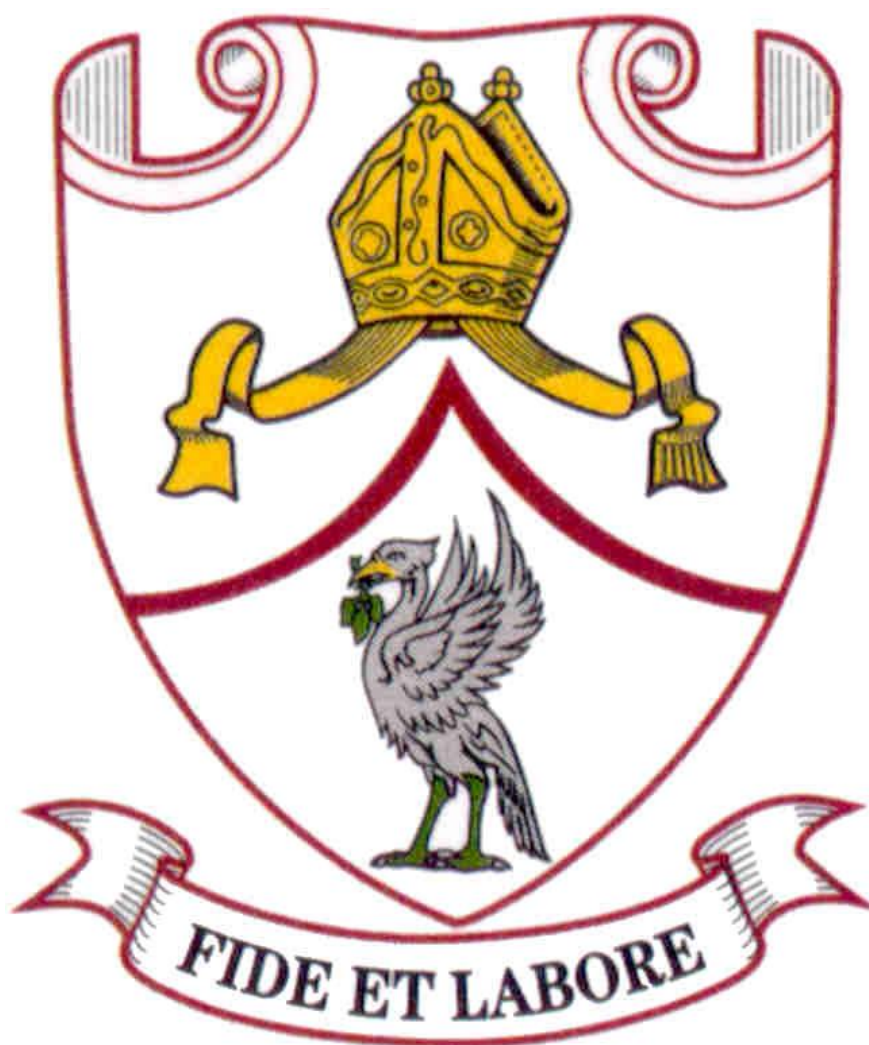


**St Margaret's  
Church of England  
Academy**



**CURRICULUM  
STATEMENT  
2019/2020**

# St Margaret's Curriculum

## Introduction

Our Academy Mission Statement reads as follows:

**Inspired by the knowledge and love of God,  
we all come together to learn  
in a Christian community where we are valued  
for who we are and who we could become.**

This Mission Statement underpins everything we do, including our curriculum. In “*coming together to learn*”, our overarching **intent** is to develop:

- independent, successful learners who enjoy their learning and make strong progress;
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives; and
- responsible citizens who, through their commitment to Christian values, can make a positive contribution to society.

We see our curriculum – what we teach – as being far more than the set of subjects we offer. The learning that takes place in an Assembly, and the learning that takes place because of the way a member of staff deals with an issue in break-time (for example), are both part of our curriculum – just as much as is the learning that takes place in a Geography lesson. Bertrand Russell espoused a similar point of view when he observed: “*More important than the curriculum is the question of the [...] spirit in which the teaching is given.*”

This document therefore sets out how our Mission Statement has provided a clear, coherent rationale for the ambitious, wide-reaching curriculum that we have adopted at St Margaret's.

## Overview: our intent

Because we are “*inspired by the knowledge and love of God*”:

- Religious Studies is an essential part of our curriculum; and
- assemblies are a central part of our provision every day.

Because “*we all come together to learn*”,

- we have a strong pastoral system which:
  - ensures each and every individual is included in the life of our school, and
  - enables all to learn; and
- there is a strong universal element to our curriculum – we aim to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Because “*we are a Christian community*”,

- we have a strong set of Christian values (alongside the British values we all espouse) that shapes our entire provision – our leadership, our academic curriculum and our pastoral curriculum.

Because “*we are valued for who we are*”,

- we have a strong element of personalisation in our curriculum – options in Years 8, 9 and 11, a healthy programme of extra-curricular activities *etc.*

Because “*we are valued for [...] who we could become*”,

- we have a substantial Careers programme and a Learning for Life (PSHCE) programme both of which prepare our learners to be confident individuals and responsible citizens.

### Universal offer vs personalisation

Striking the right balance between an entitlement curriculum and personalisation is a key decision for any school. Our curriculum offer balances these two demands as follows:

- An increasing number of our students are classified as ‘disadvantaged’. We therefore have a strong universal offer of a largely academic ‘EBacc’ curriculum (see below) for all, as we believe this will open doors for all our learners’ futures – ensuring all “*are valued for who [...] they] could become*”. For example, we ensure all students can study two languages from Year 7, or three Sciences in Key Stage 4, regardless of prior attainment. And our extra-curricular offer is also significant, allowing sporting and cultural opportunities (significantly subsidised for disadvantaged students) that broaden minds, horizons and aspirations.
- We are determined to offer all our pupils the right support to enable them to follow this largely academic curriculum; our work with SEND and disadvantaged students is therefore key.
- We aim for increasing numbers of students to take a basket of GCSEs that meet the English Baccalaureate, and in order to support this we are realigning our language provision to concentrate on French and Spanish (not German) – as this offers better progression from the offer of our 60+ feeder primaries. This will take time, however; we are aware of the need, and are actively taking steps, to accelerate uptake in English Baccalaureate subjects so we can meet the Government’s national target of 75% of current Year 7 pupils studying an English Baccalaureate in their Key Stage 4, and 90% of our September 2022 Year 7 cohort.
- At the same time, we believe in offering routes allowing for young people to realise their potential in specific areas – valuing them for “*who [they] are*”. Recently purpose-built Drama and Food/Nutrition rooms have enabled learners to take courses in these areas for the first time, the latter proving to be particularly popular with some cohorts of youngsters. Recognising the dearth of entrepreneurs locally (11.9% of the north-west’s workforce is self-employed, compared to 15.1% nationally), we have introduced Business Studies as an option Year 9; recognising the importance of the visual arts to the local economy, we have introduced Photography as a stand-alone subject in Year 9 too. Post-16 our ‘A’-level and (especially) our applied/‘T’-level offer is constantly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of each cohort. Unusually, we also offer post-16 routes for SEND pupils who are not yet ready to leave school through our Sixth Form entry procedures; we have found this is an effective way of ensuring such pupils are prepared effectively for their next steps, and remain in education and/or training.

We believe we have struck the right balance between these two competing ideals, and that our aspirations for the future in this regard are right for our pupils too.

### Details

The following pages contain summaries of our intent in each area outlined in our ‘Overview’ above – alongside details of how we **implement** each element, and the **impact** we know it has.

