



ST. HELEN'S SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY

GENERAL STATEMENT

St. Helen's school supports the principles of the National Curriculum and recognises that all pupils are entitled to access a curriculum, which is broad, balanced, relevant to individual needs, and which will provide them appropriately for the world in which they will live and work.

The curriculum comprises all that contributes to the learning of the individual and success in examinations. It gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematic, scientific, technological, aesthetic and creative education. Skills in speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy are developed through all areas of the curriculum and across the whole school. The curriculum also includes activities planned to promote the intellectual, moral, social, spiritual and physical development of all its pupils.

The aims of the school are underpinned by a curriculum which is based on the equality of opportunity, where each individual is valued and where the love of learning will thrive so that all pupils gain a sense of achievement from the learning process.

The curriculum is delivered in a stimulating and challenging learning environment in such a way as to teach self-discipline and a sense of responsibility, to promote independent learning and the value of collaboration in teamwork. The school believes that assessment should be used for teaching and promotes reflection on individual strengths and individual target setting. Links with local community and beyond are fostered to widen horizons and to demonstrate the relevance of the curriculum to everyday life. Teaching aims to increase awareness among students of their position as global citizens.

Religious Studies are available to all pupils and, whilst St. Helen's is a Christian Foundation, the diversity of religious beliefs of the pupils is respected and celebrated in assemblies and cultural events.

BREADTH

Pupils are selected by academic ability and virtually all continue in Higher and Further education when they leave.

The basic framework of the National Curriculum from Foundation – KS5, is enriched to meet the particular needs of all pupils. There are opportunities to study an extra Modern Foreign language, classical languages, a wide range of sports, creative arts and numerous musical instruments. ICT is formally taught and used extensively throughout the curriculum.

In KS1 French is part of the curriculum, while in KS2 a range of languages is offered as part of a languages rota. At KS3 all pupils follow a broad programme of study, in addition to core subjects, two humanities, Latin (from Year 8), 2 modern foreign languages, RS, PE, Drama, Art, Music, Design Technology and ICT are taught in every year.

At KS4, in addition to core subjects, including both dual and triple award science, all pupils continue with at least one humanity and one foreign language. A wide range of optional subjects are also available, including ICT.

The post-16 programme of studies includes a core curriculum of Careers Education, Physical Education and Personal, Social & Health Education and students in KS5 choose between the International Baccalaureate and AS/A2 courses in 24 subjects.

BALANCE

It is the policy of St. Helen's to offer equality of access to all subjects. Pupils have an open choice from a wide range of subjects in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. Each pupil is counselled when making these choices to ensure a balanced programme of study. The timetable is built around their choices to ensure that each pupil is able to pursue her aptitudes and preferences. The commitment of the school is demonstrated in the generous staffing allocated to run courses for small numbers of students. In addition to Careers education as part of PSHCE pupils and parents are invited as appropriate to information evenings about choices. Detailed option information booklets are provided for each pupil and her parents.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The school has a policy to recognise and cater for individual educational needs. It sets out for parents what help the school can offer in addition to the taught curriculum. The Director of Teaching and Learning, who has particular responsibility for the Exceptionally Able, ensures that all teachers are made aware of any Exceptionally Able pupils and monitors provision for the exceptionally able.

The needs of all pupils with specific learning difficulties including those with statements, are co-ordinated by the SENCO and those with learning difficulties. Teaching staff are expected to make special provision for these pupils in their lesson planning and to address their needs by using appropriate and imaginative resources. Teaching strategies are selected to challenge the very able and to help pupils to manage and overcome learning difficulties. Detailed records are kept and made available centrally to all staff across the school.

DISABILITY

The school has an Accessibility Plan and, in line with statutory requirements, aims to make all parts of the school and the curriculum accessible to all pupils, as is reasonably practicable.

DIFFERENTIATION

The diversity of learning styles is acknowledged in the Schemes of Work and lesson plans for each subject. These are written to present the curriculum through a variety of teaching methods using a range of resources. Regular review of the Schemes of Work is carried out to introduce fresh approaches to assessment techniques and to ensure the pursuit of excellence in the delivery of the curriculum.

CONTINUITY

Continuity between phases of the school is considered to be a vital element in curriculum management. Regular consultation between teachers in various Key Stages and the exchange of up-to-date data ensure that, as they move through the school, pupils meet fresh stimulation. Whilst reinforcement is embedded in the Schemes of Work, repetition is avoided.

HOMEWORK

Heads of Department, Form Tutors, Subject Co-ordinators and Heads of Year/Year Group Leaders monitor to ensure that appropriate homework is set and marked regularly to support and reinforce work covered in class. It provides an opportunity for the development of research and independent learning skills. There is a high expectation that this work is completed in full and on time. Parents can become involved in managing their daughter's progress by overseeing this work and by communicating any difficulties to their daughter's form tutor through the Diary Planners.

CAREERS

There is an extensive careers programme including opportunities for work-related learning and careers education is featured, as is appropriate as part of PSHCE programme. The aim is to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

REVIEW

This policy is monitored by the Deputy Head (Curriculum), Heads of LSH, Juniors, Middle, Upper School, 6th form and by Heads of Department. It is reviewed annually.

Reviewed: Spring 2010

Next Review Date: Spring 2011