

# ST. ILLTYD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

## CURRICULUM POLICY

**At St. Illtyd's we offer a curriculum that enables pupils to feel confident, valued and successful, respecting themselves and others as learners whilst also promoting spiritual awareness, moral and cultural values.**

1.1 The school promotes innovative and challenging approaches to teaching and learning. We appreciate that every child is unique and therefore has very different needs. At the heart of what we do is the feeling that we must engage and motivate all pupils both inside and outside the classroom. Approaches to teaching and learning are promoted through Subject Leaders and the Teaching and Learning Advocates.

1.2 Effective learning takes place in well-established learning environments. These learning environments must be based on mutual respect. It is the responsibility of staff and pupils to ensure that all members of the school community are engaged in learning. This is achieved through clearly defined expectations regarding pupils' behaviour and attitudes as well as the provision of a well planned and inclusive curriculum that engages and motivates all pupils.

1.3 The school recognises that to best show we value pupils we must find appropriate ways to celebrate success. Subject areas identify pupils who make outstanding contributions or outstanding progress and recognise this through a mixture of whole school praise strategies. In addition, subject areas recognise achievement through letters home, classroom displays and referral to the Subject Leader and Headteacher for good work. This enables pupils to recognise, share and celebrate their own and others achievements, strengths, talents and expertise.

1.4 All curricular areas promote spiritual awareness through the planning and delivery of lessons. The curriculum encourages spiritual growth by:

- Asking questions about existence and purpose
- Creating a sense of wonder
- Creating a sense of fulfilment
- Creating time for reflection

1.5 Our curriculum is planned to be broad, balanced, flexible, relevant and inclusive, matching the needs of the individual irrespective of gender, race or background.

1.6 Throughout the school we work hard to deliver our curriculum vision. This states that:

At St. Illtyd's Catholic High School we are passionate about creating a curriculum and teaching and learning experiences that enable every student to excel and make rapid progress towards their personal goals, always achieving their potential.

As a school community we believe this is effectively done when:

- We develop a curiosity for knowledge
- We build a range of independent learning skills and develop enquiring minds
- We strive to achieve the highest academic results and to realise the potential of every pupil
- We foster a sense of personal identity and self worth
- We construct our curriculum to allow maximum choice and flexibility, so that programmes in Key Stage 4 and 5 have high personalisation
- We create a climate that stimulates excitement about learning
- We listen, to pupils, colleagues and expert practitioners to inform our practice
- We work hard to contextualise learning
- We recognise that the most effective learning is collaborative and social
- We work towards building community – locally, nationally and internationally in order to develop active citizens of the world
- We foster a life long love of learning, and equip learners to cope with the rapidly changing needs of the technological world in which we live.
- We develop pupils who are spiritually aware of the world they live in.

Ultimately, all these strands combine to give each individual the best life chances and allow them to make choices about their contribution to our community, because this is the basis for a happy and successful life.

This is most effectively achieved through a blend of traditional expectations and creative learning approaches; where learning is planned but space is left for unexpected and emerging ideas.

We believe that the essence of education is that teachers know the young people they teach and what they need to know.

The overall result is a dynamic classroom characterised by effective relationships, and expectation of success and a high degree of challenge in all that is undertaken.

## **CURRICULUM ORGANISATION**

**St. Illtyd's Catholic High School provides a curriculum that enables pupils to work and learn together in a high quality teaching and learning environment with a technological emphasis**

2.1 There is an emphasis on all staff to maintain teaching spaces in such a way that they engage pupils and provide appropriate stimulation. The school recognises that the organisation of teaching spaces contributes to the way pupils learn.

2.2 E-learning is seen as a way to bring even greater creativity into classrooms as well as putting an emphasis on the use of multimedia resources. E-learning helps teachers more fully engage a range of learning through varied stimuli.

E-learning:

- enhances the quality of teaching and learning, leading to accelerated learning by all pupils of all abilities
- supports or enriches traditional teaching methods
- is an effective aid for the teaching of differentiated lessons.

2.3 Pupils are grouped in ways we feel are most appropriate to their age and ability.

**In Year 7:**

- pupils are taught in mixed ability groups for all subjects except English and Maths where they are set by ability
- pupils study English, Mathematics, Science, Religious Education, Computer Science, History, Geography, Technology, Art, Music, P.E., Spanish and Welsh
- pupils in the ASPIRE class (pupils with high levels of ALN) have more lessons of English and Mathematics to support progress in Literacy and Numeracy.

**In Year 8:**

- pupils are taught in mixed ability groups for all except English and Maths
- pupils study English, Mathematics, Science, Religious Education, Computer Science, History, Geography, Technology, Art, Music, P.E., French and Welsh
- pupils in the ASPIRE class (pupils with high levels of ALN) have more lessons of English and Mathematics to support progress in Literacy and Numeracy.

**In Year 9:**

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- pupils are taught in mixed ability groups for all subjects except English and Maths
- pupils study English, Mathematics, Science, Religious Education, Computer Science, History, Geography, Technology, Art, Music, P.E., Spanish and Welsh

### **In Years 10 and 11:**

- all pupils study in sets for English Language and Literature, Mathematics and Science.
- in addition, pupils choose 3 option subjects
- pupils are taught in mixed ability groups for optional subjects
- GCSE optional subjects taught in school include: ICT, Drama, Art, Geography, Additional Science, French, Spanish, Business Studies, History, Resistant Materials, Food Technology, Graphics, PE, Music, Independent Living Skills and a BTEC extended certificate in teamwork and personal development in the community
- all pupils follow GCSE Welsh full course
- External provision is also provided by MPCT where the students study level 2 vocational qualifications

#### **2.4 Within the Compulsory Core Curriculum:**

- English - pupils will study two courses. All pupils study English Language. And English Literature
- Mathematics – all pupils follow two GCSE courses of maths and numeracy
- Science – for 2017/18 pupils follow GCSE core science with Additional Science being available as an option. For 2017/18 all students will follow GCSE science.
- Religious Education – as a faith school all pupils follow GCSE
- Welsh Baccalaureate – skills challenge certificate is delivered.

**2.5 Key Stage 3** - Pupils with ALN receive support either in class or through withdrawal, depending on the degree of need. Pupils with difficulties in literacy will follow a programme of intensive literacy coaching instead of following a course in MFL

**Key Stage 4** - Pupils with ALN receive support either in class or through withdrawal, depending on the degree of need. Pupils with ALN are guided towards appropriate courses that they can access effectively.

**2.6** In Year 9 pupils undertake an options process that helps them make the most appropriate choices of courses for Years 10 and 11. Pupils will choose to follow one of the following pathways:

- GCSE courses in all their subjects
- A mixture of GCSE and vocational courses

The pathway structure is aimed at ensuring that all pupils follow a curriculum tailored to their needs whilst providing appropriate levels of challenge.