Stephen Brierley

Principal

August 2019

Because we are “*a Christian community*”,  
**we have a strong set of Christian values... that shapes our entire provision –  
our leadership, our academic curriculum, our pastoral curriculum and our pedagogy.**

Intent

- Every decision, whether made by an individual or a group, whether arrived at by design or by default, is driven by the decision-maker’s values.
- It follows, therefore, that no institution providing an education for young people can do so in a ‘values vacuum’. Every school has its values, be they explicit or implicit. And all those who interact with a school, especially its students, will learn from the values they see in operation.
- St Margaret’s is an Anglican school. Our values are explicit, and explicitly Christian. We intend for all of those who interact with our school to learn something about the values we hold dear. That learning will often be implicit (St Francis of Assisi instructed his followers to “*Preach the gospel, and if necessary use words*”), but it is no less powerful (indeed, arguably it is more powerful) because of that.
- The eight Christian values that we intend should pervade every aspect of our school life are Compassion, Endurance, Forgiveness, Friendship, Justice, Peace, Trust and Wisdom. Our students will learn how those values will help them navigate life’s journey, and create a fairer world.

Implementation

We teach our eight values explicitly and implicitly.

- Explicitly, each value forms the theme of our Worship for a week. Assemblies, therefore, speak directly to each value and apply it to students’ lives. Form Worship addresses each value too, some supported by centrally-supplied resources. Each value is referenced explicitly in (*eg*) Learning for Life and Religious Studies lessons, as appropriate. A start-of-Year-7 ‘Our Community’ project also focuses explicitly on them.
- Implicitly, we recognise that (for example) how we respond when a student says “*Sorry*” will teach them about the nature and Christian exercise of forgiveness. As and when appropriate, this is explicitly discussed with staff; for example, the issue of forgiveness and how (as adults) we respond to an apology has been addressed directly in *Weekly Bulletin* 225, an information sheet that is sent to all staff. The implicit teaching of our values is something that derives (a) from our ethos, and (b) from the lead-by-example culture of leadership at St Margaret’s: the Principal, for example, teaches himself (helping to engender Trust when teaching issues are discussed); requests for time off from staff (*eg* an afternoon off to arrange care for a terminally-ill relative) are considered favourably, demonstrating Compassion; *etc.* It also derives, to a lesser extent, from our academic curriculum: the value of Endurance is reinforced in Year 11 and in the way we approach the end of terms, *etc.*

Impact

- We know it is inherently difficult to ‘measure’ how much our students embody Justice or Wisdom. Nonetheless we take pride in the frequent comments we receive from (*eg*) work placement managers and members of the public about our students’ conduct in the wider community.
- We do annually measure the attitudes of some students through an attitude questionnaire, as part of our Pupil Premium work. Changes over time are tracked. Denominational inspections (and an inter-inspection Diocesan check-up) also rigorously examine our impact in this area.

Author: S Brierley/A Penketh

Because we are “*inspired by the knowledge and love of God*”,  
**Religious Studies is a central part of our curriculum.**

Intent

- In a city famous for its ecumenism (in both religion and sport!), we see RS as being critical in helping to educate for dignity and respect, encouraging all to live together well. By studying RS at SMA, students will further develop their understanding of what it means to **BELONG** to a religion, what the key **BELIEFS** are of that religion and how an adherent of that religion may **BEHAVE** as a result of those beliefs.
- The ‘big ideas’ we teach are: God; Creation; The Fall; The People of God; The Incarnation; The Gospel; Salvation; and The Kingdom of God.

Implementation

- In **Key Stage 3**, our knowledge-rich curriculum is based on Diocese’s ‘Illuminating Pathways’ scheme. Topics fit with times in the calendar (*eg* ‘Belonging’ at the start of Year 7). Content includes Belonging to the Christian faith; the Bible; Jesus; Places of Worship; Holy Books (building on previous work); Leaders/Special People. Given their increasing ability to abstract, philosophical questions (*eg* the Nature of God) are introduced later in the Stage. Biblical literacy and its influences on both Christians and Jews today pave the way for Key Stage 4 study.
- By the end of **Key Stage 4** learners will demonstrate a deep understanding of Christianity’s and Judaism’s key beliefs, including how different traditions interpret their Holy Books and apply them to modern-day life. Religious responses to moral issues develop these applications further.
- In **Key Stage 5**, students apply ideas underpinning Schools of Philosophical Thought to ethical dilemmas, and analyse Philosophical Concepts through Religious Language, Conscience and Meta Ethics. Students will explore more deeply the interrelationship between Christianity and Feminist Theology as well as that between Christianity and Science (as many of our students go on to study Science at University).
- Sequencing and Assessment: We sequence our curriculum using ‘Spiral Learning’, revisiting topics throughout the year/Key Stages, making links with prior learning and the ‘big ideas’ (see ‘Intent’ above). This form of learning helps ensure long-term retention of knowledge within our subject, as does our linking of ‘Ten Facts’ homeworks with the content of current RS lessons. (Reading homeworks are also set). In this way we systematically check learners’ understanding and retention. We use low stakes testing and questioning as part of our Responsive Teaching. Within each lesson students use Green Pen to correct and enhance their work. A summative assessment concludes each unit.
- All resources are shared centrally. We make good use of resources from the Diocese and ensure the content is accessible for all.
- Guest speakers (from a range of Christian traditions) are invited into school. We take part in a number of national competitions and initiatives.

Impact

- In this Department, we evaluate the development of the student ‘holistically’ and recognise the impact of explicitly making connections between our Christian Values and appropriate Life Skills. Pupils’ commitment (*eg*) to charity and to volunteering reflects their learning in RS.
- There are, therefore, several ways in which we measure how well we have achieved our *intent* – most obviously, our student’s external exam results; but we also evaluate the impact of our curriculum through an annual Pupil Voice survey and their enjoyment/engagement over the year.

Author: K Harding

Because we are “*inspired by the knowledge and love of God*”,  
**assemblies are a central part of our provision every day.**

Intent

- Our vision for the education of young people at St Margaret’s is deeply Christian. Through our vision statement we aspire that all those who learn here will leave us able to live “*life in all its fullness*”, as Jesus put it (John 10:10) – so they might fully become the people they were made to be. Outside a full academic curriculum, therefore, through our programme of assemblies and form periods we will develop rounded young people by:
  - sharing with them Christian values which will equip them for their journey through life;
  - reinforcing these values by marking different religious festivals, as appropriate; and
  - fostering in them the attitudes and values employers seek, so they can make a positive contribution in their communities and in society at large.
- We fully recognise the privileged position the (Anglican) Church has enjoyed, over the centuries, in the provision of education in this country, and are constantly mindful of the obligations that arise from that privilege. Our full recognition of these obligations guides us through any potentially controversial areas for faiths schools (such as creationism and homosexuality). But as far as Assemblies are concerned, alongside the Christian values mentioned above, we recognise and celebrate British values, interpreting them in the context of our faith.

Implementation

- We devote more time than many schools (25 minutes per day on four days of the week) to our daily act of worship. This time is generally split between Form Worship (at least two days a week) and Assemblies (up to two days a week). A ‘theme for the week’ ensures full coverage of the values and attitudes we espouse – though the theming is flexible, allowing us to respond to national or local affairs as and when appropriate (eg October 2019 assemblies on ‘Tolerance’ were a response to racist chanting in a Bulgaria vs England football match). Form Tutors are supported appropriately in their delivery of Form Worship. Assemblies are delivered by staff and outside speakers (from a variety of Christian, and sometimes Other World Faith, traditions) in school and in the parish church of St Anne’s, conveniently situated next door to school. Music features in each Assembly (generally through the singing of a hymn) to underline the connection between the Arts and matters spiritual.

