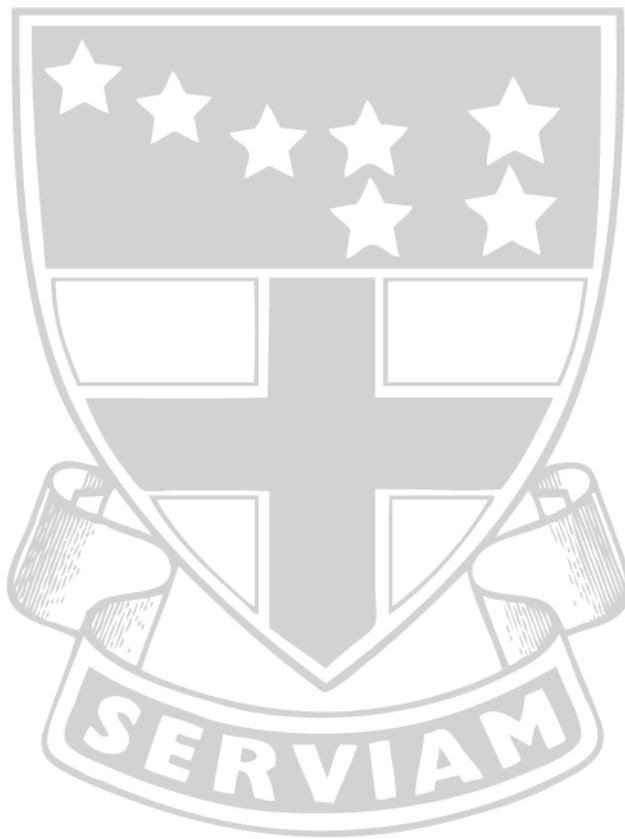


CURRICULUM POLICY



Date of Review: July 2024

Date of Next Review: July 2026

St Angela's Ursuline School

Curriculum Policy

Aim:

The intention of the curriculum at St Angela's Ursuline School is to provide high challenge subject specialist learning that equips students not only for examination but future employment and life success.

Fluency in both literacy and numeracy are integral to this aim alongside developing the skills, abilities, characteristics and traits that match our Ursuline ethos and the important knowledge needed that reflects British Values and the desire to be a force for good in the world.

Our school offers all students a broad and balanced curriculum that develops their intellectual curiosity and subject expertise. Our curriculum intent is to be ambitious, challenging and inspire students to have high aspirations, discover new talents and achieve their full potential. Through our engaging curriculum we seek to meet the needs of the whole person by ensuring the highest possible standards in education. The impact of our curriculum is that it prepares students not only to be highly successful but also to be ready for the next stage of their life journey.

Curriculum organisation:

Our formal curriculum consists of 50 one hour periods over two weeks. Within this, there are three formal key stages:

Key Stage 3: Year 7 - 9

Key Stage 4: Year 10 - 11 (GCSEs / Btec)

Key Stage 5: Year 12 - 13 (A levels)

All students are provided with a high-quality inclusive education. The curriculum coverage allows all groups of students to access the content and make progress through the curriculum. Our daily registration of 20 minutes is a key component of our curriculum. The school has a rolling PSHCCE programme for all students in Year 7-13.

At Key Stage 3 students are taught: English, Mathematics, Religious Education, Science, Modern Languages, Art, Computer Science, Drama, Geography, History, Music, PE, Technology and PSHE. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 lays the foundations for the requirements of the GCSE by equipping students with the skills for success and developing their interest in a wide range of topics. This curriculum ensures students are supported to select strong KS4 subject choices in all routes including artistic subjects and not just EBacc performance subjects.

At Key Stage 4 students are able to select from a range of GCSEs. All students follow our compulsory core subjects of English Literature, English Language, Mathematics, Religious Education and Double or Triple Science. Students then select from the following subjects: Art, Business Studies, Computer Science, Dance, Drama, Geography, History, Modern Foreign Languages (French, Spanish, German), Music, Physical Education, Psychology, Sociology, Technology or Btec Media. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 further develops students' subject expertise, preparing them for the requirements of the GCSE examinations and then further / higher study.

At Key Stage 5 students are able to select from a range of A levels. Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science, Drama, Economics, English Literature, Geography, History, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, French, Spanish, German, Physics, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology and Product Design and a hybrid-online/face to face Core RE. The curriculum at Key Stage 5 ensures students have mastered a higher level of subject expertise that prepares them fully for university and the world of work. Progression to university is exceptionally high.

The subjects offered within the curriculum are ambitious and designed to give all students the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. It is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.

Subject Organisation:

Students follow a well planned content sequence in each subject area that enables our curriculum intent to be implemented. The table included in this policy reflects the current SOWs for each subject curriculum area. Leaders have ensured that the sequencing of lessons reflects their longer term planning to maximise the impacts for both subject expertise and outcomes. Leaders rationalise their content choices to ensure that students are able to consolidate and master their understanding of the key topic areas. There is clear knowledge progression and sequencing of concepts. Students know what they are learning, the purpose of it and can relate this to the bigger picture of learning over time.

