

St Joseph's Catholic High School

Curriculum Principles at St Joseph's Catholic High School



Introduction

At St Joseph's Catholic High School, we have an aspirational curriculum which is broad, balanced and dynamic. Our aim is to ignite within our students the self-belief to meet their potential.

We achieve this by offering the very best teaching and support. Our practice is rooted in our Mission Statement: "We realise that learning is the key to the rest of our lives."

In our key characteristics, we say: "No excuses, high expectations," "We take pride in our work," and "Every child is unique." At St Joseph's, we build a partnership between families, students and teachers that puts Christ's teachings at the centre of what we do.

Our teachers have real respect for their learners as people with ideas of their own. They are passionate about teaching and learning and are able to present challenging learning tasks. Their expertise allows them to be responsive to the learners in their classrooms. We insist on good learning habits with high expectations and no excuses. This sets the tone for the learning that follows.

We expect all learners to make exceptional progress and set targets to show what this looks like. This will result in nearly all student achieving eight good GCSEs including English and Maths. Some will achieve the English Baccalaureate.

We follow a thirty period timetable, with six x 50 minute lessons each day. This enables us to have a balanced amount of curriculum time for English and Mathematics and maintain a wide range of subjects. In addition, there is a 20-minute tutor period each morning.

As well as ensuring all students have three lessons of RE, we pay particular attention to the core skills of English and Mathematics. However, we are keen to ensure that students develop the essential skills and qualifications they need to reach their full potential. This means challenging the more able students and giving extra support to those who need it. Our curriculum meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum and other statutory subjects.

In Years 7 and 8, all students follow the same wide range of subjects before beginning their GCSE courses in Year 9.

For Years 9, 10 and 11, our students can opt to study a full range of GCSEs or combine their core GCSEs with other qualifications in more applied or vocational subjects. Our curriculum at this key stage is aimed at preparing students for the opportunities available to them post-16, whether that is further study, training or employment.

Find out more

Parents or other members of the public can find out more about the curriculum by contacting subject leaders using info@sjchs.uk

They can also access the relevant awarding body websites to obtain information regarding qualifications.

AQA: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/qualifications>

Edexcel: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>

Eduqas: <http://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/>

OCR: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/>

RSL: <https://www.rslawards.com/>

WJEC: <http://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/>



Our Principles

Our Mission Statement states that at St Joseph's students will be challenged to live, love and learn through Jesus Christ. Students are challenged to work hard to reach their goals and to move to the Post 16 provision which is best suited for them. In order to be equipped for this at the end of Year 11, therefore, our curriculum is designed to ensure that all students can strive for excellence and achieve these goals. We are united as a school in sharing a common purpose through our Mission Statement. We work together with parents to enable students to achieve their personal best, to pursue lifelong learning, to develop and model respect for themselves and others and play a significant role in the life of the local community.

St Joseph's is committed to:

- helping everyone within the school community to make the most of every ability they have been given; to achieve academic excellence and to prepare well for adult life in a modern and diverse society.

We wish students to have a curriculum which:

- is broad - covering a wide range of knowledge and promoting understanding through studying a wide range of subjects.
- is balanced- with sufficient time relevant to the age and experience of the students.
- is relevant – subjects are taught in a way that relates to students' lives and experience, now and in the future.
- is differentiated – what and how the subjects are taught matched students' individual needs, abilities and aptitudes.
- promotes skills- general knowledge, oral skills, reading and writing, knowledge and understanding of RE, and provides a programme of development of financial capabilities.

Design Principles

- All students have a full-time timetable of 30 lessons per week in a **two**-week timetable.
- Students entering the school with attainment below the level expected for their age will follow a curriculum designed to accelerate their progress so that they can participate fully and this will mean more intensive support in literacy and numeracy for some children. Therefore, some students do not attend language lessons.
- On entry, students are given a Starting Point (0 -5) based on their KS2 scores. This enables teachers to ensure each student is working to the correct Milestone. A milestone sets out

what a student in Years 7 and 8 should know, understand and be able to do by the end of each term, dependent on their Starting Point. Judging against these milestones enables us to judge whether a student is making the right progress for their ability. Students in Years 7 and 8 are in the same set for each subject and are in mixed groupings for practical subjects.