Impact

- By its very nature, the impact of the ethos of a school cannot reliably be quantified in any positivist way (not least because of the problem in disaggregating what can be attributed to our influence from what can be attributed to familial influences – many of our pupils come from committedly Christian or Muslim families). Nonetheless, we are committed to evaluating both the quality of our Assembly programme (for example, through independent observation) and the impact it has on our pupils (for example, through their commitment to our volunteering programme, and through the health of our Christian Union and provision for Muslim prayer) as reliably as we are able to. Our 5-yearly denominational inspection is also central to our evaluation of the effectiveness of this area of our work (in 2017, it was judged to be ‘good’).

Author: A Penketh

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**there is a strong universal element to our curriculum:  
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the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.**

## **ENGLISH**

### Intent

- Our vision is to enable students to become readers and writers for life. Their study of English will foster a diverse understanding of the world in which we live. They will experience the very best that Literature has to offer and grasp how it can enhance their own lives.
- We want students to blossom as fluent speakers, building a repertoire of spoken language skills that will allow them to be articulate communicators and ardent listeners. We want them to be fervid readers who read, and respond ably to, a range of challenging texts from different eras and genres. They will build the skill of using critical interpretations that will inform their own personal responses. They will write coherently and accurately in a range of formats. We aim to develop a passion, interest and curiosity that extends well beyond the page. Students’ English skills will help them access other subjects. In studying English, their empathy will challenge them to become better citizens.

### Implementation

- At **Key Stage 3** we cover formal and creative reading, writing and enrichment (specifically targeting diverse texts). We also embed the skills required for GCSE study but without making the focus GCSE. We ensure a high-frequency focus on subject-specific vocabulary, interleaving skills and alternating between reading and writing. We finish with our Shakespeare/drama study to ensure a progression of challenge. Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is vertically structured so that we are constantly revisiting, refining and expanding. For example, we teach poetry to all year groups in the same half-term to allow us to calibrate the level of challenge and complexity both of text and response. Our use of ongoing assessments through responsive teaching and feedback allows for the monitoring and embedding of long-term knowledge.
- In **Key Stage 4** and **Key Stage 5** we use AQA’s specifications for English Language and English Literature to inform content but continue to use the same approaches of interleaving, revisiting, engaging and challenging. Formative and summative assessments have an exam focus.
- We use questioning, responsive feedback, re-creative activities, and whole-class feedback on extended pieces to maximise progress. Our collaboratively-produced **resources** revolve around challenging texts that we choose to build depth, diversity and cultural capital. We encourage independent reading and research, and offer a poetry club, creative writing club, theatre trips where possible *etc.*

### Impact

- We use formative assessments during each scheme to monitor ongoing achievements and have moved to a summative assessment at the end of each year. In Key Stage 4 we use Comparative Judgement (and results from external examinations) to measure our impact.
- As well as using data from assessments, we use discussion and student voice to measure the extent to which we have achieved our intent.

Author: S Bell

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## READING

### Intent

- We aim to build a life-long love of reading in our students, enabling them to become confident readers who treasure the written word.
- We aim to introduce students to as wide a variety of genres as possible to build their cultural capital and their appreciation of ‘different’.
- We aim to show our students that reading must not be the preserve of English lessons, or even the preserve of academia – but that it is relevant to all fields of human endeavour, including the social and the personal; and that reading has genuine relevance to any individual’s life.

### Implementation

- We have already implemented a number of schemes and initiatives to meet this intent.
  - The Learning Resource Centre is a hub for readers – popular at breaks and lunch-times, and morning form-times too
  - A Year 12 Reading Buddies programme helps weaker readers in Year 7 become more confident (and has benefits for Year 12 students too)
  - Our SENDCo also uses catch-up funds to support developing readers in Year 7 through software packages such as *Lexia*
  - Students find that regular visits from authors (averaging two per year) are often inspirational and reinvigorate their reading habits
  - Pupils from a local Primary School visit us on World Book Day each year; these and other events build the profile of reading in school
  - English teachers now devote one lesson in every six to Reading for Pleasure. This includes discussion about how the reading can be applied
  - The new Year 7 Homework programme includes half-an-hour of reading for every student nightly, with quality-assurance to check it’s done
- However, we are not yet satisfied with our work in this area. In particular, reading provision in Key Stage 4 is not yet a strength of our work (despite its strategic importance to us in achieving our intent, as outlined above. Our Academy Improvement Plan sets out that we will also:
  - arrange a Year 10 Reading Survey, the results of which will feed into a new post-14 Book Club, facilitated by Year 12 students; and
  - revitalise our work to promote a culture where all are readers, including staff (eg by refreshing the “*I am currently reading...*” posters)

### Impact

We will know whether we have realised our intent through the extent to which reading features in students’ priorities. How often is the Learning Resource Centre over-full? What will the results of the new Year 10 survey show us about how embedded reading for pleasure amongst this particular group of Key Stage 4 students? How effective will the Year 7 Homework programme be in encouraging students to read? How readily will Year 7 students engage with the extra provision for reading in their English lessons – and to what extent will we be able to involve other subjects in this work, in line with our intent? At present the available indicators show a good level of reading, but our ambition is for more.

Author: S Bell/S Haworth/D Silverstone



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## **MATHS**

### Intent

- Mathematics pervades every aspect of life including family life and all careers. A secure foundation in maths is essential for future well-being.
- This philosophy, allied to an unshakeable belief that success in mathematics is possible for every child, leads us to a curriculum that embeds high expectations (with, *eg*, flexible setting arrangements); we aspire to differentiate through depth, not content.
- This philosophy also dictates that as far as possible, we seek to use Maths in, and apply Maths to, meaningful, real-world contexts. This means that, for example, we teach loci without referring to unrealistically-tethered goats!
- We believe that it is essential for students to develop mathematical thinking, in and out of the classroom, in order to fully master mathematical concepts, and that the correct use of mathematical language throughout their maths learning is an important strategy to achieve this.

### Implementation

- We teach Number (including Ratio and Proportional Reasoning), Geometry/Measure/Shape/Space, Algebra and Handling Data in both **Key Stage 3 and 4**. Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics modules are offered **post-16** at Level 3 (including at Further Mathematics level).
- We believe that a deep appreciation of the number system, and place value, is foundational to all mathematics – so these topics are prioritised.
- Beyond that, our objectives are cumulative. Pupils should continually use and apply their prior knowledge alongside new learning. This continual recapping supports their acquisition of a deep conceptual understanding of how each topic interacts with others in mathematics.
- We also believe that a problem-solving approach to the learning of mathematics is not only the best way of acquiring new mathematical skills and knowledge, but also the best way of pupils use their maths in novel contexts. Learning to solve problems takes time; but by structuring our **Key Stage 3** curriculum so that all pupils in a year-group are learning the same content at the same time, they have longer to focus on each area.
- In every lesson, we aim to check learners’ understanding from responsive feedback, responsive questioning and other appropriate techniques.

### Impact

- In **Years 7 to 10**, we assess the impact of our implementation using pre-unit and post-unit summative tests and cumulative end-of-year exams.
- We determine the extent to which we have achieved our intent by the quality of student feedback, post-16 uptake and external exam results.

