



**ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE**  
**CURRICULUM POLICY 2024 – 26**  
**Incl. DISCIPLINARY LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**  
**POLICY 2024-26**

At St Michael's we offer a broad and balanced curriculum which provides both continuity and progression for our students across the key stages as well as fostering the spiritual, intellectual, moral, cultural and physical development of all our students. Our curriculum focuses on ensuring the achievement and enjoyment of each individual; we recognise that all students have different talents and ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to find and develop the talents that they possess.

**Aims:**

- To provide a curriculum that offers depth and balance, challenge and enjoyment, allowing students to explore, identify and pursue their talents, within a framework of high expectations
- That is personalized, meeting the needs and aspirations of all our students
- That prepares students for an active role in an uncertain and fluid employment market
- Prepares pupils positively for life in modern Britain, promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Embedded within this is our mission to provide these opportunities within the framework of a Christian, Catholic community in particular building on the vision of our Salesian Founders so that our curriculum fully articulates the Catholic vision of the college and is able to foster in all our students: 'the ability to enjoy thinking, generate ideas, search for answers and explore mystery'.

The curriculum at St Michaels is reviewed annually to ensure that it:

- Enables excellent student outcomes to be maintained and improved
- Meets both students' and statutory needs
- Maintains depth and richness
- Is coherently planned and sequenced to ensure that students are able to build the relevant skills and knowledge they need for excellent outcomes at each key stage

**Implementation:**

We ensure that our curriculum is personalised, challenging and stimulates the interest of our students.

**Key Stage 3:**

At Key stage 3 we aim:

- To provide a foundation of knowledge and skills leading to KS4 and beyond.

- To allow students to become familiar with new subjects, develop interests and be able to make informed choices for the future, based on a realistic understanding of their talents, abilities, aspirations and interests.

All students at key stage 3 follow a broad and balanced curriculum intended to build on their skills from primary school as well as develop and embed subject knowledge across a range of subjects. Year 9 is pre-GCSE year whereby all subjects make the transition to GCSE skills, including the mode of assessment and models of working. There is increased emphasis on GCSE targets.

Across the key stage, an S group exists in order to challenge our most able students. These students are identified through having CATs scores of higher than 115 and above average KS2 results and have the opportunity to study Latin as well as experiencing increased challenge throughout their lessons.

### **In Year 7, 8 and 9 all students will study:**

RE, English, Maths, Science, History, Geography, MFL – either French or Spanish, P.E, Design and technology: Food and nutrition, Textiles and Product Design, Drama, Music, Art, Computing and CPHSE.

In addition, some students will study Latin in Year 7 and 8, with Classical Civilization in Year 9

### **Key Stage 4:**

At the start of Key stage 4, many of our students have begun their GCSE courses already, in terms of skills development and knowledge building.

We aspire to 80% + of our students achieving the English Baccalaureate by ensuring that they take History or Geography and a Modern Foreign language as well as the core subjects of English, Maths, Science and RE. Core subject support is available as an option for those students who would benefit from additional intervention rather than studying a language. Computing skills are delivered across all subjects in line with our Technology for Learning Plan which incorporates the use of google classroom.

### **Courses at Key stage 4:**

Core subjects studied to GCSE by all students:

RE, English language and Literature, Maths, Science – double or triple

Ebacc subjects: Humanity: either geography or History, MFL: either French or Spanish

Students can choose from the following Option subjects as GCSE choices:

Art and Design Fine Art, Business Studies, Computer science, Design and technology, Drama, Media studies, Music, Physical education and Cambridge National Level 2 Certificate in Creative iMedia.

All students have the opportunity to do PE once a week which is non-examined and all students study CPHSE.

### **Key Stage 5:**

At key stage 5 we offer 3 pathways: An honours pathway, A level and the Technical Pathway. Each pathway comes with related enrichment experiences including EPQ or the opportunity for work experience. All students study NOCN RE for one timetabled period a week and have a PE lesson to support fitness for life.

### **Enrichment**

St Michael's College values the understanding that knowledge can fall outside traditional subject boundaries and that learning can be organised in different ways ; our curriculum includes a range of opportunities for these. There is a Careers and Enterprise week as well as an Arts and Enrichment week and the curriculum is enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities; each subject offers a culturally enriching activity at some point during the year, ensuring that, over the course of the year all of our students experience a range of activities that will deepen their cultural understanding and appreciation of the subjects that they study.

