



Curriculum Policy

2021-2022

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Linked policies/documents: PSHE, Careers, Assessment Policy

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Guiding principles for curriculum at Mount St Mary's College

Pupils in a Jesuit school are growing to be . . .

Grateful for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and **generous** with their gifts, becoming men and women for others.

Attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and **discerning** about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.

Compassionate towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and **loving** by their just actions and forgiving words.

Faith-filled in their beliefs and **hopeful** for the future.

Eloquent and **truthful** in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.

Learned, finding God in all things; and wise in the ways they use their learning for the common good.

Curious about everything; and **active** in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.

Intentional in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and **prophetic** in the example they set to others.

The purpose of Jesuit schools is “improvement in living and learning for the greater glory of good and the common good”.¹

¹ St Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), *Jesuit Constitutions* n.440

Why Catholic schools?

The document, “Christ at the Centre”² states

“...this will mean that Catholic schools should...Provide a broad and balanced education which will help children and young people grow to their full human potential, and pay regard to the formation of the whole person”.

It continues to cite Canon Law, stating this is so that

*...all may attain their eternal destiny and at the same time promote the common good of society.*³

Before we can write a curriculum plan, we have to consider the purpose of Catholic schools.

Consequent upon the reasons why they are provided, Catholic schools should exhibit the following four fundamental characteristics which promote the permanent principles of Catholic social teaching: the dignity of human life, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity.

Christ at the Centre⁴, p. 10

What does this actually mean? Here are some simplified explanations:

THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN LIFE

Catholic schools should aim to offer to all

“...the opportunity of an education, of training for a job, of human and Christian formation”⁵

What do we want our students to be able to do by the time they leave school? We want all students, regardless of background or starting point, to be educated, ready for the world of work and to have developed them as human beings and as Christians, or as non-Christians with an awareness of Christian faith. Catholic schools accept students of all faiths and none.

Consequently, our curriculum must adequately prepare our students for the world of work.

² *Christ at the Centre* by Mgr Marcus Stock. Catholic Truth Society, published 2012 (Revised, 2nd edition)

³ *Code of Canon Law, Can.795.*

⁴ *Christ at the Centre* by Mgr Marcus Stock. Catholic Truth Society, published 2012 (Revised, 2nd edition)

⁵ *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997, §15.

THE COMMON GOOD

The common good is about students reaching their full, human potential. This means

"...Children and young persons are therefore to be cared for in such a way that their physical, moral and intellectual talents may develop in a harmonious manner, so that they may attain a greater sense of responsibility and a right use of freedom, and be formed to take an active part in social life".⁶

Consequently, our curriculum must be broad and balanced enough to encourage the holistic care of the child, defined by Ron Miller as

"...each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace."⁷

Consequently, our curriculum must encourage the holistic care of the child. In Jesuit schools in particular, this means "Finding God in all things through education and formation for the whole person".⁸

SUBSIDIARITY

In "Christ at the Centre", we learn that

"The principle of subsidiarity recognises that social responsibilities should be carried out at the lowest and most local level of organisation, unless this is beyond their capacity and resources"

Christ at the Centre, p. 12

What does this mean? In one, (perhaps oversimplified) interpretation, it means that we will encourage freedom of thought and independence of our students, intervening only when absolutely necessary.

In short: our curriculum needs to create independent human beings.

SOLIDARITY

In "Christ at the Centre", we learn that

"According to the principle of solidarity, each person, as a member of society, is indissolubly linked to the destiny of society itself" (ibid)

Our curriculum needs to encourage the notion of service to wider society; of tolerance of others; of the notion of being a good citizen.

⁶ Code of Canon Law, Can.795.

⁷ Miller, R. (2000). 'A brief introduction to holistic education', *the encyclopaedia of informal education*. [<http://infed.org/mobi/a-brief-introduction-to-holistic-education/>]. Retrieved: 01/10/2019].

⁸ The Characteristics of Jesuit Education (1986)

Core principles of curriculum at Mount St Mary's College

Our curriculum must

- fully prepare our students for the world of work
 - encourage the holistic care of the child
 - create independent human beings
- encourage the notion of being a good citizen

Key Stage 3 at Mount St Mary's College

Upper Elements (Year 7) 2021-2022

Faculty	Area	Total lessons / 25
Arts (English, Art, Music, Drama)	Aesthetic and Creative, Linguistic	7
Humanities (History, Geography, RS)	Human and Social	5
Languages (French, Spanish, Latin)	Linguistic	3
Practical (DT, IT, Games)	Technological, Physical	4
Sciences (Maths, Science)	Mathematical, Scientific	6

Figures (Year 8) 2021-2022

Faculty	Area	Total lessons / 25
Arts (English, Art, Music, Drama)	Aesthetic and Creative, Linguistic	7
Humanities (History, Geography, RS, PSHE)	Human and Social	5
Languages (French, Spanish, Latin)	Linguistic	3
Practical (DT, IT, Games)	Technological, Physical	4
Sciences (Maths, Science)	Mathematical, Scientific	6

Rudiments (Year 9) 2021-2022

Faculty	Area	Total lessons / 25
Arts (English, Art, Music, Drama)	Aesthetic and Creative, Linguistic	7
Humanities (History, Geography, RS, PSHE)	Human and Social	5
Languages (French, Spanish, Latin)	Linguistic	3
Practical (DT, IT, Games)	Technological, Physical	4
Sciences (Maths, Science)	Mathematical, Scientific	6

Key Stage 3 is compulsory study, with a handful of students with SEND withdrawing from three languages down to two or perhaps one. Our options process runs in year 9 ready for a year 10 start.