The intention of the curriculum is clearly signposted to students and parents through detailed schemes of work that are shared on the school website with all (visually accessible roadmaps). Subjects are increasingly working together to consider cross curricular themes and a layer of cross curricular sequencing. KS3 is used as the foundation for building KS4 success as they do KS4 into KS5.

The subject curriculum is delivered by our high quality practitioners who all engage fully in CPL opportunities, including action research projects to further enhance the implementation and impact of the curriculum to our learners. This ensures they have the

knowledge, expertise and practical skills to design and implement a curriculum that meets the needs of our learners and is both appropriate and equitable for everyone.

Lesson observations, learning walks and work scrutinies of both students' work and assessments are regularly conducted each term by all leaders (Middle leaders and SLT) to assess the quality of education received by the students. Leaders analyse this evidence jointly in line management and middle leaders meetings to judge whether the intended curriculum is being enacted. Through regular rigorous assessment students are tracked carefully throughout their school journey so that parents are fully aware of their attainment. These assessments demonstrate how well students can recall learning over time, but also provide reliable information on intervention needs. The cycle of revision lessons followed by an assessment and then directed improvement and reflection time (DIRT) is well established across all departments. The aim of this is to support students feeling confident that they are able to demonstrate their knowledge in assessments as well as learn effectively from their mistakes. Assessments have been carefully created by departments to provide opportunities for the students to show what they can do rather than what they cannot do and to self review.

The Wider Curriculum:

The wider curriculum delivery of SMSC, PSHCEE and a curriculum which strongly supports the arts subjects is helping to grow people for the future in varied walks of life. The students also explore the Ursuline Virtues actively and have a role in planning these sessions.

Rise Up Day (PSHCEE) Curriculum:

Rise up days give us the opportunity to focus on our PSHCEE curriculum and further develop our students character in line with our Ursuline student profile. All students engage in a drop down curriculum that enables them to personally develop the characteristics and traits that match our ethos by participating in a sequence of lessons that will prepare them fully for society. These include exploring key issues like Relationships and Sex Education, Living in the wider society (Citizenship), Health and Wellbeing (Mental and Physical Health) and securing the important knowledge needed that reflects British values and the desire to be a force for good in the world.

Extra-curricular:

Students are encouraged to pursue opportunities that extend their learning outside of the classroom but also support and extend the knowledge they acquire within the classroom. The school provides students at all key stages with programmes that enable them to both discover and develop a wide range of interests and skills.

Students participation in our wider extra curriculum continues to support our intentions. The happiness and well rounded nature of the students is key and as such the school offers over 40 extra-curricular activities in a wide range of sporting, academic and artistic areas.

These opportunities are highly valued across all key stages and help to nurture our students' talents preparing them for the future in varied walks of life. Our success at sports is very much recognised both within the borough of Newham and beyond.

Students are encouraged to participate in educational visits which allow them the chance to draw on both their academic and personal skills. These experiences can bring topics to life and make a valuable contribution to the learners' understanding. Academic, sporting and artistic success in the school are excellent and we are not only always one of Newham's highest academically achieving, best attended and we believe happiest schools.

Students have the opportunity to participate in a number of programmes run within the school which further support their educational experience and prepare them for further study and the world of work. This includes both KS3 and KS4 taking part in the Brilliant Club. This is a programme that seeks to increase the number of students from under-represented backgrounds progressing to highly selective universities. In-school tutorials are provided by PhD graduates and the programme is successful in further stretching and challenging our more able students. The school works with Debate Mate to run extra-curricular debate workshops. This programme increases students' speaking and listening attainment and improves a range of higher-order thinking skills and non-cognitive abilities such as oracy, confidence, teamwork, and leadership. Debate Mate supports students to find their voices, so that they can become the leaders of tomorrow. Selected Year 10 students participate in the Rising Futures programme which delivers personalised support through a developmental journey of inspirational coaching sessions and immersive experience where students can develop valuable life skills and are inspired to reach their full potential. Other opportunities include Team up which provides small-group tuition to pupils from low income backgrounds that is effective and delivered by inspiring tutors. This high quality tuition helps increase students academic results and raise their aspirations.

The positive contributions that students make both within the classroom and within our community are recognised by our termly commendation assemblies and also our involvement with the Jack Petchey Foundation. Students are given the opportunity to take on leadership roles by being reps for their year, contributing to student voice through the student council and also in Sixth Form being part of our Student Leadership team.

Within school students have the opportunity to participate in our liturgy groups, our school gospel choir and also take a role in our annual school musical. Within departments we have subject specific events.

Our students represent our community very well giving generously of their time to raise awareness and funds for those in the world who are less fortunate.

