuss their impact on our understanding of human behaviour and society holistically.

In addition to our aims, our curriculum design includes revisiting and building on existing knowledge. We ensure the level of challenge is high enough for the most able, with scaffold and support available for students who need it.

Implementation

Collaborative detailed and thorough curriculum planning lies at the heart of what we do in the department. Our schemes of work are developed and updated on a yearly basis. We use all available resources and teaching strategies to ensure that students have a comprehensive knowledge of the specifications and go

beyond what is taught in lessons. Techniques to help develop long-term memory and help students master subject content are embedded in the curriculum. These are focussed on embedding challenge, metacognition, memory techniques, numeracy, and literacy into our departmental curriculum.

To complement the schemes of work students also engage in master classes and revision conferences with the local university, senior examiners, and other experienced practitioners. These activities allow students to gain valuable insight into each subject.

We also implement our curriculum through using a variety of teaching strategies and kinaesthetic tasks as well as more traditional skills practice. All staff in the department make full use of various classroom applications for education and all students have access to departmental resources both in lessons and remotely.

Impact

We know our curriculum is working in the Social Sciences department as examination results are among the best in the school at A-level. The Health and Social Care results are above the national average year on year. The engagement of students in the department can be observed in lessons and recorded in student voice. The number of students choosing to study Social Sciences at A Level are very high and a large number of our students go on to study the subjects further at university. More importantly, students frequently express their enjoyment of Social Sciences, the quality of teaching they have received and their appreciation of the knowledge and study skills they have gained from the department.