Author: J O’Halloran

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## **SCIENCE**

### Intent

- We value students for the global citizens, the stewards of creation, that they will become; we believe all students must understand the wider consequences of their day-to-day decisions. The chief intent underpinning our Science curriculum, therefore, is for students to develop a clear understanding of the major issues our world is facing, and the science behind their causes and solutions. Students will master key concepts in the three Sciences, and examine them within the context of current global issues such as pollution, food sustainability, climate change *etc.*
- We believe Science comes to life when it is applied to the real world. Linking students’ learning to recent/historical global events strengthens engagement, provides context and purpose to learning, kindles passion and deepens understanding. Applying knowledge to practical contexts (*eg* understanding electricity bills, choosing a car wisely, the importance of screening) does this too, and develops students’ independence.
- Our practical activities ensure pupils understand the purpose of scientific enquiry and gain the skills needed to draw valid conclusions.

### Implementation

- Many of our students study Science post-16. Pre-14, therefore, we group topics into themes within each of the three sciences (*eg* biodiversity, health; acid rain, atmosphere; forces and matter). From this they learn about areas of specialism within ‘Science’ that they may study further.
- Our topics are heavily sequenced to ensure students understand the fundamentals before applying them. As we teach a topic higher up the school prior knowledge is tested to see how well it has been retained. Various forms of assessment (*eg* hinge questions) check learners’ understanding during teaching. Our resources are generated collaboratively ensuring all students enjoy a high-quality, challenging learning experience. Area specialists play in ensuring misconceptions are addressed. Resources are regularly reviewed once they have been used.
- We employ an evidence-based, common pedagogy, *eg* using ‘no hands up’ and promoting deeper responses using SMA Responsive Feedback.
- Our intent focuses on the application of Science, so we help pupils research and read around current affairs, *eg* by using literature from books and articles for homework. We regularly engage with local Universities (trips out, visitors in) and lay on extra-curricular STEM activities.

### Impact

- We assess the impact of our teaching through Responsive Feedback, reviewing work each lesson *eg* to identify misconceptions. Low-stake quizzes supplement end-of-unit key fact tests, which are repeated later to ensure retention. In keeping with our intent, application style questions also feature in end-of-unit tests. Main tests with a deep synoptic element, similar to GCSE papers, complete our measures of impact.

Author: S Burns

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## **DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY**

### Intent

Our students are the problem-solvers of the future – the designers, the engineers, the nutritionists, the makers. We will stoke a passion for design, engineering and their environment, so our students have the confidence to tackle any such problem, and revel in the creativity they thus release.

Whilst our priority is the development of the learner (people are more important than things), our subject is also about the development of material. Designing, making, and using products is one of the biggest parts of human existence. Through our contribution to the overall curriculum, our students will become discriminating, informed and innovating product-users, autonomous and creative problem-solvers, individually and in teams.

### Implementation

The design process is therefore a key element of our curriculum in **Key Stage 3**. We teach technical knowledge (*eg* of CAD/CAM, of materials and of manufacturing systems) to deepen students’ appreciation of the design process. We regularly revisit and deepen students’ understanding of key ideas a spiral curriculum (delivered in a carousel), which is embedded into a series of progressively more challenging projects.

We offer two pathways **post-14**. GCSEs and an ‘A’-level focus further on the design process, coupled with a practical element where we nurture each student’s expression of their creativity. Technical knowledge is included to facilitate these elements. Alternatively, a BTEC pathway (at **Key Stage 4 and 5**) focuses on Engineering – its sectors and products, and the mathematical/scientific principles that underpin Engineering endeavours.

Frequent, low-stakes assessment is a key feature of our curriculum. Whilst end-of-project summative feedback is important, lesson-by-lesson formative feedback is crucial in ensuring students progress as the creative problem-solvers of the future and as passionate advocates for design.

We believe strongly in producing, and sharing, our own resources, particularly at **Key Stage 3**. As an experienced team, over the years we have carefully developed and refined our own project ideas to fit, as closely as we can, our curriculum intent as stated above.

Our extra-curricular offer is a vital element of our work to stoke students’ passion for Design Technology, so we offer a number of clubs/trips *etc.*

### Impact

Whilst we naturally strive for all our students to achieve the best possible examination results – as this is the surest way for them to progress to further study and careers in this subject area – we also deeply value students’ enjoyment and enthusiasm for our subject. This will partly be evident from the numbers choosing the subject through the options systems, but student surveys, their effort grades, and extra-curricular commitment are also strong sources of evidence through which we can judge the extent to which we have met our stated intent.

Author: G Richards

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## **FOOD & NUTRITION**

### Intent

- Food is an essential part of life. The study of Food is thus an essential part of any education. In our context, the study of Food not only offers unparalleled opportunities to engage those less enthused by more academic subjects, but can also make a singular contribution to the school’s pastoral curriculum. We will do this by creating a uniquely nurturing environment, a small-scale “*Christian community*” (as the whole-school Mission Statement expresses it), that supports mental, physical and emotional health – not least because of the immediate feelings of satisfaction and achievement that pupils can receive within a lesson from practical (and edible) work. That is our vision for Food at St Margaret’s.
- It is our intention that pupils will take pride and ownership of their practical work. By exploring a range of foods they will increase their tastes, will learn about different cultures and will develop skills which will enable them to live healthily and become independent, functional citizens. They will thus become confident, informed consumers with a passion for selecting, preparing and making good food for themselves and others.
- We also recognise the increasing number of opportunities for careers in Hospitality and Catering locally (it is a growth area of our regional economy). Our curriculum is planned to allow all learners can access such opportunities (*eg* through a new Key Stage 5 course in 2019/2020).

### Implementation

- Pre-14, we teach nutrition, food commodities and cooking skills, focussing on mastering practical techniques safely in order to progress. In line with our intent to open possible career paths, post-14 we look more at the Hospitality and Catering sector, again with a practical focus.
- We use hinge questions to identify gaps in learning, topic tests to strengthen recall, and flash cards and knowledge organisers to boost retention.
- As a one-teacher Department, strong links with other schools (*eg* through regular meetings) enable quality resources to be shared.
- The unique nature of our subject inspires a distinctive, ambitious and inspiring pedagogy. Tasting sessions, practical lessons, visits and demonstrations ensure learners gain practical, industry-standard skills and knowledge (again, preparing students for possible future careers).
- Our teaching enables students to make cross-curricular links – especially with Science, but we also enhance their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Trips and visits (*eg* to the Good Food show) are a key way of teaching students about the wider world of food, and its social and moral aspects.

### Impact

- Assessment and tracking show how well pupils retain knowledge. Pre-14, pupils must master a skill to move on, and non-progression is rare.
- Pupil voice and recruitment show we are creating a “*nurturing environment*” (see ‘Intent’). Students often show other staff their practical work.

Author: R Moore

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## LANGUAGES

### Intent

- By studying another language, students gain a deeper knowledge of language systems (including that of their own), a broader knowledge and understanding of other cultures and ways of thinking, and a sense of empowerment that will enhance “*who [...they] could become*”. Our curriculum ensures they benefit from increased enjoyment of travel and other cultures, enhanced cognitive skills (in listening, speaking, reading and writing), improved employment prospects – and a growing love for languages that continues beyond school, whatever their chosen career.
- Students study French and Spanish: France is our nearest neighbour and (so French opens many career paths), and many students visit Spain given its popularity as a holiday destination for Liverpudlians. This choice also maximises the opportunities for progression from primaries.

