



CURRICULUM POLICY

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MONITORING AND REVIEW

Staff Responsible	Andrew Gibb – Deputy Head (Academic) and Mairead Carney – Head of Prep
Reviewed by	SLT
Approved by	SLT
Frequency of Review	Annually
Date of Last Review	April 2020
Date of Next Review	April 2021

The School refers to all staff and students in St Mary's School, which includes the Early Years/Foundations Stage (EYFS), the Preparatory Department (Years 1-6), Senior House (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form (Years 12-13).

The term 'parent' refers to those who have parental responsibility for a child.



AIMS

This policy sets out to ensure St Mary's School meets its wider aims including:

- A stimulating, well-balanced education which will challenge and excite our students, encouraging them to strive for excellence and leading to the acquisition of skills, independence, self-discipline and academic success
- A framework of support and challenge which enables all our students to achieve their individual potential and to develop personal confidence and self-esteem
- A full range of opportunities which will enable our students, as responsible citizens, to take their place in the world with poise and assurance

WIDER REFERENCES

This policy operates within a wider national framework, which includes:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Regulations 2014

RELATED INTERNAL POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Curriculum Plan
- Teaching, Marking and Assessment Policy
- Co-Curricular Policy
- SEND Policy
- EAL Policy
- More Able Policy
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy

CURRICULUM

The curriculum is designed to take into consideration the interests, ages, aptitudes and needs of all students, including those who have an EHC plan. The curriculum enables all students to have the opportunity to learn and make excellent personal progress. The curriculum is grounded within fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Students are prepared for the opportunities and responsibilities of life within British society.

Broad

The curriculum is broadly based, each student is given access to a wide array of experiences, including: linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, spiritual, physical, and creative and aesthetic.

Balanced

The weighting of each element of learning and experience is carefully considered and given an appropriate weighting. All students acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.



Challenging

The curriculum is stretching for all students and allows them to develop mastery of concepts and skills. This includes students who are below and above compulsory school age, which is appropriate to their educational needs.

Differentiated and Accessible

The curriculum acknowledges that all learners are different. Learning opportunities are designed to ensure all students have the ability to access them while offering sufficient challenge. Each student is allowed to gain self-confidence and self-esteem by achieving learning goals.

Continuous

The curriculum is mapped to ensure that students continue to build on skills, knowledge and experience and minimise needless repetition. This is important across all key stages including the movement between KS2 and KS3 which is a vital element of the School's Transition Project.

CURRICULUM PLAN

The curriculum plan is reviewed annually to ensure it meets the needs of the students. The current Curriculum Plan is available on request.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

Teaching time each week: 33 hours 45 minutes

The curriculum that we teach in the Early Years classes meets the requirements set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage Outcomes 2014. We provide a programme of activities for students in Early Years which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills.

Assessment forms an important part of the future curriculum planning for each child from Reception upwards. At the end of a student's Reception year, the teacher completes an Early Years Profile.

The three 'prime' areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The four 'specific' areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design



KEY STAGE 1

Teaching time each week: 34 hours 10 minutes / 35 hours

Subjects

Core	Core
English	Computing
Mathematics	Topic (History and Geography)
Science	Music
Physical Education	Art
PSHCEE and Citizenship	French
Religious Studies	

KEY STAGE 2

Teaching time each week: 36 hours 15 minutes

Subjects

Core	Core
English	Computing
Mathematics	History
Science	Geography
Physical Education	Art
PSHCEE and Citizenship	Spanish
French	Design Technology
Religious Studies	Music
Thinking Skills	Textiles

KEY STAGE 3

Teaching time each week: 36 hours 15 minutes

Subjects

Core	Core
English	Computer Science
Mathematics	History
Science	Geography
Physical Education	Art
PSHCEE	Food Technology
Careers	Drama
French	Music
Religious Studies	Textiles
	Study Skills
Option	Option
German (in Year 8 and 9)	Spanish (in Year 8 and 9)



Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

In some cases students will not partake in MFL lessons in order to receive extra support in core skills such as literacy.

KEY STAGE 4

Teaching time each week: 36 hours 15 minutes

Subjects

Core	Option
English (GCSE)	Computer Science (GCSE)
Mathematics (IGCSE)	History (IGCSE)
Science (GCSE)	Geography (GCSE)
Physical Education (Core)	Art (GCSE)
PSHCEE	Food Technology (GCSE)
Careers	Drama (GCSE)
At least one MFL	Music (GCSE)
	Textiles (GCSE)
	French (GCSE)
	German (GCSE)
	Spanish (GCSE)
	Business (GCSE)
	ICT (IGCSE)
	Religious Studies (GCSE)
	Physical Education (GCSE)

Science GCSE

Science consists of two pathways at GCSE: Combined and Separate. Combined Science allows students to study all three sciences and receive two combined GCSE grades to reflect their work. Separate Science goes into greater detail in each Science and students will achieve three separate GCSE grades to reflect the outcomes achieved in each discipline.