- In Years 7 and 8 students study a curriculum that includes the core subjects of English, Maths, Science and RE, and also History, Geography, French, Food, Technology, PE and Performing Arts. New to Years 7 and Sets 3, 4 and 5 in Year 8 (September 2018) is RP, a Personal and Social programme, one lesson per week.
- Sets one and two in year 8 learn a second language, Spanish for two lessons per week. Their RP lesson will be on a rolling programme of a 'drop down' lessons.
- GCSE courses begin in Year 9. Students must study English, Maths, RE and Science. There are a few students who have a personalised timetable but the remaining students all study a humanity subject: History or Geography, Computer Science or a language. The school does not insist on students studying a language to GCSE, however many do choose to do so.

Literacy

Our aim is for students to develop into confident readers, writers, speakers and listeners who value these skills and strive to improve them. We recognise that this is the responsibility of all staff from all subject areas to teach literacy skills.

We want students to

- For students to develop a love of reading.
- For students to read with confidence, fluency and understanding.
- For students to read a variety of genres within fiction, nonfiction and poetry.
- For students to be able to evaluate reading material and justify their preferences.
- For students to read across the curriculum to support independence of learning in all subjects.

In order to raise the profile of literacy and to support students in their reading and to raise standards, there are three literacy expectations.

1. Students will have a reading book in their possession.
2. Students will speak in full sentences with no slang.
3. Students will listen carefully when being spoken to.

Assessing Reading Skills and ensuring progress

Single word reading tests and spelling tests take place for all students on the SEND register in Years 7 and 8. From this, students are monitored three times – baseline in September, reviewed in Spring and again in the Summer term. Retesting will take place to ensure progress is being made.

The English Department complete a spelling and reading test in September – the NGRT Test - and repeat in the summer term and again at the end of Year 8. The Catch- Up students complete a re-test in Spring also.

Teaching Reading:

In English, all classes at KS3 have a reading lesson every 2 weeks (this is alternated with a lesson of 'free writing'). Some lower ability classes go to the Library to read, others read in lessons. Students read independently but in lower ability classes where there is a TA, small groups are removed from lesson and complete guided reading or they read to the TA - this is mainly in set 4 and 5.

Set 5 classes in Year 7 and 8 receive two intervention lessons – one literacy and one numeracy. In literacy the students work on reading comprehension with techniques such as memory maps and mind maps and key point summaries to aid understanding of texts. The students are split into smaller groups by ability for these sessions.

Paired reading is scheduled weekly with Pairs organised with Year 10 and 11 students and Year 7 readers.

Guided reading with small groups and one to one sessions also take place for students whose reading needs developing.

Developing Independent Reading

Years 7 and 8 take part in group reading with their tutor, once per week.

Paired reading takes place with students reading with students from Year 9 and 10. These students are selected from our 'more able' cohort, with the intention of developing their confidence and leadership skills as well as improving the reading skills of the identified students.

Writing

Students in Years 7 and 8 produce a complex (five paragraph) piece of writing each week.

This is mapped out between the subjects on a writing calendar. There is a common approach to supporting extended writing across the school.

Learning by heart/ Revision

Learning by heart is a strategy employed by different subjects at appropriate points. In St Joseph's we have three revision strategies that we teach and embed across the school: tbc

Financial Capabilities

This programme is planned through Years 7-10 and is planned within a number of subjects and within our Personal Education Programme which consists of PSE in Years 7 and 8 (Year 9 2019) and drop down days 7-10.

Expeditions (Educational Visits & Outdoor Education)

During the year, there are a wide variety of expeditions available to the students. These range from local visits within lesson time to nearby places of interest, to residential activities further afield.

Families will always be given reasonable advance notice of visits and will be informed as to which visits are compulsory and those that are optional. If a visit takes place within the normal day, then we will inform families of the visit by text or a note in their child's planner.

As part of the school life and the National Curriculum, all students must take part in and experience a variety of outdoor activities. We expect full participation in the annual school walk and in our Sports Days.

English

Students are taught with a variety of approaches to enable them to improve their Writing, Reading and Spoken Language skills. GCSE exam skills, such as inference, comparison, analysis and evaluation are taught from year 7 and are explored and developed through the study of a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, poetry and Shakespeare. Students develop essential GCSE writing skills, developing narrative, descriptive and transactional writing styles. Exam questions will be taught frequently with regular feedback to ensure students develop key exam techniques and skills through practice and unseen GCSE style exam questions for both literature and language.

In Year 7 students study *The Hobbit* (set 1 & 2) or *The Spooks Apprentice* (sets 3-5) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Literary heritage texts, Myths & legends and modern-day heroes & villains, Transactional and travel writing

In Year 8 students study *Macbeth*, *The Woman in Black* (sets 1-3) or *Horowitz Horror* (sets 4-5), Gothic Literature, 19th Century fiction and non-fiction texts and they develop writing for a range of audiences and purposes.