### Implementation

- Not all students study Languages post-14. So pre-14, we equip students for life-long language learning (by reinforcing the basics of a language system), and for basic linguistic competence to support future foreign travel. Topics include Personal Identity, Tourist Information, *etc.*
- Post-14, students study themes linking more to future study and employment opportunities – *eg* through a broad theme of Identity and Culture.
- Our course choices focus on phonics and translation, integrating grammatical structures and content as well as regularly recycling vocabulary.
- Lessons are designed to begin with recall questions which focus on the previous lesson’s learning as well as material covered in previous units. Indeed, checking learners’ understanding is central to the implementation of our curriculum – both in lessons and over time. This is done through targeted questioning and the use of hinge questions; responsive teaching and feedback are regular features of our lessons. Students are set regular vocabulary tests and low-stakes, end-of-unit quizzes. Assessments in all four skills take place at the end of each module.
- In line with our intent, we choose resources to immerse students in foreign culture (*eg* films, songs) – and to motivate, challenge, and enhance understanding. We use ICT heavily to revisit prior learning and to promote engagement, to help engender a love of language learning for life.
- We further seek to inspire a passion for our subject through a range of activities outside the classroom, including educational day trips, a weekly French film club, trips abroad, cookery classes, baking competitions and an annual week-long celebration of languages.

### Impact

- For our academic intent, we judge impact through changes in students’ long-term memories, measured through exams and end-of-module tests.
- We also judge the impact we have made in inspiring a love of language learning through student voice and option-process uptake data.

Author: W Monaghan

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## **GEOGRAPHY**

### Intent

- No-one can claim to be a global citizen without knowing about our planet – its physical features, and how humans interact with it. Global citizens also need to make judgements about geopolitical and societal issues locally, nationally and internationally, and to identify patterns in spatial distributions. Our vision is thus to ensure all pupils appreciate how interactions between our planet and humankind shape everyday life.
- We also consider that we need to embed social, moral, cultural and spiritual values in our curriculum, *eg* by considering the social implications of interdependence or of global sustainability. Our choice of topics (in all Key Stages) is governed by our vision and by these considerations.
- We also aim to foster a love for the study of our subject – not just for the period in which our students are being formally educated, but for life.

### Implementation

- Our strategy in Key Stage 3 is to teach essential key skills/themes (*eg* Industrial Change in Year 8) and contextualise them *via* a study of place. In Year 9, we revisit skills from Years 7 and 8 (through deliberate practice) and study Hazards and The Living World as a bridge to GCSE.
- Post-14, we study compulsory units first and optional units later to allow for synoptic knowledge and understanding to develop. The choice of units is design to maximise progression (*eg* from Urban issues at GCSE to Contemporary Urban Environments at ‘A’-level). Post-16 we study a range of challenging units (*eg* Global Systems and Governance) in order to deepen still further students’ appreciation of our subject.
- Key skills and concepts are revisited frequently across successive Key Stages in order to facilitate long-term information retention. We find this helps students clarify the underpinning theories and build their understanding. This can only be done collaboratively (as each teacher relies on colleagues’ work in previous years) – so all resources within our subject are planned, agreed by all, and held centrally for all to access.
- Learner understanding and progress is checked using responsive feedback and a variety of standardised assessments. We encourage additional independent learning *via* (*eg*) the Seneca and BBC bitesize learning websites, and a variety of online resources available on the school website.
- No Geographer would want to study our world without seeing it in person. Fieldwork is an essential part of our curriculum. A range of one-day visits and popular residential visits are arranged annually (*eg* to Llandudno and the Trafford Centre), with longer trips to (*eg*) Iceland.

### Impact

- Performance in formal exams will show the extent to which we have been able to implant Geographical ideas into pupils’ long-term memories.
- We also consider pupils’ thirst for knowledge, their enthusiasm, and option uptake, which show if we have fostered a love of Geography.

Author: K Williams

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## **HISTORY**

### Intent

- We know the narrative of human achievement from prehistory till now is at once deeply compelling, deeply engaging and deeply instructional. We yearn to share that with our students, up-skilling them to think independently about the evidence that shapes our understanding of the past.
- The content of our curriculum has been chosen primarily to inspire that deep, inquisitive, curious engagement. Valuing students for “*who they could become*”, we challenge them with difficult or controversial topics (such as race relations, moral/social crimes), to produce thoughtful and reflective citizens who will tackle injustice and challenge prejudice. And in order to equip the amateur and professional historians of the future, we grow students’ historical skills through enquiry-based depth (*eg* Whitechapel 1870-1900), and breadth (*eg* Crime, 1000-2019) studies.
- We recognise the vital role History plays in cementing British values and in growing cultural capital. In Key Stage 3, an entitlement curriculum ensures all students study our culturally rich city and its role in the world, the changing nature of British society and governance, and finally Modern World History. Post-14 we revisit the political, socio-economic and cultural developments that underpin how we understand the past.

### Implementation

- Given our intent to grow students’ historical skills, we deliver our curriculum primarily through the study of historical evidence (pictorial and written). All students (including SEND learners) have access to similar, appropriately-scaffolded resources, quality-assured by a subject lead.
- Given our intent to inspire inquisitive engagement, we routinely use a wide variety of resources – digital media/podcasts, artefacts, *etc*
- Given our intent to grow students’ cultural capital, we offer trips into our history-rich City regularly (*eg* students investigate the Trans-Atlantic Triangle themselves). Visits abroad to thought-provoking destinations such as a German concentration camp and the Vatican supplement trips to Debating Competitions, a Mock Trial competition and the European Youth Parliament – underlining the British values we promote.

### Impact

- We measure impact through various assessments (see below) and through an end-of-year student voice survey – *eg* our 2018 survey showed students felt their voices were heard, reflecting our whole school’s inclusive ethos. Our choice of content engenders an appreciation of the Christian and British values we espouse; and by deliberately setting students challenging tasks, we impact on their resilience and confidence.
- We are careful to assess ‘impact’ against our intent as well as against national test outcomes. Year 7 assessment includes a research study and a debate. Summative tests are supplemented in Year 9 by monthly continuous assessments and a source-based exam (in line with our intent).

Author: P Keenan

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## **ART**

### Intent

We believe that Art is essential to every child’s development. Regardless of talent or ability, Art facilitates the development of creativity. It offers opportunities for students to express ideas, thoughts and feelings in an innovative manner, to forge links with the world in which we live, and to ask (and begin to answer) thought-provoking questions about the world too. Our curriculum's aim, therefore, is to be as creatively inspiring, innovative and diverse as possible, whilst making broader links across other subject areas. We will do this by supporting, engaging and challenging all students, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design.

This driving ambition also applies to our Photography courses, introduced in response to local industry needs to maximise students’ access to visual creativity (as, *eg*, some students less able to express themselves through drawing can still demonstrate great creativity photographically).

We believe passionately in the power of Art to enfranchise disadvantaged students (such as those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, or those with mental health issues) and are proud to be at the forefront of innovative bespoke provision for such students especially post-16.

### Implementation

At **Key Stage 3**, students will develop their skills and techniques through their research and analysis of the work of artists, designers and craftspeople. Through their sketchbooks, they will work from direct observation to learn new techniques and processes. They will develop their ability to analyse the work of artists and designers, using their analysis to inspire their own ideas. Studying units of work covering formal elements, conflict, illustration, anatomy, surrealism, architecture and portraiture, they will use a variety of media to develop their skills.

In **Key Stages 4 and 5**, students follow a thematic approach to their studies in both Art and Photography, closely linked to GCSE assessment objectives. Projects are designed by individual staff to be interpreted by the whole ability range within each (mixed-ability) group. In Art, the exploration of drawing in its many forms is investigated thoroughly. Each unit of study includes the opportunity to study an aspect of critical and contextual studies, enhancing students’ abilities to develop ideas and explore different types of art forms from western and non-western sources.