Option System

Students will take part in all core subjects and will additionally select three optional subjects at GCSE level. The School expects the majority of students to select at least one MFL subject. Students will receive support and guidance from the School to help them select appropriate options.

The School aims to allow all students to secure their preferred option choices but sadly this is not always possible and as a result students are asked to select 'reserve' choices.

Further Mathematics and Other Languages

Further Mathematics is taught as part of the co-curricular programme and students can elect to take the examination. Some students elect to take optional language subjects in addition to the normal curriculum (e.g. Mandarin), the School will support these where possible.

KEY STAGE 5

Teaching time each week: 36 hours 15 minutes



Sixth Form curriculum consists of more than just academic study and we offer a programme of activities for students which is appropriate to their needs. In addition to the A Level lessons, there are a number of lessons and activities that the students have in order to enrich their education and give them valuable experiences and preparation for independent adult life.

Subjects

Core	Option
Physical Education (Core)	English Literature
PSHCEE	Mathematics
Enrichment	Further Mathematics
	Biology
	Chemistry
	Physics
	Dance
	ICT
	Computer Science
	Philosophy and Ethics
	History
	Geography
	Economics
	French
	German
	Spanish
	Art
	Food Technology
	Drama
	Media Studies
	Music
	Government and Politics
	Psychology
	Business
	Physical Education
	Sociology
	Textiles
	Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Option System

Students pick one of three pathways for A Level study:

- Four A Levels (or five if taking Further Mathematics)
- Three A Levels and an EPQ
- Three A Levels

Subjects at A Level have entry requirements that vary between subjects. These include performance at GCSE in related subjects and prior study.



The School aims to allow all students to secure their preferred option choices but this is not always possible and as a result students are asked to select 'reserve' choices.

CAREERS CURRICULUM

Carers guidance is an essential part of the School curriculum and more information can be seen in the Careers Policy available on request. The careers curriculum ensures that all Senior House students have access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner; enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential.

PSHCEE CURRICULUM

The curriculum incorporates Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education for all students. The PSHCEE course reflects the School's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people. Citizenship Education is incorporated within the delivery of PSHCEE, individual subjects and co-curricular activities.

For more information please see the PSHCEE Policy and Scheme of Work, which is available on request.

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)

The School provides RSE in the basic curriculum for all students, in which students are encouraged and guided by moral principles. A full statement of the School's RSE Policy is available to parents on the School website. All students study the biological aspects of human reproduction as a compulsory part of their education.

SPRITUAL MORAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

The development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is included within the curriculum at all Key Stages. All staff are asked to consider how students' learning in their subject area enables them to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. The SMSC dimension is particularly extended in PSHEE and Religious Studies and multicultural themes are explored in many subject areas. For more information on this please see the SMSC – RS policy and the SMSC – British Values policy, both of which are available on request.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religious Studies is compulsory for all students at Key Stage 3. Any request to withdraw a student from the Religious Studies programme or related activities must be made to the Headmistress in writing.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The School has been designated by statutory instrument as having a particular religious character: Anglican. Prospective parents are informed of the School's designated religious status.

All students are expected to take part in collective worship. The School has a programme of collective worship involving whole-school assemblies and smaller group assemblies.

POLITICAL EDUCATION

The promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is forbidden. Political issues are introduced in a number of courses and assemblies. These are always presented in a balanced way, in keeping with fundamental British values.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE) AND GAMES

All students (including the Sixth Form) are expected to take part in the School's Physical Education and Games programme. Students can only be excused from PE and Games lessons for medical reasons, for which a note from a parent will suffice, or other reasons agreed with the School.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The School has a wide and varied programme of cultural and sporting activities that take place outside the formal curriculum. For more information, please see the Co-curricular Policy.

TRANSITION PROJECT

As part of the commitment to having the curriculum be continuous, the School has embarked on a transition project spanning multiple years to ensure that as students change between year groups and key stages subjects minimise repetition and students continue to build skills. One of the most critical elements of the transition project is to help co-ordinate the planning of course content across Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Thus a common approach, language and philosophy can be adopted.

SENIOR HOUSE ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

Senior House planning takes place in three phases.

The first stage is the long term planning where the entire curriculum map is reviewed and subject offerings and time are allocated. This happens annually and is completed by the Headmistress and the Deputy Head (Academic) in consultation with the SLT and Heads of Department.

