Sacred Heart
Catholic Academy

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Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Quality of Education Policy 26-27

"Aspire not to have more, but to be more."

Love Respect Service Ambition

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Curriculum

Our curriculum is the sum of all planned activity within the academy and is the vehicle through which we deliver our vision; that all in our community ‘Aspire not to have more, but to be more’ - St Oscar Romero.

At Sacred Heart Catholic Academy, we have designed a curriculum which supports all pupils to flourish and achieve excellence, irrespective of their starting points. At the heart of the curriculum is our pupils. We recognise that each of our pupils have their own gifts and talents, and our curriculum seeks to develop a depth of knowledge, tailored to each pupil, in order that they can be successful in the varied careers they will enjoy.

During Years 7, 8 and 9 our pupils study a wide range of subjects which follow the national curriculum. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 follows the national curriculum where applicable and offers a breadth of subjects and qualifications matched to local and global employment markets and the interests of our pupils. We offer a wide range of GCSE and vocational qualifications designed to meet the needs of all pupils.

Inclusion is at the heart of all we do at Sacred Heart Catholic Academy, with every child being supported to access the full range of subjects, irrespective of any special educational need or disability. To support depth in the design of our curriculum, all pupils are exposed to enriching experiences in their subject areas, alongside bespoke careers advice and guidance throughout their school journey.

Our school values of Love, Service, Ambition and Respect underpin our curriculum philosophy.

Our curriculum is:

Knowledge-rich with clearly defined end points and effective sequencing which strengthens schema to enable all pupils to secure our ambitious curriculum goals;

Enabling as all pupils are supported to access to the whole curriculum and achieve the outcomes they need for the next steps in education, employment or training;

Responsive as assessment identifies security of learning and pupils are supported to achieve our ambitious curriculum goals;

Inspiring as it takes pupils beyond their own experience, offers opportunity for creativity, and enables them to understand their identity in Crosby and beyond;

Transformative as by developing all aspects of academic, social and spiritual growth, we develop young people who exemplify our values and make a positive contribution to their communities.

Our subject leaders carefully select key knowledge for the greatest cognitive benefit. Our curriculum provides a knowledge-rich program of study which is increasingly rigorous and is flexible enough to be adapted to meet pupils' needs.

Principles of Curriculum Design

Leaders at all levels have carefully considered the curriculum journey for their given subject to create defined, coherent progression towards ambitious curriculum goals. Broad and deep- thinking overtime, supported by SLE’s has led to the curriculum as it is currently planned.

Subject leaders think deeply about progression and evaluate the curriculum’s effectiveness on enabling pupils to know more, remember more and do more. Teachers focus on lesson adaptation (thinking carefully about how to deliver the curriculum effectively to all learners in their classes) rather than lesson planning (as this is completed collaboratively).

Curriculum development is an ongoing process and is departmental development time is allocated to support teams to come together to reflect on current delivery, and plan for the future.

Our curriculum enables all pupils to acquire knowledge that takes them beyond their own experience. It is knowledge pupils may not have equal access to at home, in their community, with family or friends. As such, this knowledge is the right of all pupils, and we strive to remove all barriers to them acquiring it.

Pupils naturally see a subject in terms of its substantive knowledge – the facts and ideas that experts in the subject have established. In addition to this information, however, disciplinary knowledge is required. Disciplinary knowledge addresses how that knowledge was established, its degree of certainty and how it continues to be revised by scholars, artists or professional practice. All pupils are taught appropriate disciplinary knowledge within their subject areas. They not only learn about history or science, but how to become historians and scientists.

Our curriculum considers disciplinarily specific, powerful ways of thinking that are developed through sustained engagement with the subject. Examples include inverse operations in mathematics, cause and effect in science and provenance and context in history.