### Impact

We expect all students to achieve their maximum potential. We monitor their progress against their starting points, exposing them to continuous assessment throughout the year. This assessment covers observational drawing, the development of ideas, critical studies and final outcomes.

Our students produce extremely creative and individual artwork that can be seen displayed throughout the school and beyond: some of our students’ Photography work, for example, has been selected to be displayed in the office of Liverpool’s Chief Education Officer.

Author: S Davidson



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## MUSIC

### Intent

- Music pervades our lives. An understanding of music will therefore deepen any individual’s experience of life on a daily basis.
- Music is a vital medium of human creativity. Appreciating it (and its history) is thus an essential element of any human being’s cultural capital.
- Music pacifies, invigorates, excites, soothes, heals – and it is a profoundly social activity too. We know that expressing oneself through music, or becoming absorbed by another individual’s creative expression of themselves, brings real benefits for mental and emotional health.
- We therefore intend for all students to gain a lifelong love and understanding of music through its theory and practice. We intend that each student will learn to be deeply musical – to understand fully the elements of music and apply them to singing, composing, listening, improvising, and engaging with the wider opportunities we offer. Most of all, we intend for each student to want to improve their own ability to express themselves musically, which can be achieved by developing within them a passion for multiple musical genres and disciplines.

### Implementation

- Pre-14, we teach through topics, each centred on elements of music. At the start of each year we revisit Rhythm and Pitch to check the basic elements of music are deeply understood. Pedagogically we teach through singing, playing instruments, groupwork, critical engagement, *etc.*
- Our choice of topics reflects our intent to equip students with the cultural capital they need for a lifelong appreciation of human creativity in this field. The Blues, Holst’s *Planets*, the Orchestra, Chinese music and Music Technology (*eg* Cubase) all feature in our Schemes of Learning. The topics are sequenced to maximise progression from previous topics/years/Key Stages – *eg* composing starts with small 8-bar tasks. Year 9 is a transition year; our choice of topics overlaps with typical GCSE areas of study, whilst at the same time building on work from Year 8.
- Resources are chosen to reflect the availability of musical instruments. Regular investment (*eg*, this year, in ICT) ensures variety and quality.
- Extra-curricular music is foundational to our work. Events throughout the year (*eg* the school’s Cathedral Carol Service) enable us to introduce hundreds of students to the rich experience of public performance. Regular visits to school by professional musicians are equally important.

### Impact

- Our developing pedagogy is enabling us better to assess the impact of our work and to modify accordingly (using, *eg*, Responsive Feedback).
- However, just as important to us is the number of students opting for Music post-14, and the number participating in extra-curricular activities.

Author: C Smith

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## **DRAMA**

### Intent

- We believe Drama offers students a unique opportunity to develop their communication skills and self-confidence, allowing them to come across as competent and assured in their daily lives. Our subject’s skills enable them to be even more ambitious in “*who they could become*”.
- We intend all students should understand theatrical performance skills and develop the self-belief to put them into practice live on stage.
- Drawing on their reading, and performances, of the work of 20<sup>th</sup> Century (and other) playwrights, students will develop a deeper understand of how drama mirrors life, and will use that knowledge and their imaginations to devise drama around various themes and topics.
- Drama can make a potent contribution to the pastoral curriculum (*eg* students’ learning about bullying/antisocial behaviour). We exploit this.

### Implementation

- The Drama curriculum is structured specifically around eight key performance skills that run through every topic and script covered. Scripts and devised tasks get gradually harder and allow pupils to challenge themselves in a number of different ways; with each new task.
- Topics are taught in a varied pattern, graduating to become more challenging (from a characterisation perspective) towards the end of the year when pupils have matured and skills sets are well established. The subject-matter is chosen in line with the intent above – *eg* looking at duologues in *Lord of the Flies* in Year 7, and scripted performance (in ‘Bullying’) and devised drama (in ‘Antisocial Behaviour’) in Year 8
- Drama’s place within the English Department facilitates obvious cross-curricular links and strengthens our provision for reading.
- Extra-curricular work is a core component of our work. A flourishing Drama Club supplements regular whole-school productions and mini show-cases; theatre visits (subsidised for disadvantaged students) are also a key way of engaging students and enhancing their cultural capital.

### Impact

- Students are evaluated by their peers and their teacher throughout the developmental and rehearsal process on a lesson-by-lesson basis. Groups and pairs are asked to share their work most lessons and allow for whole-class feedback and verbal teacher evaluation of individual progress – which in turn affords opportunities for regular evaluation of the impact of our provision against its stated intent (above).
- The number of students opting to take GCSE Drama, and their outcomes, allow for a longer-term evaluation of the impact of our provision.
- St Margaret’s alumni are reputedly confident and articulate. As Drama embeds into the curriculum, this will become even more apparent.

Author: T Mulligan

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## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

### Intent

Our Department will create positive learning environments that create a thirst for progress (physically and academically) whilst building enjoyment within sport and exercise. Our area is unique: by enjoying time out of the classroom and engaging in physical exercise, our students will enjoy proven benefits such as improving both physical and mental health, decreasing stress, and building relationships with others.

Above all else, the biggest concept we teach is the need to lead an active and healthy lifestyle which will boost physical, mental and social well-being. Secondly, we look to develop our students both technically (through physical performance) and academically, helping all students to take part in competitive/recreational sport both in and out of school. And where we can, we look to personalise the curriculum for each individual.

### Implementation

In **Key Stage 3** we provide a broad curriculum covering fitness, and individual and team sports. We aim to foster both capacity for elite sporting performance, and for regular recreational physical activity (*eg* through coaching). This approach continues in **Key Stage 4** alongside a GCSE offer which allows boys to explore anatomy, physiology, data analysis *etc*. This route continues into **Key Stage 5** in both BTEC and ‘A’-level courses.

Regular low-stake assessments assure pupils’ progress. In **Key Stage 3** we use techniques like rich questioning (hinge questions) which identify gaps in learning or common misconceptions. **Post-14** we scaffold learning and then assess it through thorough questioning, end of unit tests, *etc*.

Our extra-curricular offer is a key part of our strategy to create a thirst for progress. Numerous teams across many sporting activities afford a significant number of students to opportunity to compete ‘for the school’ and achieve success. We see first-hand the galvanising impact extra-curricular success can have on a wider circle of students. **Post-14**, an increasing number of trips (*eg* to Universities) reinforce these messages.

### Impact

- In **Key Stages 3 and 4**, we track all learners’ progress in their physical activities, through their technical and physical performance in each sporting activity. In **Key Stage 3** we are looking at introducing homework activities to enable us to assess pupils’ understanding of the need to, and benefits of, exercise.
- In **Key Stages 4 and 5** we incorporate knowledge retention tasks and end-of-unit tests to assess learners’ progress in their academic studies.

Measuring their progress both physically and academically enables us to assess the extent to which we have created in them a thirst for progress, in line with our stated intent.