Maths

In Years 7 and 8 Maths students cover the main areas of the curriculum: Number, Ratio, Proportion and Rate of Change, Algebra, Geometry and Measures and Probability and Statistics. Students cover seven units per year of which four are based on number, ratio, proportion and rate of change and algebra; two are based on geometry and measure, while the last unit covers Probability and Statistics. This mirrors the demands placed on student in their later study to GCSE. The assessment objectives are: Using and Applying Standard Techniques, Reason Interpret and Communicate Mathematically, Solve problems within Mathematics and other contexts. Students are assessed following each unit of work. They have two end of year exams – non calculator and calculator which tests all skills covered during the year.

Science

Students study units of Biology, Chemistry and Physics in year 7 and 8, giving students a broad introduction to the key elements of each of the separate sciences. Topics covered in Year 7 include: Cells, Structure and function of body systems, Reproduction, Particles and their behavior, Atoms, elements and compounds, Chemical reactions, Acids and alkalis, Forces, Sound, Light, and Space. Topics covered in Year 8 include: Health and lifestyle, Ecosystems, Adaptation and inheritance, The periodic table, Separation techniques, Metals and acid, The Earth, Electricity and magnetism, Energy, and Motion and speed.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum prepares students for GCSE by developing the same assessment objectives AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas; scientific techniques and procedures. AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas; scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures. AO3: Analyse information and ideas to interpret and evaluate; make judgements and draw conclusions; develop and improve experimental procedures. Within each unit of work there are opportunities to initially develop skills associated with AO1, moving to AO2 and once the skills are embedded, applying them to other contexts and developing AO3. Year 7 and 8 students are assessed at the end of each term on the topics and skills covered.

RE

Year 7 and Year 8 students follow selected topics from the Religion for Living Junior Certificate Programme which is used by Catholic Schools in Ireland. The underlining thought for Year 7 is Faith and the opportunity to meet Christ who is it the one who gives meaning to our lives and is the source of all happiness. The underlining thought for Year 8 students is the History of Salvation. Students are assessed regularly. There are three formal literacy assessments and three knowledge assessments in both Year 7 and Year 8

Learning Support

- **Small Group Intervention**

Pupils in set 5 in Years 7 and 8 have two periods a week of small group support. One lesson is to develop reading skills and one for numeracy skills. For both interventions, pupils are taught in groups of 4-6 based on internal and external literacy and numeracy data. Both reading and maths skills are assessed formally four times a year.

- **Reading**

Reading is an essential core skill for learning. We use a programme called “Memory, Thinking and Comprehension (MTC). It consists of six components covering a range of reading topics: People, Animals, Landmarks and Monuments, Inventions, plans and Forces of Nature. Each component contains eight texts based on each topic. The skills that are taught and developed are memory skills, answering questions about a piece of text, inference and analysis.

- **Numeracy**

Pupils are following an entry level maths course. It consists of eight components covering the following topics: Properties of number, four operations, ratio, money, the calendar and time, measures, geometry and handling data. The first four components are taught in year 7 and the rest in Year 8.

Art

In Art, students explore many varied themes working with different materials, techniques and equipment. The themes are: Still Life, Portraits, Self-Expression, Graphic Design, Landscape with the study of Artists and other cultures. Techniques used include painting and drawing, clay, print-making, photography, mixed media and sculpture. All year 7 students begin with a benchmark project to assess knowledge and skills under the four assessment objectives: research, development of Ideas, creativity, understanding of critical and analytical Study. Throughout Years 7 and 8 Students learn to evaluate and develop their work, building up their knowledge and working creatively and independently. Students are assessed during and at the end of each project.

Computer Studies

All students in Years 7 and 8 study a Computer Studies course which ensure all students can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, logic, algorithms and data representation, can analyse problems in computational terms, have repeated practical experience of writing computer programs in order to solve such problems, can evaluate and apply information technology, including new or unfamiliar technologies, analytically to solve problems and are responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology.

Design and Technology

The planned D&T projects in Years 7 and 8 have been designed to ensure students use a range of materials and skills to design, make, evaluate and gain technical knowledge using multiple manufacturing and design skills. Students will complete a series of projects over years 7 and 8 including a Smart Battery Tester, a USB Mood Light and building Structures. The skills students will be applying are problem solving, designing through sketching and modelling, learning about forces and stress, learning about functionality and aesthetics, exploring innovation through iterative design, making and designing mechanical systems and movement and 3D printing and prototyping. Students are assessed on their ability to design, make, evaluate and on their technical knowledge.

