

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic High School



Curriculum Statement Policy

Curriculum Statement

Principles

The school curriculum comprises all those activities and experiences which contribute to the intellectual, spiritual, physical, social and emotional development of members of the school community.

This definition refers also to the extended or out-of-hours curriculum which contributes to the ethos of the school, promoting the values expressed in our Mission Statements and School Aims.

St Joseph's bases its curriculum on the principle that all pupils should have access to a broad, balanced, relevant and coherent curriculum, irrespective of their personal aptitudes and abilities. The school seeks to ensure equality of opportunity within the curriculum for all pupils.

All pupils have in common a need to acquire the knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes necessary for their own development, and for playing a full part in society. In general, the purpose of the curriculum is to help all pupils to achieve this development, each to their own potential.

Therefore, the curriculum aims to help pupils:

- i) to deepen their understanding of Gospel values, of the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and of their own spiritual potential.
- ii) to become enthusiastic learners, with the ability to question, argue and reason, developing the skills and motivation to pursue independent lines of enquiry.
- iii) to develop self-confidence, and self-discipline, grow in self-esteem, and develop sensitivity to and respect for others.
- iv) to communicate in a variety of ways, using a wide range of media, including new technology.
- v) to develop a respect for their community and for the environment, and an appreciation of the interdependence of all aspects of the world.
- vi) to foster an appreciation of a wide range of human achievements.
- vii) to acquire knowledge and skills in preparation for adult life, and the world of work.
- viii) to promote a healthy lifestyle, encouraging participation in physical activity and nurturing talent.

Design and Content

The curriculum of the school must achieve breadth by bringing all pupils into contact with a wide range of areas of learning and experience. It cannot be assumed that this breadth in the curriculum is guaranteed simply by the range of subjects offered under the National Curriculum.

Balance must be achieved in the curriculum by ensuring that each of these areas, for each pupil, is allowed sufficient scope for development, in terms of time and resources. Equally, there should be a balance in the variety of teaching styles employed in each classroom, with avoidance of the over use of any one particular style. A balance should be achieved also across the range of types of work required of the pupils in each classroom, with avoidance of overdue emphasis on any one particular kind of work.

Each area of learning should draw upon the pupil's experience of the world, and enhance their understanding of it. What is taught and learned should be perceived by pupils to meet their present needs, be relevant to the prospective needs of adult life, serve to enhance their enjoyment of learning or further their interest in, and understanding of the world.

The requirements of the Citizenship and the Enterprise Curriculum should be met. Each curriculum area should identify aspects of their schemes which contribute to such coverage.

The school's curriculum must be differentiated, in that it possesses the capacity to cater for the needs, abilities and interests of each individual pupil. It is important, then, that departments identify and seek to meet the varying needs and ability levels of the pupils in each teaching group.

The Special Status of Religious Education

In using Christ as the "model for our personal behaviour and treatment of others", it follows that the path to full achievement of potential is, for each person, only to be found through sound knowledge of His teachings, followed ever more closely through a deepening spiritual awareness of His presence in our lives.

Since a person's potential can only be fully realised through a lived commitment to Christ, based upon an informed understanding of His way, it follows that Religious Education is central and essential to the rounded development of each pupil in every way.

The school also recognises that the spiritual and moral development of each pupil is not the sole responsibility of the Religious Education Department, but rather, in word and in deed, by teaching and by example, and at all times that of every member of the school community.

The Curriculum and the Community

The school recognises that close involvement with the community enhances the quality of teaching, learning, attainment and progress.

We aim to take every opportunity to:

- ~ use the knowledge and expertise of members of our local, national and international communities to enrich the work of departments.
- ~ use the facilities and environment of the community as teaching and learning resources in helping to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- ~ develop a healthy community approach in our pupils by introducing them to important local, national and international issues, and by encouraging them to become actively engaged.
- ~ involve the pupils practically in community work (e.g. SVP, choir and orchestra; primary schools; help with community projects etc).
- ~ ensure that each department updates and revises schemes of work to include new community projects as they are introduced.

In this way, "the community" is regarded as a natural resource, to be drawn upon across the curriculum as an essential part of school life.

Partnership with Parents

In meeting its responsibilities to parents, St Joseph's seeks to foster an open door policy. The school endeavours to inform parents as fully as possible on the progress of their child, and on the performance of the school as a whole. Parents are welcome into school at any time to discuss their child's schooling and are warmly invited to attend the many functions and celebrations which take place during the school year.

The school will endeavour to ensure that;

- i) girls and boys equally are positively engaged in the whole range of curricular provision.
- ii) all curricular areas contribute towards a broad and balanced education.
- iii) all curriculum areas contribute towards the moral and spiritual development of each individual.

- iv) access to the curriculum is extended to pupils having special educational needs through the provision of appropriate support.
- v) wherever possible, parents are engaged in the process of supporting children through the education programme.
- vi) due consideration is given to recognising the importance of community involvement in enhancing the quality of teaching, learning, attainment and progress.
- vii) processes of assessment and recording enable pupils' strengths to be extended and limitations reduced.
- viii) manageable processes of recording ensure continuity and progression of pupils' learning
- ix) the school curriculum as a whole promotes high expectations of pupils' performance.
- x) The delivery of the curriculum encourages the development of self-esteem