The Sacred Heart curriculum is structured and progressive, focusing on building to advanced levels of knowledge. This approach is particularly important in subjects like mathematics, science and languages, where some concepts can only be understood if other concepts have been taught first. In a subject like history where some units might stand alone, the development of disciplinary knowledge requires vertical integration and key themes such as empire or conflict are revisited in a spiraling curriculum; advanced knowledge build on more basic knowledge, which must be secured first. The curriculum is interleaved to ensure that knowledge sticks and pupils are given the opportunity to develop expertise.

Developing beyond the classroom

Our curriculum is designed to raise pupils' aspirations, by creating carefully planned opportunities to experience a wide range of enrichment, including careers provision. We match pupils' own interests and aspirations to local enterprise areas of growth.

Our curriculum looks outward to the opportunities and needs of Crosby, Liverpool and beyond. This is particularly evidenced through STEM links to the , renewable energy industries and leading-edge technology firms. There is a transformative level of investment in local industry,

and particularly in creation of high skilled job opportunities. We would like our pupils to be equipped with the character and expertise to capitalise on this investment.

We increase participation in community events for our pupils by ensuring explicit links to local charitable organisations, industries as well as routes into universities. These are directly built into our curriculum and CEIAG.

Understanding progression models

We choose the progression model which is most appropriate for our subject.

Progression might be demonstrated by the acquisition of a greater breadth of knowledge which enables pupils to solve increasingly complex problems from a toolbox of this prior knowledge (such as in maths and science). Or progression might be demonstrated by performing the same skill (such as evaluation) at a greater depth, drawing on knowledge from a range of sources (sometimes outside of the subject itself) to engage with increasing levels of sophistication and disciplinary specialism (such as in English and history).

Planning for progression

The careful sequencing of key knowledge towards increasingly complex curriculum goals ensures that the curriculum itself is the progression model. Every piece of key knowledge in curriculum planning should be an explicit next step, ensuring that identified key knowledge demonstrates clear progression from one linked unit to the next.

To ensure that our knowledge rich curriculum model does not become limited to remembering successive facts, careful consideration is given to that knowledge which is needed to enable pupils to become scholars of the subject in their own right. To this end, key knowledge is usually identified as substantive or disciplinary, as outlined below.

Substantive knowledge – carefully sequenced and progressive, this is substantial knowledge which pupils need to master. What pupils need to know.

Disciplinary knowledge – carefully sequenced and progressive, this is the knowledge pupils need, to be able to learn the subject (discipline) well. How pupils need to think.

Where pupils are developing the same disciplinary knowledge in successive units of work (e.g. evaluating the use of language features) it must be made clear how this is more demanding and demonstrates progression from one unit to the next.

Identifying tier 2 & 3 vocabulary

By identifying the words pupils may not have encountered and explicitly teaching this vocabulary, we ensure that each subject remains accessible and equitable.

In secondary years, the emphasis extends to include tier 3 vocabulary. Knowledge of these low-frequency, subject-specific words is crucial to enable pupils to be able to build the schemata required to secure long- term memory and equip pupils with the technical vocabulary required for academic precision.

Ensuring all pupils can secure the curriculum

Planning starts with individual support plans, SEND provision, disadvantage, reading age or stanine, prior attainment, persistent or severe absence, and knowledge missed through absence. Teachers implement agreed provision and identify whether it enables each pupil to access the ambitious curriculum.

Adaptations may include explicit vocabulary, visual supports, checklists, dual coding, reduced copying, front seating, pre-calling where appropriate, and aids specified in individual plans. Adapt explanation, examples, guided practice and resources to the identified barrier; review impact and remove scaffolds when pupils are ready.

We expect every pupil to secure the curriculum and do not have a streamed approach to curriculum planning (except in Key Stage 4, where this reflects tiered entry). This ensures that all pupils have access to the full curriculum. Scaffolding is provided, but expectations are not lowered, for pupils who need additional support to secure the curriculum. Scaffolding not differentiation.