The second phase is the medium term planning. Each Head of Department is responsible for overseeing an effective programme of study appropriate to the ages and needs of the students. Teachers at all levels share responsibility for conducting medium term planning for the delivery of curriculum content by creating schemes of work. Departments should regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their schemes of work. The curriculum will incorporate many aspects of the National Curriculum KS3 to KS4 for Years 7 to 11 and the requirements of the A Level specifications for the Sixth Form. However, these do not determine the whole curriculum. Heads of Department ensure that Schemes of Work are tailored to the needs of our students, that topics and resources are engaging and that the aims identified by the School are fulfilled by the curriculum. Medium term plans give clear guidance on the core knowledge and objectives around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of students' knowledge, understanding and skills. Medium term plans may suggest teaching strategies that can be used when teaching each topic.

The third phase is the short term planning conducted by individual teachers who plan how to effectively communicate ideas, concepts and skills in each lesson. Short-term plans are written or formulated by our teachers either weekly or daily and in a style that suits each individual teacher. These are used to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities will be used and take into account provision for the differing needs of the students.

SENIOR HOUSE NUMERACY AND LITERACY

All Senior House staff contribute to the development of all students speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills. This requires creating space within lessons to allow students to practice, giving clear feedback and by holding students to a high standard.



The School have made the advancement of these skills a priority and staff training has focussed on how the skills can be built within lessons.

PREP DEPARTMENT ORGANISATION AND PLANNING

We plan our curriculum in three phases. We agree a long-term plan for each subject within each year group. This indicates what topics are to be taught in each term, and to which groups of children.

Medium term plans give clear guidance on the core knowledge and objectives around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of students' knowledge, understanding and skills. Medium term plans may suggest teaching strategies that can be used when teaching each topic.

Short-term plans are written by our teachers either weekly or daily and in a style to suit the individual teacher. These are used to set out the learning objectives for each session, and to identify what resources and activities will be used and take into account provision for the differing needs of the students.

In the Early Years, we adopt an inter-disciplinary topic approach to curriculum planning based on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Handbook, September 2014. Our school fully supports the principle that young children learn through play, and by engaging in well-planned, structured activities.

In Key Stages 1 and 2 we base our plans on the National Curriculum 2014. In Key Stage 1, this is largely delivered by the form teacher, with specialist teachers for Music, French and PE. At Key Stage 2 we teach all subjects separately either by form teachers or by specialist teachers.

PREP DEPARTMENT NUMERACY AND LITERACY

In accordance with National Curriculum guidelines, and in addition to the individual subject Schemes of Work, we promote the teaching of core skills across all subjects:

Numeracy and Mathematics

Teachers use every relevant subject to develop students' mathematical fluency. Confidence in numeracy and other mathematical skills is a precondition of success across the curriculum.

Teachers develop students' numeracy and mathematical reasoning in relevant subjects so that they understand and appreciate the importance of mathematics. Students are taught to apply arithmetic fluently to problems, understand and use measures, make estimates and check their work, as appropriate to their age and stage of development. Students apply geometric and algebraic understanding, and relate their understanding of probability to the notions of risk and uncertainty. They also understand the cycle of collecting, presenting and analysing data. They are taught to apply their mathematics skills to both routine and non-routine problems, including breaking down more complex problems into a series of simpler steps.

Language and Literacy

Teachers develop students' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for



students, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects.

Spoken Language

Students are encouraged to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using standard English. They learn to justify ideas with reasons; ask questions to check understanding; develop vocabulary and build knowledge; negotiate; evaluate and build on the ideas of others; and select the appropriate register for effective communication. They are taught to give well-structured descriptions and explanations and develop their understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas. This enables them to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

Reading and Writing

Teachers develop students' reading and writing in all subjects to support their acquisition of knowledge. Students are taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and are encouraged to read for pleasure. We promote wider reading through use of the Accelerated Reader Scheme and by provision of a variety of genres of books in classrooms and libraries and set clear expectations for reading at home. Students develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. They are taught the correct use of grammar and build on what they have been taught to expand the range of their writing and the variety of the grammar they use. The writing they do includes narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summaries and evaluations: such writing supports them in rehearsing, understanding and consolidating what they have heard or read.

Vocabulary Development

Students' acquisition and command of vocabulary are key to their learning and progress across the whole curriculum. Teachers develop vocabulary actively, building systematically on students' current knowledge. They increase students' store of words in general and make links between known and new vocabulary, discussing the shades of meaning in similar words. In this way, students expand the vocabulary choices that are available to them when they write. In addition, it is vital for students' comprehension that they understand the meanings of words they meet in their reading across all subjects. It is particularly important to induct students into the language which defines each subject in its own right, such as accurate mathematical and scientific language.

FOREST SCHOOL

Forest School offers learners opportunities to achieve and develop confidence, independence and resilience hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment. The skills learnt can be applied in the classroom to develop and extend learning.

Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and complements the wider curriculum and is led by accredited Forest School Trained Leaders.

Reception and Nursery and weekly sessions and Key Stage 1 have a session each term.