

St. Mark's Catholic School



CURRICULUM POLICY

Effective Date:	Review Date:	Prepared by:	Designated SLT:	Governor's Committee:
April 2026	April 2028	MLO	MLO	Curriculum

Our Mission:

St Mark's is a Catholic community inspired by Gospel values where relationships are rooted in love. At the heart of our mission is a commitment to live out our faith and a dedication to embrace excellence in all that we do. We believe in education that instils possibilities, transforms lives and enables all to fulfil their potential.

Curriculum Intent

Our curriculum intent is central to our vision and ethos as a Catholic School. The curriculum is rooted in the Gospel and places the dignity, worth and flourishing of every child at its heart. It is designed to support pupils' academic, spiritual, moral and emotional development and reflects and promotes Catholic Social Teaching

To this end, we intend to develop the potential of every student, particularly disadvantaged and students with SEND, at St. Mark's by providing a curriculum which:

- Is ambitious, broad, balanced and coherent within and across subjects
- Meets all the expectations of the national curriculum and places the EBacc at its core
- Is coherently planned and sequenced to embed long-term understanding and strong disciplinary knowledge
- Is enriching and engaging for all students so that they achieve regardless of their background or prior attainment
- Has academic rigour alongside creativity and practical learning
- Supports all students through adaptive teaching but maintains high expectations for all (particular disadvantaged students and those with SEND needs)
- Promotes equality, anti racism, respect and belonging.
- Develops skills of numeracy, literacy, oracy, and digital literacy
- Prepares students for future learning and employment, including the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- Equips our students to be active citizens within the local and international community in order to overcome social disadvantage.

Our curriculum intent is also set firmly within the context of a Catholic vision for education.

Curriculum Delivery

The formal curriculum is organised into a 30-period week with lessons being 50 minutes in length. This entitlement is achieved by offering a core curriculum in which creative, geographical, historical, environmental, linguistic, literary, scientific, mathematical, technological, spiritual, moral and religious areas of learning are offered to the students. St Mark's implements a 3-year key stage 3, and this develops the disciplinary knowledge and skills necessary for progression to key stage 4 and 5. This is all taught within mixed ability classes, with the exception of Mathematics.

At Key Stage 4, choice is offered to allow for individual development needs and personal interests. The EBacc is at the heart of the St Mark's curriculum as we believe that this provides students with the best route to success. We value the delivery of Modern Foreign Languages, and the vast majority of students undertake them until the end of year 11. Careers advice and guidance supports the options process at GCSE and continues into year 10 and 11. In the Sixth Form, we offer a wide range of A Level courses, and the majority of students choose 3 subjects. Some A Level students will undertake a fourth A' Level or an EPQ.

To ensure coherence and development, the curriculum is regularly reviewed by the SLT, Subject Leaders and in Department meetings. Subject Leaders have the professional autonomy to shape their curriculum in their subject areas based on the latest educational research. Each Subject Leader has formulated a clear curriculum map and statement, which is shared with all members of the Department. Subject Leaders are responsible for ensuring that teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach (including teachers delivering lessons outside their main area of expertise).

Teaching and learning at St Mark's enables all pupils to acquire deep knowledge, develop disciplinary thinking and achieve exceptionally well over time. Teachers use expert subject knowledge, responsive assessment and explicit instruction to ensure learning is adaptive, inclusive and challenging, enabling every pupil, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, to succeed. Across the school, high expectations, consistent routines and a culture of excellence create classrooms in which pupils are highly engaged, think critically and produce work of a consistently exceptional standard. Continuing professional development ensures teachers are considering the latest research when developing their classroom practice and pedagogical knowledge.

Teachers and leaders use assessment to check understanding; to inform teaching and to close any knowledge and skills gaps. The whole school policy has been designed following the guidance from the EEF and to reduce unnecessary burdens on staff, whilst still supporting students and ensuring progress.

Reading and oracy is prioritised to allow students to access the full curriculum offer. The school is promoting fluency, confidence and the enjoyment of reading. Students' reading attainment is assessed, and gaps are addressed.

Through the curriculum, all students will realise their potential and develop a sense of their own worth. It will also enable them to respect people in the school and the wider community. Inclusion for all is at the heart of the school's Catholic ethos

The Wider Curriculum

The wider curriculum contributes greatly to students' learning and experiences. Liturgies, Masses and Retreats are an essential and regular part of the Catholic life of the School. Lunchtime and after-school activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, sporting activities, academic and pastoral intervention and curriculum enrichment studies serve to extend our students fully. There is also a wide range of leadership opportunities and public speaking competitions. We aim to enrich our students' cultural capital both within and outside of the classroom.

Curriculum Impact

At St. Mark's, we teach a broad, rich and academic curriculum and this leads to excellent student progress and achievement in public examinations. Continual monitoring of individual performance through our reporting system ensures that students are continually encouraged to maintain and increase their efforts. We appreciate that curriculum development is an ongoing process, and we continue to monitor, evaluate and refine our curriculum in order to develop highly educated young people who are ready to play their full part in society.

Students at St Mark's are ready for the next stage of education, employment or training; they gain skills and qualifications that allow them to go on to destinations that meet their interests and aspirations.

Parental and community involvement with our curriculum is essential if it is to fulfil the vision and mission of the school. Parents' evenings, expectations evenings, newsletters, diaries and information booklets keep parents informed as to what we are trying to achieve with our students.

Our Governing Body is consulted on a regular basis as to the content of the curriculum and approves the Curriculum policy.