Scaffolding is crucial to effective curriculum implementation and is our primary strategy for ensuring that lower attaining pupils, and those with SEND are effectively supported to secure the curriculum. Consideration should be given to, but is not limited to:

How is vocabulary explicitly taught during this unit of work?

What scaffolding do pupils need to secure x?

How has homework been used in this unit of work?

How is retrieval practice embedded in this unit of work?

What strategies have been used to support pupils with reading?

Ensuring assessment is fit for purpose

We do not use generic descriptors as the basis for assessment, instead, assessment is tailored to the curriculum goals or key knowledge which is being assessed. This ensures that assessment is focussed on the curriculum as it is intended, and not a generic measure of performance.

Formative assessment takes place regularly and informs day-to-day teaching. Pupils are given the opportunity to respond to this formative assessment, before arriving at a judgement about their security of knowledge at the end of each unit of work.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that all pupils in their groups receive regular feedback driven by the needs of the pupils and the curriculum.

Formal summative assessment takes place twice yearly and these examinations are designed to evaluate pupils'

overall performance, including long-term memory and security of annual curriculum goals.

High-quality independent practice

Exercise books show planned, demanding independent practice, correction and improvement between assessment points. They are not jotters: Do Nows, copied notes, gap fills and teacher models should not form the bulk of evidence. Teachers address incomplete tasks and provide an appropriate route to essential learning for pupils who have been absent.

The result of curriculum planning is that pupils know more, remember more and can do more. We are only able to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and pupils progress by planning opportunities for them to independently demonstrate what they are able to do.

We ensure that every lesson/stage within every unit of work includes carefully considered instruction and modelling to enable challenging independent practice. Careful consideration is

given to providing pupils with regular, timely and challenging independent practice which is closely aligned to the guiding questions.

Teaching and Learning

The shared lesson sequence is Do Now – I Do – We Do – You Do – Exit Ticket, with checking for understanding and responsive reteaching throughout. Time in I Do is purposeful and concise; guided and independent practice occupy a substantial part of the lesson.

The Do Now is three to five short, closed retrieval questions ready on entry without exercise books, usually completed in four to six minutes while the teacher circulates. During I Do, the teacher explains and models in small chunks, thinks aloud and checks each chunk. During We Do, pupils practise with guidance before independent release. You Do starts when pupils are ready; teachers can release ready pupils while reteaching a small group, or reteach the whole class. The exit ticket checks the key learning and informs the next lesson.

Teachers secure 100% attention before explanation or directions, give precise What To Do instructions and check that pupils know what to do. Mini-whiteboards provide whole-class evidence: think time, a simultaneous "3, 2, 1, show me", a scan of all boards, probing of correct and incorrect answers, and a decision to move on, practise or reteach. Vocabulary is checked explicitly. Purposeful circulation and live marking continue during independent work.

At Sacred Heart Catholic Academy our overarching aim is to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their background, make rapid academic progress and grow in socially and spiritually.

Ensuring that teaching and learning expectations are explicit and consistent will allow us to pursue our mission.

Highly effective teachers are proficient in both their subject knowledge and in their classroom practice. Both of these elements are critical to delivering a body of subject knowledge with the necessary skill and depth to ensure that pupils make rapid progress.

Highly effective teachers have a clear understanding of their pupils and where they are in relation to their learning.

Highly effective teachers are skilled in moving pupils forward through planning, teaching, feedback and adapting, ensuring pupils make outstanding progress.

Direct Instruction is the best method used to transfer their knowledge to our pupils. In exploring and articulating the knowledge within the curriculum and the thought processes of a subject expert we equip our pupils to practice effectively.

Instruction often takes two forms:

Activation of new knowledge

Provide pupils with deep knowledge by explaining clearly and memorably new concepts, related subject terminology, and how these connect to prior learning. Provide concrete examples and ask questions to check understanding.

Modelling

Demonstrate how an expert thinks by modelling how to approach tasks. For example, think aloud as you go through a worked example. Make the process obvious by breaking it down into small steps and highlighting pitfalls to avoid.