Author: C Parkes

Because we are we “*value*” each individual for “*who [...they] are and who [...they] could become*”,  
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**we give all learners options to personalise what they learn,**  
**underlining their worth and teaching that in a “*Christian community*”, diversity is openly celebrated.**

## **BUSINESS STUDIES**

### Intent

- We all interact with Business every day. A good understanding of how Business works is therefore essential for life in modern Britain.
- Locally, a lower-than-average proportion of adults are self-employed. Higher levels of ‘Business literacy’ are therefore a priority for our city.
- These two drivers – preparation for everyday life and for future employment – lead us to a curriculum that is rich in a wide variety of real-life examples, that reflects the constant changes in the Business world, and that stimulates engagement with our subject outside the classroom (*eg* through current affairs) too. Given our place in the options system, we ensure each Key Stage’s curriculum is a self-contained unit of study too.
- Additionally, our Year 9 curriculum is designed to give students a taste of our subject before their GCSE choices, and (more importantly) to give them an insight into how Business affects our daily lives in an engaging way even after they may have decided to drop our subject.
- As part of a whole-school curriculum, we value and exploit any links between Business and other subjects (*eg* Maths, and accountancy skills).

### Implementation

- In line with the whole-school curriculum intent, Business education is implemented inclusively. All students have the right to challenging classroom experiences regardless of prior attainment, and the resources we provide for our learners reflect this.
- We ensure, in line with the local imperative underpinning our intent, that many of our case studies feature local businesses and employers.
- Extra-curricular trips and visits are a vital component of our curriculum delivery. Trips to local businesses and visits to school by local entrepreneurs are a regular feature of our provision. A Share Club in school provides extra insight into the workings of a Stock Exchange.

### Impact

- We believe in the importance of regular, low-stakes assessment tasks. Short assessments of key terms take place fortnightly across all years.
- More summative, extended assessments, take place every half-term again across all years in the main school. The outcomes inform our self-evaluation of how effective we have been in educating our students about the world of Business, its needs and operation.

Author: C Cooke

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## COMPUTING

### Intent

Our aim in Computing aim is two-fold: to inspire students – as pioneers of the future; and to nurture a love of our subject. As computer programs pervade every aspect of our lives, our society needs computer scientists – passionate individuals to develop computing in every type of industry.

In practice, this means that students need to see the wider picture and to relate their learning to the real world and possible career paths. They need to become digitally literate, and digitally resilient. We will achieve this by teaching them to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science. They will acquire this knowledge by learning key facts and words, by analysing problems in computational terms, and through repeated practical experience of writing computer programs in order to solve problems. Students will thus learn to evaluate and apply information technology (including unfamiliar technologies) and will become competent and creative users of it – in both home and work contexts.

### Implementation

At **Key Stage 3** students will be introduced to how computers work, programming, HTML, computational thinking, spreadsheets, sound editing, networks, databases, video editing, cyber security, implications of digital systems and legal, ethical and environmental issues.

At **Key Stages 4 and 5** Computer Science students will:

- understand more deeply fundamental Computer Science concepts, *eg* abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation;
- analyse problems in computational terms by practically solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs;
- learn to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically understand the components that make up digital systems; and will
- understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society and apply mathematical skills relevant to computer science.

To ensure long-term retention of knowledge we revisit prior learning by implementing a spiral curriculum, thus ensuring we constantly build upon previous knowledge. We use responsive teaching, questioning, knowledge-based assessments, deliberate and guided practice to check student understanding. Resources are selected to support, assess, develop and consolidate knowledge and skills to facilitate progression. To inspire a passion through activities out of the classroom we aim to use competitions, outside speakers and extra-curricular clubs. We promote reading around computing through class discussion and in particular whilst teaching emerging technologies and the history of computing.

### Impact

Students will show progress in tracking, formal/informal assessments of facts/keywords, and end-of-unit tests. Assessed real-life practical tasks' outcomes will be used responsively to ensure progress. Their progress, and our reviews, will determine how well we have achieved our intent.

Author: M O’Gorman

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## OPTIONS IN YEARS 8, 9 AND 11

### Intent

- Our Mission Statement underlines our unshakeable belief in every student’s God-given potential: we value them “*for who [...they] could become*”. And we celebrate the incredible diversity of that potential: every student has a number of rich, fulfilling paths ahead of them, any of which could be followed into adult life. We still recognise the need for a strong universal Curriculum offer: there are nationally-acknowledged sets of skills, and bodies of knowledge/cultural capital which are necessary for full, fulfilling, active citizenship in modern Britain (and not all youngsters’ backgrounds will necessarily equip them accordingly). But we cherish youngsters’ individual identities which emerge ever more richly during their secondary years, and seek to help them find those identities (academically at least) through our options systems.

### Implementation

As they mature, students at St Margaret’s will rightly be given more and more choice, and fewer and fewer universal elements, in their studies.

- In Year 9, a strong universal element (English, Maths and Science; RS, French, History, Geography, Learning for Life, Food/Nutrition and PE) is supplemented by a choice (subject to numbers, students choose three out of Art, Business, Computing, Drama, ICT, Music, Photography, Spanish and Technology, with the proviso that, in order to ensure their continuing acquisition of cultural capital, they must choose at least one creative arts subject – *ie* Art, Drama, Music or Photography). In this way, nearly all potential GCSE subjects can be ‘sampled’ in Year 9.
- In Year 10, the universal component is reduced – although all youngsters still have the option to study Triple Science and/or and EBacc curriculum, for example – and the personalised element is increased (students choose three GCSEs, possibly with Statistics too, alongside a six-GCSE Core). In some cohorts, a handful of SEND students who may not be able to access three optional GCSEs are offered a reduced diet.
- Post-16, the only universal element of our curriculum is Learning for Life. A range of options enable students to develop their own interests.
- At each stage, comprehensive and independent careers advice helps students to make decisions that are at once realistic and ambitious. However, we also recognise the importance of active citizenship as well as well-judged ambition. We are sensitive to the notion of vocation and alert to the possibility that inspired by our Christian values, some young people may eschew traditional careers and serve in other ways.

### Impact

- The impact of our Options system can be seen in the high levels of pupil engagement in optional subjects post-14 (*eg* Food and Nutrition).
- The low numbers of pupils who do not progress on to education, employment or training also demonstrates the impact of our options system.

Author: S Brierley

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## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

### Intent

- Despite the nomenclature, we view our extra-curricular offer as a vital part of what is taught at St Margaret’s – *ie* as a vital part of our curriculum. Trips, visits, membership of a sports team or choir often provide students with the most memorable (*ie* the most impactful) experiences of their schooldays. They are also the most effective way of building cultural capital, a key element of our curriculum offer.
- We have a strong PE Department, and many of the extra-curricular activities they offer are competitive team sport fixtures. These are strongly supported by the school, even if at times lessons are missed – not so much for the wider acclaim success on the sports field can bring to the school, but more because through team sports, students learn more about values such as Friendship, Endurance and Trust.
- We are particularly set on ensuring that disadvantaged students have equal (or, indeed, greater) access to these activities, so we subsidise them.

### Implementation

- Due to the importance we attach to these activities, a token payment is made to staff who run them. Some clubs are run to nurture students’ talents and interest (all “*are valued for who [...they] could become*”). Bands and a choir are good examples here (not least as they play a large part in school occasions), as is a German Club and an Astronomy Club. A Christian Union and Ramadan prayers nurture students’ faiths.
- Some extra-curricular activities are especially tailored to cater for pupils with additional needs. A lunch-time Games Club, where pupils can play board games away from the noise of the playground, is popular with ASD students. A separate Chess Club has a similar, but separate, membership – links with another school’s Chess Club are being formed. An occasional Dr Who Club also attracts a particular groups of boys.
- We recognise one-off school trips can realise the same aims as regular in-school extra-curricular activities. A Skiing trip enables students to learn new skills, and annual cultural trips (run by the History and Geography teams) to London, the UK and Europe broaden minds too. We place particular value on the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, with large numbers of Year 9 students successfully gaining the Bronze Award. In particular we find the expedition element of the award is especially helpful in developing Endurance (one of our values) and character.

