

St. Michael's Catholic Academy



Curriculum Overview – updated May 2017

Introduction

St. Michael's offers a broad and balanced curriculum to meet the needs of *all* students within our community. We are an inclusive, progressive Academy, and we seek to provide a personalised curriculum within the guidelines set by Government.

The Academy is committed to supporting students to discover, nurture and fully enrich their talents so they can successfully take their place in our community and in the wider world. Students experiencing success and achievement is at the centre of all we do in order to build confidence and help students to better know, love and accept themselves and others.

Our curriculum is designed to enable students to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to obtain the very best outcomes in their final exams in Year 11. Our curriculum plan provides for students of high, middle and low ability alongside vulnerable and SEND students.

In Years 7 and 8 students experience a broad foundation of subjects to help identify areas of strength and love for subjects they would like to pursue at GCSE level. These include:

RE	English	Maths	Science
Art	Computer Science	DT	Geography
History	MFL	Music	PE

In addition, all students from Year 7 through to Year 11 follow a course of Personal, Social, Health and Careers Education, which is studied weekly alongside a programme of life skills which covers British Values, Safeguarding, e-Safety, in conjunction with a respect programme, which explores issues of race, discrimination, sexuality (including LGBT awareness) and equality within our inclusive Catholic context.

St Michael's provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through activities and our vibrant student-centred ethos where we model our behaviours, our thinking and our actions with Christ at our centre.

St Michael's Catholic Academy regards preparation for life and keeping safe as a profound priority, and this is reflected in our weekly provision of assemblies and talks from visiting speakers.

Setting from September 2017

From September, the Academy will set across all year groups and all subject areas in a structure that will result in two top sets, two second sets, two third sets and so on - called parallel setting. This will make it much easier for students to move up and down sets to better meet their needs whilst developing their talents. The Academy wishes to provide the best environment for progress for all students, including SEN and vulnerable students and, after consultation, the Academy is now introducing setting.

All form groups will be mixed ability for registration and PSHCE.

Early GCSE

Due to the more demanding content of the new GCSEs, core subjects, humanities and languages will begin the GCSE syllabus in Year 9. These subjects include:

RE	English	Maths	Science
Geography	History	MFL	

As a Catholic Academy we see Religious Education as at the core of our Academy and therefore all students follow GCSE Religious Education. Not only is the subject very successful academically, but it also provides important moral and spiritual education vital to the development of every child and adult. All students take GCSEs in Maths, English Language and English Literature. These three qualifications are the key to future success regardless of whether students go straight into the world of work, apply to college or for an apprenticeship. All students take Science as part of their core curriculum. Core Science consists of a Combined Science GCSE (two GCSEs) which includes Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Many students study Separate Sciences which consists of three separate GCSEs. We also expect all students to participate in Core PE which is not examined.

Option choices

In addition to helping students cover the content and skills required to complete these more demanding GCSEs by starting in Year 9, this will also help students make a much better choice when the Options Evening takes place later in Year 9.

The Academy does not provide a one-size-fits-all approach for students within the optional curriculum and, as such, provides four pathways to the future. The pathways are identified by looking at your son's/daughter's strengths and weaknesses and then suggesting two possible pathways that would best ensure your child reaches their full potential. Within the selected pathway there will still be some choices to be made. The four pathways are as follows:

- **Baccalaureate Academic**
- **General Academic**
- **Broad Curriculum**
- **Personalised Curriculum**

Baccalaureate Academic Pathway

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Separate Sciences (three GCSEs)
- Spanish or French
- Geography or History

This pathway is designed for those students wishing to apply for to one of the top universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and York. These are known as the Russell group universities. Some of the courses at these universities also require that students have followed a languages course such as French or Spanish. All these universities expect students to have studied academic GCSEs. This pathway is designed to cater for the requirements for these universities.

General Academic Pathway

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Separate Sciences (three GCSEs)
- Geography or History
- Another GCSE or Technical award.

This pathway is designed for those students wishing to go to the majority of universities.

Broad Curriculum Pathway

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Combined Award Science (two GCSEs)
- Select two courses in any combination from our GCSEs, technical awards or BTEC courses.

This pathway has been designed for those students wishing to apply to modern universities or further education. It is also a great foundation for studying a trade or modern apprenticeship.

Personalised Curriculum Pathway

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Combined Award Science (Two GCSEs)
- Geography or History
- One technical OR BTEC course.
- Extra Maths, English and a further vocational qualification to be determined for your son/daughter.

This pathway has been designed for those students wanting a good foundation for studying a trade or modern apprentice. It also provides an opportunity to focus more on English and Maths.

Available GCSE and Vocational option courses

GCSEs	Vocational
Art	BTEC Creative Digital Production
French	BTEC Sport
Music	BTEC Health and Social Care
Spanish	Technical Award in Fashion and Textiles
History	Technical Award in Visual Communication
Film Studies	Technical Award in Materials Technology
Computer Science	Technical Award in Food and Catering
Geography	ECDL (European Computing Driving Licence)
Physical Education	

Careers provision across the Academy

Students follow a programme where they have access to:

- Kudos - internet based careers advice and guidance programme;
- Pastoral support from form tutors;
- PSHCE talks and guidance from industry specialists;
- Further education presentations;
- Work-related experiences;
- One-to-one independent careers, information advice and guidance;
- Visits to colleges of further education.

Waves of Intervention

Intervention is essential to help prevent students falling behind in subjects or underperforming with a profound emphasis on English and Maths. Intervention is at the centre of our inclusive ethos.

In St. Michael's we have three Waves of Intervention as follows:

Universal Intervention: This intervention is the responsibility of the subject teacher and is put in place if a student is required to improve classwork, homework or improve a subject assessment. This intervention is informed by the marking data and the judgement of the teacher

Targeted Intervention: This intervention is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leader and is put in place where universal intervention has been ineffective. This intervention consists of a small group tuition delivered by a specialist teacher for 45 minutes each Monday. The impact of this intervention is measured by an assessment before the intervention with a post-assessment following the intervention.

Intensive Intervention: This intervention is the responsibility of the Principal who ensures that an Intervention Graduate Coach provides one-to-one tuition for students to diminish gaps in knowledge and skills to assist students to regain progress and develop strong revision and study skills.