Practice provides the space for pupils to apply their knowledge of the curriculum with increasing mastery until they are able to communicate as an expert. Expert teachers plan carefully for intentional practice, providing pupils with careful guidance as they begin to explore their new knowledge before they are able to practice independently.

Therefore, practice commonly takes one of two formats;

Guided practice (I do, we do)

The harder pupils think the better they will understand and remember what they have been taught; set challenging work and provide scaffolding and support to make the impossible possible.

Independent practice (you do)

Once equipped to do so, pupils need to work independently, though with clear guidance and feedback. Practice needs to be challenging and focused so that pupils are thinking hard about what they are learning.

Assessment

After key assessments, subject leaders review grades 9–7, 9–5 and 9–4, performance against target, and gaps for disadvantaged pupils, SEND and other relevant groups. They consider attendance and missed learning, identify precise knowledge gaps and plan reteaching, adaptation and intervention. Exam review forms the first stage of the relevant QIC cycle.

All assessment will:

Have a clear purpose linked to curriculum goals; all assessments, whether they are a hinge question in a lesson, or an annual examination need to have a rationale to support them.

Be valid; this term is used to describe the degree to which an assessment provides information that we can trust and can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the planned curriculum.

Be reliable, producing information that can lead us to make conclusions about the level of pupil learning and our future planning with confidence.

Subject Leaders are responsible for working together ensuring that pupil progress in their subject is regularly and effectively assessed.

Evidence suggests that assessment functions best when it is designed collaboratively, identifying a shared purpose and relevance to the curriculum. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that when planning for assessment and feedback, it is meaningfully linked to curriculum planning, manageable for both staff and pupils, and motivates pupils to improve their learning.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment needs to be an essential part of good teaching practice ‘day in day out’. Highly effective teaching utilises some of the following:

1. Observation 2. Questioning 3. Formative “live marking” 4. Low stakes tests

Evidence suggests that grading individual pieces of pupil work – either with a GCSE grade or a score out of 10 – is ineffective, and can be counter-productive. The purpose of marking is to provide pupils with feedback on how to improve and to motivate them to action. Grading does not achieve either of these purposes for all pupils. Therefore, grades will not be used for formative assessments.

Areas for improvement should be actionable by the pupil with guidance from staff and lead to an improvement in the quality of pupils' work. Time should be given in lessons for pupils to respond to feedback.

Summative assessments

Summative assessments are used to test long-term memory. These can take a number of different formats such as:

1. unit tests 2. formal, or mid-year assessments 3. annual exams (including Year 11 mock exams) 4. statutory tests and public examinations

Formal assessments must be moderated, and marks standardised before recording and reporting to ensure comparability, accuracy and reliability.

Data from formal assessments will be shared with parents and analysed at a subject and whole academy level. It will inform strategic planning, evaluation of the curriculum and evaluation of teaching.

The use of agreed terminology is essential to ensure that pupils, parents, staff and governors can quickly interpret the information they are presented with. It is also important to ensure that any information presented is reliable and not misleading.

End of unit tests

At classroom level, each subject from Key Stage 3 upwards, will ensure that there is a formal assessment at the end of each unit of learning to assess the security of learning across that unit by each pupil.

These will be used at a department or year group level to inform meaningful feedback based on the assessment. It is expected that pupils will respond to their feedback from end of unit assessments.

The outcomes from these end of unit assessments will inform further planning and curriculum improvement.

Formal assessments

These assessments will occur half yearly and will establish extent to which learning has been secured over time and has led to a change in the pupil's long-term memory which can then be successfully evidenced under formal exam conditions. In most cases the outcomes of these will be reported to parents.

Key Stage 3 Formal assessments will be sat under examination conditions twice per year. In Years 7, 8 and 9, these exam series will be in the exam hall.

autumn and spring terms.

Formal examinations and mid-year examinations

Will be cumulative of course to date and including interleaving.