Homework and Flipped Learning:

Homework is an essential component of the learning process. The work set consolidates and extends the knowledge and understanding that students have acquired within lessons. Homework is vital to our students' progress at school.

At St Angela's we utilise Flipped learning as a form of pre-learning for lessons. The main focus of 'high challenge for all' has been through flipped learning as a T&L initiative complementing the accelerated learning techniques used over many years. Flipped learning means that activities that were traditionally done in the lesson are now completed at home. Students are introduced to the learning material before the lesson, which then means that lesson time can be used to deepen understanding through classroom activities.

Flipped learning is a pedagogical approach in which the conventional notion of classroom-based learning is inverted, so that students are introduced to the learning material before class, with classroom time then being used to deepen understanding through discussion with peers and problem-solving activities facilitated. Flipped learning moves students away from passive learning and towards active learning where students engage in collaborative activity, peer learning and problem-based learning. Within this context, the role of the teacher shifts towards that of facilitator and coach by empowering students to take control of their own learning. The use of technology further enriches the flipped learning process and promotes skills that are essential for 21st-century learning.

Flipped learning as our key T&L initiative has been embedded throughout the school. The implementation of this has ensured that we continue to provide high challenge for all, both within and beyond the classroom. Flipped learning has had a major impact on key departments (History, Psychology and Sociology) with outstanding attainment and progress results. As more departments have engaged with this T&L initiative results have risen in key groups.

Homework Routines

We encourage students to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own studies by developing good home learning habits and study routines from Year 7.

Parents support these habits by:

- Providing a suitable quiet environment where your child can complete the work
- Allocate a time each evening for students to complete the set work
- Check Google classroom for full instructions

Where feasible, students are encouraged to complete home learning activities on the day it is set.

Literacy and Numeracy:

Fluency in literacy is integral to our curriculum intentions and all students are encouraged to spend 20-30 minutes per day reading (for pleasure/interest) to develop their literacy skills. We promote high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English. The TLC (school library) has a range of books that are regularly updated for all students to borrow. Students are taught to take ownership of their learning through reading and research.

Students are also encouraged to read the newspaper and watch the daily news to keep abreast of current affairs and have a better understanding of what is going on in the world.

Mathematical fluency and confidence in numeracy is developed throughout the curriculum and the daily registration is used to challenge students with a numeracy programme eg numeracy ninjas

Curriculum resources:

Departments effectively utilise their capitation to purchase resources that provide the best impact for students and are value for money. Resources are regularly updated to reflect changes in specifications and our schemes of work. Textbooks are loaned to students for courses and departments subscribe to subject specific platforms that enable students to access online material beyond the lesson. The school has had a continuous programme of investing in technology to ensure that the latest innovations can be used to further support students' learning. We have successfully moved to being a google school harnessing all the advantages that google can bring to both our students and staff. The school is rich in resources with every classroom equipped with an IWB / Plasma screen. Staff utilise visualisers to support teaching and learning. Students have access to ICT resources to support their learning throughout the school day. All staff have access to computers and our ICT service provision ensures that our systems are well managed.

Assessment:

The GCSE grading system of 1- 9 is used to assess students from years 7 to 11. The 1-9 grids for each subject identify the knowledge, understanding and skills required for each grade.

The school makes use of formative and summative assessment to secure students progress. There is a combination of classroom assessments and year group examinations.

The parents of Key Stage 3 and 4 students receive 3 reports per year, 1 per term. These reports highlight students' current working at grade, their predicted grade and an indicator for their efforts both in lessons and with the work completed for home learning.

The report communicates how well students have performed in recent examinations or assessments, allowing parents to know how well their child is growing in the skills required to complete their GCSEs.

The timetable is temporarily suspended in the summer term and Year 7 - 10 sit formal end of year examinations. This helps familiarise students with completing examinations in an exam hall environment under timed conditions. Year 11-13 will also sit mock examinations in the winter term to fully prepare them for their summer external examinations.

Study Support:

Key Stage 3

Students are able to get further daily support with their studies through homework support and reading support. Students are guided during this period by our Learning Mentors.

Key Stage 4

GCSEs are essential qualifications for students and we run a targeted intervention programme of study support everyday after school to ensure that students are never without support. These sessions run for 1 hour and they are carefully planned so that teachers can close any gaps in understanding but also provide additional support that will boost students' grades. Parents and students are informed of all sessions. Students are issued with their own personalised timetable. This timetable is updated half termly so it responds to the needs of all pupils. Students who are not allocated to a specific subject on one day may utilise the schools Place To Be study room to complete independent work assigned by their teachers. This is supported by the TLC staff who can advise on resources that may support their learning but also work with students on improving their literacy.

Out of Hours Learning:

A programme of revision sessions are run in the February half term and Easter holidays for GCSE and A level students. These sessions are led by our subject experts and are a perfect opportunity for students to gain further support with their revision during the final months before the exam.

Overall our academic excellence, student enrichment and a vast array of opportunities annually make progression to university life exceptionally high.