



Department 2021: Learning Support

We aim to deliver the mission statement of the school:

- The learning support department aims to make learning accessible for all and enhance students' lives by fulfilling the St Joseph's mission statement, Living, Loving and Learning through Christ. We strive to make all aspects of the curriculum available, engaging and fun for our students. With the aim to inspire our students with special education needs to enjoy and succeed in education and continue in further education. We also aim to support and grow independence and resilience in our learners. Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is built around understanding and mastering of the basics in both literacy and numeracy which is tailored to our students' needs and linked to the whole school aims. We work alongside the English and Maths departments to plan the curriculum to each cohort.
- In accordance with the JPP, we want our students to think and learn about the role of the individual and their place in society. With this in mind, we allow all students the opportunity for class discussions, and we encourage students to voice and vocalise their opinions and learn and understand the views of others.
- Our curriculum is fun and through the use of games and social interaction we enable a thirst for education and an enjoyment of learning. Students are heavily supported in our classrooms to reach learning goals. The aim is to ensure our students are lifelong learners by enjoying reading and encouraging their interests in topics which impact them.
- Our curriculum is broad, ambitious and challenging and develops students' knowledge of their community, local history, their country and the wider world, this is integral to our curriculum. Students explore a wide range of texts and use class readers which inform and develop students understanding of different cultures and tests their understanding of different communities.
- We specifically tailor our curriculum; it is planned based on the cohort in the classroom. A great deal of preparation and time is spent understanding the strengths and areas of development needed in each class. It is important to us as a department we not only support and scaffold learning for our students, but we stretch and challenge their learning and enable breadth and depth in knowledge. We assess our students in every lesson and target all our teaching. We divide the class into three groups to enable further directed teaching in smaller groups which allows students the ability to grow in confidence and builds strong relationships with support staff.
- In light of lockdowns and missed learning the curriculum has been modified and adapted. The department plan is explained to both Key Stage 3 and 4 classes so they understand the bigger picture of their time in learning support lessons. In Key Stage 3 our first priority was to re-establish the understanding of the basics in literacy and numeracy taught at Key Stage 2. We have used alphabetical order lessons, capital letters, full stop lessons and many other Key Stage 2 curriculum topics to ensure students are transferring these skills to all other lessons in our school. We also incorporate a children's mental health and well-being unit into our Key Stage 3 lessons, where students in small groups on a carousel basis have a 12-week block of work on mental health and mindfulness. This block of work is carried out by our school counsellor within learning support lessons. At Key Stage 4 we have divided classes into three groups, to again allow for targeted teaching which is, reading, writing and numeracy. These groups rotate on a carousel basis enabling Key Stage 4 students the opportunity for smaller group work and a targeted approach to learning.
- Our Key Stage 3 curriculum builds on prior learning at KS2, we have established relationships with primary schools in our academy and local feeder primaries to ascertain gaps in student's knowledge and developmental areas linked to reading, writing and oracy. We have also used data gathered in the early stages of the academic year which helps us identify missing areas of comprehension. This data analysis also informs our planning.
- I attend regular networking meetings with SENDCos and primary school colleagues in both the academy trust and feeder schools. In these meetings we mark joint assessments and peer review other marking techniques. I am aware of the syllabus covered in KS2 and assessment criteria.

To achieve our Mission Statement, our curriculum:



Living, Loving and Learning through Christ



- The learning support curriculum is structured to ensure that students are compassionate, loving, ambitious and strive for excellence. Through our class discussions and the JPP words linked to our SOW, we help teach students the catholic values which are central to the mission statement. We also follow the school's policy on behaviour, achievement and rewards.
- At KS3 and KS4 all SOW have built in opportunities for literacy, reading and oracy. This year is the first year we have incorporated oracy into our SOW. But quickly we realised that although oracy wasn't written in our SOW we have always encouraged our SEN students and all other students to be able to communicate their opinions and debate topics which arise in our lessons.
- All SEN students have support plans on the system which are individualised and accessible through class charts. All staff have access to the SEN register which is updated regularly. I am accessible full time and communication is open from teachers to myself as SENDCo. Teachers plan their use of support staff and communication, and relationships are good between teachers and TA's. Teachers adopt a quality first teaching approach, with this, tasks are scaffolded to ensure success for SEN learners and appropriate equipment is used for any specific need's children may have. Information is shared easily through class charts which denotes PP and SEN children. Provision of resources is facilitated by myself as SENDCo and the PP coordinator and teachers follow the PP strategy which is available on our school website. As a department we monitor and support provision and asses progress which helps us identify if further intervention is required. Another provision which we offer is homework club. This club allows us to help in a relaxed environment students who are finding homework tasks difficult away from the classroom teacher.
- I have access to a wide range of professionals, such as, Educational Psychologists, the specialist teaching service and EHCP co-ordinators, which have involvement with some students in my department. Whole staff CPD is delivered by these professionals in my department and regular CPD details are fed to staff in our school. I hold a staff CPD each academic year on both the students who are SEN and current SEN updates. The department work collaboratively to help develop curriculum plans and SEND practice within the school. HLTAs and Tas work within departments and provision small group or 1x1 provision for pupils. Some support staff are key workers for our most vulnerable pupils. The support staff also have responsibilities to review, monitor and track the provision provided to students. Support staff advise the teacher on differentiation and scaffolding for students.
- The learning support department implement various metacognition strategies to help students, know, understand and apply more. Students have built in opportunities for reflection on their learning. At KS3 and KS4 dialogic teaching is common practice in the learning support department allowing students to question and reflect on learning. Mind mapping is a key technique we also use to help students develop essay planning skills and revision techniques.
- Students have lots of opportunities to review learning to challenge misconceptions and interleave prior work. The use of quizzes and games allows students the opportunity to reflect on prior learning.
- Each term students have assessments to review knowledge, skills and understanding. Students have assessments on reading, reading comprehension and math. Throughout the year in all lessons assessment is ongoing, both self-assessment and teacher assessment. Assessment is done formally and informally by verbal answers or marked work during each lesson.