Will be consistent/comparable across all teaching groups, to show progress between classes and between assessment points.

Reporting

Reporting of pupils' progress and attainment is via Pupil Progress at KS4 and KS3. Here parents can view recent assessment information pertaining to their child, including teacher assessment and internal examination outcomes.

Feedback

Feedback is linked to planned substantive and disciplinary knowledge. Teachers use live, verbal, whole-class and written feedback as appropriate, then give pupils time to respond in green pen and demonstrate improvement. Departments align feedback with unit plans; the quality of the response matters more than the volume of teacher marking.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that all pupils in their groups receive regular feedback driven by the needs of the pupils and the curriculum.

Feedback should be delivered in a manner that secures the curriculum goals and challenges misconceptions. It should be timely at meaningful points against the curriculum in subject schemes of work (linked to essential pieces of knowledge or addressing common misconceptions) that provide pupils with clear opportunities to further secure their learning before the end of unit assessment.

'Remember quantity of feedback should not be confused with the quality.' (DfE: Reducing Teacher Workload)

To support our high expectations for effective marking and feedback, all marking should be:

Meaningful: Will the feedback support pupils in making progress? Will it help them to make things stick?

Manageable: Is it the most appropriate type of feedback?

Motivating: Will it engage pupils to act on the feedback and make progress towards a learning goal?

In addition to this, teachers should make full use of verbal feedback opportunities, including modelling worked examples, targeting questions to check understanding, and highlighting misconceptions with further explanation to make the implicit explicit.

The regularity and effectiveness of this feedback will be demonstrated by:

Pupil responses to feedback.

The progress of pupils in teaching groups over time, with a demonstrable improvement in the quality of pupil work.

The academy has high expectations of standards of presentation of written work. We have to ensure that pupils understand that all staff expect the same high standards of presentation across all subject areas. When work is well presented, pupils will be able to refer more easily to previous work, recall work previously completed and take a pride in their own high standards.

Pupils will:

Write in black pen

Complete drawings, diagrams and graphs in pencil.

Use green pen to make corrections or amendments.

Use a ruler to draw any lines.

Write the date and title at the top of the page. They should be underlined with a ruler.

Glue all worksheets flat rather than folded for ease of reference.

Teachers will:

Direct pupils to either start a new page or continue on the previous page (this will be dependent on if work needs marking or green pen tasks are to be completed).

Mark in purple pen.

Homework

Homework can result in pupils making accelerated progress in academic subjects (including reading). This is equivalent to an extra 5 months each year, which is over 2 years particularly across secondary years.

Homework that is linked to classwork is most effective and digital homework has been shown to have an even higher impact.

Homework is set on a regular basis, depending on the age of the child. This allows pupils to consolidate new knowledge, learn how to organise themselves and learn on their own. Consistent and thorough habits are vital to establish early as homework is a key part of education success. Pupils must get into the habit of reading daily.

Homework will either be reading, retrieval practice (checking prior knowledge to prepare for lessons) or

directed practice (revising things your teachers have noticed you need to practice).

Quality Assurance

The two-week Quality Improvement Cycle (QIC) brings together lesson visits, work scrutiny, pupil voice, assessment analysis, coaching and departmental review. SLT link and middle leader meetings consider books, learning walks, feedback, disadvantaged pupils, SEND, adaptations, evidence of mastery and upcoming deadlines. Leaders identify strengths and one precise What / How action step, record progress as met, partially met or unmet, and follow up on its impact.

Form time reading in Years 7–10 and Year 11 English, mathematics and science intervention are jointly quality assured and followed by feedback to staff. Where IRIS Connect is used for professional reflection or effective practice, staff follow agreed recording arrangements and pupil restrictions.

Quality assurance is a transparent, open and honest process that results in staff delivering their very best day in, day out. Everyone is responsible for engaging in the process and contributing to improving the performance of all.

