

St John Henry Newman Catholic School

CURRICULUM STATEMENT

“To educate the young is to transform the world” Juan de bonifacio SJ

As a Catholic school, we understand the importance of being a learning community that lives its life according to the teachings of Christ and our curriculum is designed to deliver the ambitions set out in the Vision Statement of the Governing Board.

Intent

Our curriculum is planned and structured to deliver a greater depth of understanding across all subjects, to allow our pupils to make meaningful connections in their learning and understand relevant, ‘real world’ application for their knowledge.

The curriculum is designed to give pupils a full understanding of the Catholic ethos of our school and to allow pupils to understand what it is to be part of the Newman family. It also provides an excellent education based on Gospel values for example developing confidence and mercy. We actively teach and develop British Values to prepare pupils for future learning and success so that they can contribute positively to a diverse society and flourish in the world.

We teach our pupils how to research, read, interleave and develop techniques to retain knowledge; in time they become confident communicators with an extensive and ambitious vocabulary.

We match our curriculum to the needs, abilities and interests of our pupils whilst ensuring challenge and high aspirations are in place. The curriculum offers opportunities to develop leadership and the skills to work as part of a team.

We will equip pupils to become independent and resilient learners and our curriculum will provide them with a range of opportunities to develop critical thought and problem solving skills to enable academic success, so pupils become the best they can be.

“Life is entrusted to man as a treasure which must not be squandered, as a talent which must be used well” St John Paul II

Implementation

At St John Henry Newman Catholic School we teach well sequenced lessons to ensure the secure development of pupil’s knowledge and development.

Our curriculum begins as our pupils arrive. Our curriculum starts at the school gate as the pupils are welcomed into school. All pupils are greeted several times as they enter the building to build on their good manners and respect for others. They then start the day with literacy, numeracy or revision skills as well as receiving a message of faith either through an assembly or through The Way. Our school was specifically designed to put opportunities for pupil wellbeing at the centre of the school. Pupils can socialise while dining, when using ICT facilities or using the resources in the LRC. Staff are there to guide pupils to improve their social skills throughout the day, both with adults and their peers.

Our approach to teaching and learning supports our curriculum as we incorporate opportunities to revisit and develop key concepts and skills. Curriculum mapping has taken place across all subjects to ensure that the skills and knowledge needed for success in Year 11 are introduced from the start of Year 7 and that learning from primary school is built upon and developed further.

Our Key Stage 3 programme of study has been designed to allow all pupils, including those with SEND to develop their skills and understanding to later access their GCSE courses confidently.

Covid has caused significant disruption to the education of our students and we have worked very hard to minimise this. The majority of our pupils study the Ebacc. As a school we have committed to offering the English Baccalaureate for the majority of pupils because we feel it's important for their social mobility. As part of our COVID recovery programme we temporarily amended our Key Stage 3 curriculum to a 2 year programme of study to allow pupils to focus on key GCSE knowledge so that they aren't disadvantaged in the future. We have supported pupils to plan for their next steps confidently through our thorough careers programme and with staff support make sensible choices during while implementing this strategy. Pupils still had the opportunity to experience all subjects up to the end of Y9 and in some cases into KS4 through SALAD days. Pupils have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of subjects including the Arts and Technology as well as traditional Ebacc subjects so their choices are not limited.

For those pupils who it affects the programme of study in Key Stage 3 is still being delivered and is interleaved with the Key Stage 4 curriculum. This has allowed additional content to be taught in all subjects and has enhanced the educational experience of all pupils. Now that we have implemented additional strategies to address the gaps in pupil learning we have reverted back to a 3 year Key Stage 3. The curriculum model is reviewed annually.

Pupil choices are made in the best and most realistic interests of the child and not the whole school performance. The curriculum has been designed to reflect the employment opportunities available and to offer pupils the best possible life chances.

In lessons, pupils are challenged with stimulating content, while teachers provide additional support so everyone can access the curriculum. Our higher attaining students are expected to produce work of greater depth and analysis before moving onto new topics. We have specific programmes in place to support pupils who have a less than secure understanding of reading, writing and mathematics so that they can access the full curriculum.

SEND pupils experience teaching which best suits their needs and allows them to access the curriculum irrespective of any issues they face. This does not limit their opportunities and still allows them to experience a broad and balanced curriculum.

Key Stages 4 and 5 are based on a more bespoke approach where pupils receive advice and guidance in line with their future aspirations to select appropriate subjects from a broad curriculum to allow them access to Post-16/18 opportunities at the correct level. Learning at this level is challenging for all students and high standards are expected.

Staff present new material in small steps so that pupils can practise and secure their knowledge before moving on. Targeted and challenging questions are regularly asked to allow pupils to demonstrate understanding. Scaffolding is provided for those pupils who require it and a wide range of differentiated strategies are implemented to ensure all pupils are able to make clear and sustained progress. Retrieval of previously learned content is frequent and regular, which increases both storage and retrieval strength. Staff are part of a continuous programme of CPD throughout the year, alongside any individual mentoring or coaching. At the heart of this is high expectations. At St John Henry Newman, our teachers are all responsible for high levels of numeracy, literacy and the development of vocabulary.

We do not prescribe a particular teaching style or pedagogical approach. Our teachers research and adapt to provide the best skills for a particular lesson and class on a particular day.

Summative assessments are held once per term to allow pupils to demonstrate their understanding of key topics and to allow teachers to assess the impact of their teaching. Teachers also use formative assessment to ascertain progress more regularly.

We believe that literacy and vocabulary are key for our students to allow them to unlock the curriculum. We teach the meaning of subject-specific language, and lessons contain challenging reading and writing tasks. We also encourage all pupils to read widely through allocated DEAR time and through a targeted reading system in Key Stage 3.

As a Catholic school, lessons, extra-curricular activities and the school ethos offer a holistic approach to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the school to develop confident, responsible citizens.

“Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you. Do not be afraid to dream of great things.” Pope Francis

Impact

As a result of an education at St John Henry Newman, all of our pupils, including those with SEND are literate, numerate and confident with high ambitions. They value their community and desire to further improve society by their actions. They have a good understanding of the wider world and have been prepared to succeed in life.

We use feedback and available data to evaluate the success of our curriculum and are therefore able to review it annually. Our recent data shows improvements in outcomes and pop ins demonstrate that pupils are engaged in learning.

All pupils including those with SEND are prepared for each stage of their curriculum, employment or training. We see the transformation very quickly in our new pupils who learn to be part of the Newman family and live up to our standards, either in Year 7 or at any entry age.

We are successful with a significant number of the managed moves we accept due to the success of our curriculum. Teaching is structured well across all departments which allows pupils to build on learning across all key stages.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. Psalm 32:8