French

The curriculum assumes all students are beginners in Year 7 and introduces topics which allow students to talk about their own experiences: Me, My Free time, School, Family and Friends and Holidays are covered in Year 7 and in Year 8: TV, Film and Books, What you did on holiday, Describing others, Clothes and Home. The grammar covered includes masculine and feminine articles, agreements and word order, the present, past and future, irregular verbs, reflexive verbs, opinions in present and past and the infinitive verb, possessive adjectives, some and many, connectives and negatives. Students are assessed in the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in end of unit tests. Weekly vocabulary tests are also given.

Food and Nutrition

Food and Nutrition has three main areas closely linked to the British Nutrition Foundation's Food a Fact of Life Programme of study. The five topic areas are: Food preparation and Cooking, Food Science, Food Safety, Food Choice and Provenance, Nutrition and Health. Students will be expected to be able to cook 8 – 10 savoury main course dishes using fresh ingredients and using a range of preparation, equipment and cooking methods. They are also expected to recognise a wide variety of ingredients and know how these ingredients form part of a healthy balanced diet so that they can choose to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Students are assessed formatively throughout the course on both their practical and theory work.

Geography

Year 7 and 8 Geography covers six half termly topics which cover British and World Geography. In Year 7: It's your Planet, Maps, UK, Glaciers, Rivers,. In year 8 students cover GIS, Population, Urbanisation, Coasts, Weather, Global Warming, Asia, and China. Each of these topics instil the key ingredients and skills for Geography study. There is a common formal assessment at the end of each topic, as well as regular extended writing tasks to develop the skills necessary for answering the longer GCSE questions when they begin GCSE.

History

The History curriculum is constructed in order to ensure students cover key moments in Britain's past moving into World and twentieth century modern history in Year 8. The subjects include: The Norman Invasion, Medieval Life, Tudors, English Civil War, Industrial Revolution, The Roman Empire, Roman Cumbria, WW1, WW2, The Holocaust, The Cold War, Terrorism and Race Relations. Students are assessed four times per year. Each test has a preparation lesson, differentiated help and feedback lesson. Assessments are based on GCSE questions and the four GCSE Assessment Objectives.

Performing Arts

Music, Drama and Dance are taught throughout Years 7 and 8 in order to develop a students' confidence, physical awareness, communication and articulation. The Key themes are Freeze Frame, Tableau, characterisation in music, musical techniques, appreciation, singing and key board. In Dance, students will study different dance styles and techniques. Students are assessed during and at the end of each project.

PE

The PE curriculum allows students to have the opportunity to learn about, play and enjoy a range of sports including Rugby Union/ League, Netball, Football, Hockey, Gymnastics, Basketball, Tennis, Table Tennis, Fitness, Badminton, Athletics, and Rounders. Students will cover the skills and techniques that enable students of all sporting ability to improve their skills, knowledge and their overall performance. Assessments are practical. Students are assessed through a variety of practical activities and will be based on their performance, knowledge and tactics in the sports studied in each half term.

Spanish

In order to move from beginner level in Spanish to being able to accurately communicate and understand simple information, Year 8 covers four GCSE topics: My Freetime, School, Family and Friends and My Town. The grammar covered includes masculine and feminine articles, agreements and word order, the present and immediate future, key irregular verbs, opinions and the infinitive verb, possessive adjectives, some and many, connectives and negatives. Students will be assessed in the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking in end of unit tests. Weekly vocabulary tests are also given.

Religious Personal Health Social and Citizenship Education (RP)

The Way of St Joseph is a faith-based approach to RPSHE+C (Religious, Personal, Social Education and citizenship). It ties in with the Way program developed by our Chaplain within our own school community. It will build upon the excellent work that is undertaken in providing Careers Information Advice and Guidance and the work undertaken by our Diocese and the Catholic Education Service on Human Relationships and Sex Education. It prepares our students for the demands and rigours of contemporary society so to assist in this aspect of the education of our students we have created and resourced a program that deals with the relevant issues that face 11-16 year olds in Workington. These include issues such as drugs and alcohol abuse, relationships, law and order and knife crime. We have opted for a virtue-based approach inspired on the example of our patron saint, St Joseph.