Quality Assurance must lead to rapid improvement in quality of education across the Academy, particularly for Disadvantaged pupils and SEND. Quality Assurance directly informs individual, departmental and Academy wide CPD (including coaching) and subject level action planning.

Curriculum Reviews

A Curriculum Review is an in-depth analysis of an area of learning which includes speaking to leaders, teachers and pupils. This is done in order to establish an understanding of how the curriculum is constructed, how securely it is being implemented across the curriculum area and the extent to which leaders, teachers and pupils can articulate curriculum goals.

The Curriculum Review is an opportunity to evaluate progress against department action plan priorities and the quality of provision across the whole subject. We gather evidence on the curriculum intent, implementation and impact. This is done in collaboration with leaders, teachers and pupils. The emphasis of this process is on mutual exploration of the strengths and area for development within a curriculum area. Leaders are expected to put their best foot forward and openly share areas requiring further development.

The Curriculum Review will establish a coherent evidence base on the quality of education and the progress towards previously identified areas for development.

Evidence Gathering

The purpose of evidence gathering is to evaluate the impact of curriculum design and implementation on the security of pupils' learning.

Evidence gathering will take place over a series of lessons and will include a review of planning, lesson visit, review of pupils' work and discussion with a range of pupils. The overall effectiveness of curriculum impact will be viewed through the lens of the most vulnerable learners and to assist with this seating plans annotated with bus routes are required in every classroom.

In addition to regular curriculum review, there will be occasions when some evidence gathering is used to focus on a particular area of curriculum design or pupil group, for example homework or SEND.

Staff Development Cycle

Appraisal

UPS teachers need clear expectations that ensure highly effective practice is increasingly the norm and that they are making a substantial and sustained contribution to the improvement of curriculum delivery or teaching and learning either in their department or across the wider academy.

Leaders will demonstrate impact across their teams and will be held to account for a wider range of targets which ensure broad performance reaches at least the levels of national averages.

Mid-term appraisals will take place halfway through the appraisal cycle and give an opportunity for concerns to be raised and actions put in place to support staff development.

Professional Development

Whole-school and departmental CPD respond to QIC evidence. Coaching uses a specific What / How action step, rehearsal, feedback and follow-up. Time-limited informal support sets clear targets, weekly coaching, regular visits and scheduled senior leader QA. ECTs receive their induction and mentoring entitlement.

There is also the use of:

1. PLC across the Trust 2. School Teaching and Learning Library 3. Teaching and Learning Newsletter.

We secure strong teacher habits by ensuring that our Professional Development offer:

1. Builds Knowledge 2. Motivates Staff 3. Develops the delivery of the curriculum 4. Develops teaching expertise and embeds practice 5. Enables emerging leaders to grow

This is based on the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Effective Professional Development

Guidance.

Teachers are provided with a high level of training and support to ensure that they meet the required standards of performance. The Capability Policy, which again uses Sefton's policy, is designed to provide support to staff who are under- performing or not meeting the required standards for their role.

Target Setting

Our aim is that Sacred Heart Catholic Academy will be at least in the top 20% of schools nationally for progress. Pupils are given targets based on prior achievement and in line with FFT20 predictions. Formal assessment is used to evaluate the progress of pupils in relation to these targets.

At KS3, we will measure progress against the curriculum, aiming for each pupil to secure each of the curriculum goals. The target is, therefore, them being secure in each curriculum goal and progress will not be measured against any other "grade" or "level".

At KS4, pupils begin study of their GCSE subjects and it makes sense to report progress and academic targets in relation to GCSE grades. A review of targets takes place following annual assessment data and discussion with SLT link.

Setting Principles

Year 7 sets are established from the start of September using KS2 and transition information. They remain fluid: teachers and leaders review assessment evidence and can change a pupil's set when this would better support learning. Every group retains access to the full ambitious curriculum.

Teachers will tailor their lessons according to the specific needs of pupils within the set. Pupils will also have access, as appropriate, to support from LSAs.