### Impact

- It is hard to measure the cumulative impact of such activities with generally less tangible outcomes. However unsolicited parental feedback (eg: “[X] *had a fabulous time and despite finding the skiing a real challenge he seems to have persevered and learnt a lot from the experience. The cultural elements and the other activities were amazing*”) and from coaches (“*It was such a reward to see these young men sharing their Compassion, Friendship and support for each other, as they embraced the challenges of learning to ski*”) show we are succeeding in our intent.

Author: N Harrison

Because we are “*a Christian community*”,  
**we have a strong set of Christian values... that shapes our entire provision –  
our leadership, our academic curriculum, our pastoral curriculum and our pedagogy.**

## PEDAGOGY

### Intent

- There are many different ways in which the content of a subject can be taught. We make choices about our teaching methodologies every day.
- Those choices are important – for example, because some methods of teaching have more impact in terms of changing long-term memory. But they are also important because of the message they communicate about what is important to us as a school. Our students will learn about our values in part through our choices of pedagogy. Our *pedagogy* is, in this way, also part of our *curriculum*. So our pedagogical choices will be made by design, not by default; and in making those choices we will be conscious of the values we are communicating through them.
- Explicitly, through our choice of pedagogy, we will teach students these three ideas:
  - that all are valued;
  - that Trust (and trustworthiness) is essential; and
  - that Endurance is key.However this list is not intended to be exhaustive.

### Implementation

- Our Mission Statement is clear that all “*are valued*”. We will deliberately select our teaching methods so that this notion is reinforced for our students. The way we teach will communicate clearly (albeit subliminally) that ‘every child matters’. We will do this through using ‘no hands-up’ questioning – selecting students at random to answer teachers’ questions, rather than just selecting those who put themselves forward.
- ‘Trust’ is one of our eight values; it is essential if learning is to take place. It is a central notion in our approach to feedback, called Responsive Feedback – the essence of which is that once students have received feedback on a first attempt, they improve it in a different colour (green). In this way they learn to trust the feedback they have been given, and show they are worthy of being trusted to make improvements.
- ‘Endurance’ is also one of our eight values. For most, academic progress – permanently to change our long-term memories and thence to recall and apply what we have learnt correctly – is hard work, and our choice of pedagogy will reinforce this. Initiatives such as *Revise Till Five* (designed to strength students’ academic stamina), and a revitalised Homework programme (designed to ensure students ‘go the extra mile’ out of school), will reinforce the message communicated in Assemblies that nothing worthwhile in life can be achieved without hard work.

### Impact

The ‘Impact’ comments on page 4 apply equally here.

Author: C Manwaring



Because we are “*valued for [...] who we could become*”,  
**we have a substantial Careers programme**  
**which prepares all our learners to be confident individuals and responsible citizens.**

Intent

- Social mobility is vital for an efficient economy and a happy nation. Sadly, England does not score well in this regard. Schools’ Careers Departments have a vital role to play in improving that situation by nurturing ambition and countering any hint of a low-aspirations culture.
- Our aim is to prepare all pupils for future success by providing a full programme of careers advice, information and guidance that is stable, structured and delivered by individuals with the right skills and experience. This will enable them to make ambitious choices for their futures.
- We will also provide good quality, meaningful opportunities for them to encounter both the world of work and other education/training providers.
- Through this work, we will reaffirm our Mission Statement’s key notion that “[all] are valued” for “*who we could become*” in our future lives.

Implementation

- The “St Margaret’s Pathway” is a whole-school approach that structures our careers advice and guidance programme. It draws extensively on outside agencies such as the Careers Enterprise Company, a local Enterprise hub, Career Connect and Elevate – and a strong in-house team.
- Pre-14 our strategic priority is to ensure all students aim high. As early as Year 7 we organise an aspirational University Unzipped event and an introduction to our independent Career Connect advisor. This is followed up in subsequent years by a business mentoring programme, appropriate enterprise events, employer encounters and timely advice and guidance for the options processes in Years 8 and 9.
- Two individual interviews, a one-week Work Experience placement for all, employer talks, a Careers Fair and a speed-networking event all take place in Key Stage 4. In line with our intent, bespoke interventions (*eg* one-to-one interviews) to raise aspirations are arranged as required.
- Alongside the established work post-16 (employer encounters, visits to Higher Education providers, *etc*), in line with our intent we now focus on raising students’ University choice aspirations, seeking to increase the number of successful Russell Group and Oxbridge applications.

Impact

- We track our progress towards meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks using the Careers Enterprise Company’s Compass tool. This tool, presently showing that we are making good progress, not only highlights the current quality of our work but also gives a clear steer for our next steps.
- Post-event student and employer evaluations help us identify how the events can be improved, and also their effectiveness regarding our intent.
- A number of work placements lead to further (privately-arranged) placements and/or volunteering opportunities. This undoubtedly has a significant impact on the aspirations and confidence-levels of the students concerned. Ultimately, however, our impact is best measured our destinations data, including the proportion of post-16 students going on to the most prestigious apprenticeships, internships or Universities.

Author: C Roberts

Because we are “*valued for [...] who we could become*”,  
**we have a substantial Learning for Life programme**  
**which prepares all our learners to be confident individuals and responsible citizens.**

Intent

As a Church School we are deeply aware of our duty to develop “*responsible citizens who, through their commitment to Christian values, can make a positive contribution to society*” (as our overarching intent puts it – see page 2). The aim of a Learning for Life programme is to support and grow St Margaret’s young people as they learn about their development in the following strands: Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship.

- Personal: our intent is for students to grow in the knowledge of who they are, and of their importance (“*[all] are valued*” – our Mission Statement)
- Social: our intent is for students to understand their role in society and how they should interact with others (in a variety of contexts)
- Health: our intent is for students to view their bodies and minds as key tools for their future – tools they must cherish, develop, and protect
- Citizenship: our intent is for students to learn about their rights and responsibilities in modern Britain, and their place in society

Implementation

- In Key Stages 3 and 4, our Learning for Life curriculum is split into the four distinct areas as outlined above.
- Given the subject matter we cover, a variety of pedagogical approaches are utilised. These include class/peer discussion, visiting speakers (particularly for specialist subjects), topic-related videos, and the use of exercise books for students to develop their thoughts in writing.
- A topic-specific question is given at the end of each lesson. Students then use green pens to develop understanding from peer/teacher responses.
- Under certain exceptional circumstances, teachers will break from the Scheme of Learning to teach a one-off lesson to address a particular pressing topic. This may be a subject that is of national importance, or may be something that has affected our local (or school) community. This flexibility allows us to address any misconceptions that may have arisen, and is also an important part of our work to keep students safe.
- Post-16 Learning for Life lessons cover similar topics, but there is a greater focus on preparation for post-18 options (*eg UCAS work*). A more flexible pedagogy (*eg without the need for end-of-lesson green pen questions*) reflects maturer student-teacher relationships in the Sixth Form.

Impact

- Each Learning for Life lesson ends with a summative question. Students’ green pen responses show the impact the lesson has made on them.
- Questioning in lessons, a key focus in Learning for Life lesson observations, also demonstrates the impact our curriculum has.
- An end-of-year questionnaire, completed by each student in each year group, gives insight as to what has been most impactful for them
- But in Learning for Life, impact can also be shown in the way students conduct themselves around the school premises – in class or out of it. Holding the door for another student or member of staff, or offering help by showing compassion to another student who may be struggling in a lesson or with something that has affected them outside of school – both everyday occurrences in our school – show the impact our subject has.

Author: A Farquharson