Key Stage 4 at Mount St Mary's College

GCSE Timetable Breakdown 2021-2022

Faculty	Area	Total lessons / 25
Core English	Linguistic	4
Core Maths	Mathematical	4
Core Science	Scientific	4
Core RS	Human and Social	2
Option A	Aesthetic and Creative; Linguistic	2
Option B	Aesthetic and Creative; Human and Social; Physical; Technological	2
Option C	Aesthetic and Creative; Human and Social; Scientific	2
Option D	Technological; Linguistic; Human and Social; Scientific	2
Sport/Games	Physical	2
CCF	All areas	1

GCSE Options subjects are as follows:

GCSE Option Blocks 2021-2022

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Drama	Computing	Art	DT
EAL	Drama	Business	EAL
Learning Support	PE	Triple Science	History
French	Geography	Music	Spanish
Spanish	Studies	Studies	Triple Science
Latin			Studies
History			

Some students opt for a studies period instead of their option according to their needs and existing pressures.

Key Stage 5 at Mount St Mary's College

Higher Line (6th Form) students at MSM normally take 4 qualifications. These are either A Levels, CTECs or a combination of the two. Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is also on offer, as is Arts Award. CCF continues for one lesson a week as before, and compulsory Games for 2 lessons a week. The remaining lessons are study periods.

All “areas” are covered, namely: linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative.

A Level Option Blocks 2021-2022

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Chemistry	Maths	Biology	Physics
History	Art	Drama	Music
DT	English Literature	Further Maths	English Language
Psychology	Politics	Business Studies	Computing
Business Studies	PE	Spanish	Economics
	French	RS	Latin
	Classical Civilisation		Geography

We offer two CTEC qualifications (expanding to three from September 2022). Currently we offer CTEC Sport and CTEC Digital Media. From September 2022, there will be a CTEC in Business.

Resits in English and Maths GCSEs are also available.

Specialist Sixth Form Student Support Team

The Sixth Form pastoral team is comprised of tutors with specialist skills and responsibilities, additional to their tutor role. These specialist areas include careers advice, gifted & talented/Oxbridge applications and UCAS Applications.

Academic Pathways & Support

In the Jesuit spirit of *cura personalis* (care for the whole person) all our pupils' are supported in a variety of ways that maximise their personal and educational goals. The type and level of support will be dependent upon the needs of the individual. Our gifted and talented pupils will all be candidates for the College's Academic Scholarship Programme. In addition to the stretch and ambition exhibited by pupils and staff in lessons, the Programme allows a bespoke and subject specific path of academic challenge and development. As an academically inclusive community, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4, Mount St Mary's supports the special educational needs of pupils through the Learning Development Department. Our Learning Development Department offers additional help for all students in their everyday school life so that they can achieve their

full potential. Students accessing Learning Development Department support may have special/additional educational needs, require support with very specific areas of their learning (for example handwriting) or need more pastoral support to develop self-esteem.

Learning Development Department

The curriculum and written schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, EAL and EHC plans. Learning Development provision encapsulates and promotes the SEND Code 2015 with regard to providing suitably for pupils with statements/EHC plans. This is facilitated through curriculum planning at the subject/departmental and co-curricular levels in addition to the Learning Development Department. The following programmes and areas of College provision are coordinated by the Learning Development Department:

- Whole School Mind-set, Mindfulness & Motivation
- Liaison with English as an Additional language department
- Liaison with Health Centre concerning Medical support for learners
- Counselling
- Able, Gifted & Talented
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
- Use of data to promote learning development (e.g. Value Added, Standardised tests, entrance assessment).
- Exam Access Arrangements
- Identification & assessment of needs
- Advising and training staff in the enhancement of teaching & learning

Learning Development also works to raise awareness of learning needs and disabilities throughout the school and serves as a resource for staff, providing advice on how to support students with a wide range of requirements.

Enrichment and Activities Programme

The extra curricular programme at Mount St Mary's is an essential part of school life. The college believes that by participating in a range of academic, practical, physical and cultural sessions throughout the week, our students develop a range of knowledge and skills which will enhance their overall education, encourage academic ambition, promote positive relationships through teamwork and develop their resilience through healthy competition and discussion.