Key Stage 4 Preferences – looking ahead to Year 9 and GCSE

There are several principles that we use when helping students find the right combination of GCSE subjects, or the equivalent, to study in Years 9, 10 and 11. Firstly all students study the “Core” GCSE subjects of English Language and Literature, Maths, Science (either Combined or Separate sciences) and Religious Education.

Students then have three “Options” subjects that they can choose. Most students study a humanities subject of French, Spanish, Geography or History to help broaden their curriculum and ensure students meet the Progress 8 requirements. Currently over 98% of students are studying this pathway in years 9 and 10. Students are also encouraged, particularly those who are higher ability and are seeking to attend higher education, to study both a Language (French or Spanish) and a humanity (History or Geography). Students then have a further two subjects that they can study at GCSE, including BTEC courses and more “practical” subjects such as Art and Design Technology. The courses we offer are designed to allow students to have a broad curriculum that offers variety and engages with their own career aspirations and interests. For a small percentage of student’s, we seek a bespoke curriculum that suits their individual learning needs.

All the above choices and preferences are made in discussion with parents and following engagement activities such as careers events, information assemblies and a parents evening to help students make the right decisions for them. Currently students studying GCSEs are required to have a greater content and greater depth of knowledge and skills than ever before. As such we deliver a three year Key Stage 4 to support students in having the best opportunity to develop skills and learning to achieve their best GCSE grades.

Years 7 and 8 Writing Calendar HT5/6

Date	Year 7	Year 8
14 th May	<p>Life 1750 – 1900 - History</p> <p>Unseen paper 1 language Question 4 An evaluate question looking at writer's methods use in an unseen fiction text – English</p> <p>Forces – write a plan to test the strength of a bridge - Science</p>	<p>Hitler, our last hope - History</p> <p>Unseen paper 2 language Question 4. Comparison of 2 non-fiction unseen texts – English</p> <p>Health and lifestyle – write a plan to test diet lemonade for sugars - Science</p>
21 May		
4 June 2018	<p>Great Exhibition Letter – History</p> <p>Life as an African Nomad 7/2, 7/4, 7/5 - Geog</p>	<p>Dunkirk Article – History</p> <p>From your investigations of Asia's physical and human features discuss what Asia is like 8/1, 8/4, 8/5</p> <p>Asia's population Extended Writing Task 8/2, 8/3</p>
11 June 2018	<p>RYG Unseen assessment. Students will re-write their response following teacher feedback – English</p> <p>Sound – Plan an investigation to find noise levels in school - Science</p>	<p>RYG Unseen assessment.</p> <p>Students will re-write their response following teacher feedback – English</p> <p>What different Biomes are there in Asia and how are they different in terms of climate, flora and fauna 8/1, 8/4 and 8/5 - Geog</p>
18 June 2018	<p>Mines and Factory Conditions – History</p> <p>End of year exam – Paper 1 Language</p> <p>4 x extended pieces of writing – language analysis, structure analysis, evaluation, creative/imaginative writing - English</p>	<p>WW2 – History</p> <p>End of year exam – Paper 2 Language – 4 x extended pieces of writing – synthesis, language analysis, comparison, transactional writing</p> <p>Ecosystems – Investigation into how exercise affects rate of aerobic respiration – Science</p> <p>Since 1979, China has lifted hundreds of people out of poverty. How did it do this? 8/1, 8/4 8/5 - Geog</p>
25 th June 2018	<p>'The Sacrament of Eucharist is more important than the Sacrament of Confirmation for Catholics' RE</p>	<p>'Miracles described in the Bible lead people to believe in God'. RE</p>
2 July 2018	<p>Industrial Revolution Transport – History</p> <p>RYG from end of year exam – English</p> <p>Light – Describe and explain changes of colour during a play. – Science</p>	<p>RYG from end of year exam – English</p> <p>Adaptation and inheritance – Describe and explain why communication is</p>

	<p>Space – compare/contrast the inner and outer planets – Science</p> <p>Africa end of test Extended Writing 7/2, 7/4, 7/5 - Geog</p>	<p>important between scientists in the discovery of DNA. – Science</p> <p>Describe what life is like in Tibet and include the main physical and human features. 8/1, 8/2 and 8/3 - Geog</p>
9 July 2018	<p>End of unit - Compare the similarities and differences of light and sound - Science</p>	<p>Hiroshima Source Work – History</p> <p>End of unit - Plant and animal extinction – describe/explain the causes of – Science</p> <p>Three Gorges Dam Extended Writing Task 8/2 and 8/3</p> <p>End of Year Assessments 8/1, 8/4 and 8/5</p>