All pupils in years 7 & 8 opt for four one hour enrichment sessions per week, and those in years 9 & 10 opt for three. Examples of enrichment sessions include School Magazine, Gardening Club (the creation of a school garden based on the Jesuit Pupil Profile), Coding, Drama Club, Astronomy, Music Technology, Model Making, Catholic Youth Alpha, STEM Club, Personal Finance, Dance Club, Languages Culture Club, Politics, Debating and Strategy Games. There are also a range of support sessions for Learning Support students.

Our activities programme is open to students in all year groups on a daily basis between 4:30 and 5:30pm. Although some pupils choose to go home at this time, many others are engaged in a range of activities which allow pupils to have fun with their friends or attend

homework clubs so that they can have more free time in the evening. Examples of activities include:

Sport	Gym, Basketball, Weights Room, Speed Training, Netball, Football
Expressive Arts	Mixed Media Work, Senior Choir, 4 x 4 model making, Jazz Band, Stagelights
Cultural/Academic	Book Club, Bellarmine Research Project, Selection Board Preparation, EAL support, Creative Writing, Investors' Club, GCSE Study Skills, Homework Club
Social	Adventure Games, Learning Support Fun & Games

Careers paragraph

Our careers provision helps our pupils to know themselves and to be aware of how they are growing and changing, developing passions, interests and skills and learning how these relate to the world of work and ensures that they become aware of the many opportunities to work and to grow in learning, understanding and competence.

All pupils have access to individual guidance and our presentation of careers is designed to prevent stereotyping of jobs and pathways so that pupils will consider the widest possible range of careers. Our careers policy takes account of:

- the statutory guidance for CEIAG (age 8-13) and Ofsted requirements
- Gatsby Benchmarks
- GDPR and Data Protection Legislation

We work in partnership with CareersInc who provide weekly on-site support to students. Students and parents will have access to the CareersInc Schools Toolkit (offering resources and curriculum materials). Further detail is to be found in our Careers Policy.

Assessment

Heads of Faculty and where relevant Heads of Subject design summative assessments that are clearly linked to the Curriculum Maps and Critical Content. The marking of assessments should include actionable feedback and identify gaps in learning. The outcomes of assessment and its feedback must produce an integral cog in the future lesson planning and intervention. This intervention must be bespoke and question level analysis, although not mandated, is best practice for identifying gaps in cohorts. For summative assessment pieces, the grades from the assessments should help to create a working at grade; this is then reported to parents using the Progress Snapshot template. In Key Stages 4 and 5, the working at grade must be representative of externally set grade boundaries. In Key Stage 3, this is preferential but not always possible so a combination of grade boundaries and professional judgement from other key indicators such as homework and end-of-topic tests can be used. Further detail is to be found in our assessment policy.

Homework

From September 2021, the homework policy has changed at Mount St Mary's and is in a "learning phase" as we seek to make homework more purposeful and less about occupying students' time for the sake of it.

This will be both supported by the current use of critical content booklets (particularly for content heavy subjects), alongside many other forms of learning tasks.

The policy has two main aims:

1. To improve students' knowledge and understanding (fluency) as the building blocks of all learning in all subjects
2. To develop effective independent learning habits

All homework tasks should 'retrieve' and consolidate knowledge that has been taught in lessons from the current scheme of work or any previous schemes (interleaving), or actively prepare students for subsequent lessons. The tasks should go beyond a basic instruction and offer an effective method of learning.

Students independent learning habits will be promoted through weekly learning tasks and direct links will be made to the critical content booklets where necessary. In this sense, students will be revising from the start of Upper Elements continuously, as opposed to new tasks for them to begin in KS4. The long term approach to independent study becomes habitual and the same strategies are embedded in all students by the time they do external examinations in Syntax.

Upper Elements: Upper Elements will be following the same KS3 rotation as outlined below. However, the emphasis on homework tasks in Upper Elements should be on short recall and learning tasks, not long pieces of set work.

Week A	French, Latin, Art , Music, Geography
Week B	History, Spanish, Drama, DT, IT, RS

KS4

All subjects – once a week minimum.

KS5

All subjects – pupils in Higher Line are expected to receive regular homework, both ongoing independent study and lengthier pieces of set work. Therefore, it is an expectation that pupils are generally being set homework after every lesson.

Sanctions

In addition to teacher and pupil support and intervention, whenever a pupil's work is of unacceptable quality or missing for no good reason, they are issued an orange slip (this is done electronically). Examples of this kind of work include:

- Homework not done or not handed in at the specified time.

- Homework done to a low standard with insufficient time or effort.
- Unacceptable quality of class work.
- A test result which is poor due to lack of effort.
- Failure to catch up with missed work (e.g. music lesson, sports fixture) in a reasonable time.

When a pupil's work is inadequate in this way, the teacher will inform the pupil either when the work is being returned, or when it is being collected in (in the case of missing work) and say that an orange slip is being issued. They will also remind the pupil that this means a detention and get the pupil to record the date of detention in their planner.