Homework is deemed an essential aspect of our out of hours provision and is intended to enhance the students' learning. Google Classroom is used to set and monitor this and clear expectations of the amount of time that students are expected to spend on these tasks are established with parents. Parents are asked to support the college in ensuring that homework is completed to the highest standard and the college holds a homework club every afternoon to facilitate this.

### **Inclusion:**

We provide an inclusive curriculum which allows for different learning styles and prior learning experiences, as well as one which ensures that there is a match between each student and the tasks that they are set. This means that for some subjects, students are taught in groups that are set by ability and that some students receive additional support.

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is delivered effectively with regard to differentiation and the needs of all students regardless of ethnic or social group, the most able and those with additional learning needs.

In accordance with the law, the College has the right to respond to individual needs by modifying the National Curriculum programmes to:

- Allow a student with individual strengths to emphasise a particular curriculum area;
- Allow a student making significantly less progress than other students of his/her age to consolidate his/her learning and progress across the curriculum.

Decisions about any of the above will only be made after discussion with the student and parent.

Students who have been placed in the Alternative Provision Base may join live lessons through Google Classroom or be set work using other live resources that the department considers to be more effective.

### **Relationships and Sex Education**

**For further information on this, please refer to The Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

The College provides relationship and sex education in the basic curriculum for all students, in which students are encouraged and guided by moral principles and taught to recognise the value of family life/catholicity. A full statement of the College's relationship and sex education policy is available to parents. It has been drawn up in consultation with staff, students and parents, and considers the views of representatives from the community. It has regard for the government's guidance in Sex and Relationship Education Guidance and to Diocesan guidance. In accordance with the law the biological aspects of human reproduction remain compulsory for all students, but parents may withdraw their children from any other part of the sex education provision without giving reasons.

**Career’s Education**

The college employs a fully qualified careers adviser to work with the students and provide impartial and independent careers guidance. In years 10, 11 and 13 this takes the form of one-to-one meetings and support, while in year 9 the options and careers process are led by members of SLT. Year 7 and 8 has discrete careers delivery through activities during Careers and Enterprise week; including careers sessions delivered by the career’s adviser as well as encounters with employers. In addition to this, the college works closely with a number of Business partners such as Bloomberg, JP Morgan , Ernst and Young, and Grant Thornton to offer quality real life experiences for students. A full statement of our careers provision can be found in the Careers Policy.

**Quality Control**

The whole curriculum is monitored by the Curriculum Governing Body.

- Curriculum review is carried out by the Vice principal and other members of the Leadership Team as appropriate
- Curriculum Teams/Teaching and Learning group and through:
- Working Parties with a specific focus – e.g. Learning Communities
- Listening to the student voice with questionnaires or interviews
- Outside consultants
- The Sixth Form curriculum is monitored and evaluated by the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for the Sixth Form

**Concerns**

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum should discuss these in the first instance with the student's tutor. If the issue is not resolved parents should contact the Principal in writing.

**June 2024**

**Chair of the Governing Body**

**Signed:.....Date:.....**

**Review Date: 2026**



**ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGE  
DISCIPLINARY LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM  
POLICY 2024 - 26**

**Aims**

At St Michael's we believe that literacy is the key to academic success across the curriculum. The explicit teaching of grammar and writing structures can support students' learning as they move from describing to thinking, reading has the power to shape and develop minds and fluency in all subjects requires students to make meaning from the literature of the different academic disciplines they study. Through the approach of 'Disciplinary Literacy' we recognise that literacy skills are both general and subject specific and we support teachers in every subject to teach students how to read, write and communicate effectively in all of their subjects.

**Purpose**

The ability to communicate effectively in whatever situation you find yourself and to whomever you find yourself speaking or writing is essential for an adult to participate with confidence in our society. We build these skills steadily throughout our curriculum through disciplinary literacy.

**Principles**

We have a layered approach to literacy:

**Literacy Intervention:**

Students complete screening tests when they join St Michael's to identify those struggling with reading. If the student's reading age is significantly below the student's chronological age a process of further investigation begins. This may relate to:

- Word recognition
- Reading comprehension accuracy
- Reading comprehension speed

Selected students are also given a phonics test, to establish whether their reading barriers are linked to phonic knowledge or to decoding of meaning. A reading age score is produced, and any Year 7-9 students identified as being significantly below their expected reading age is put into a reading intervention group.

These groups get targeted reading intervention for 30 minutes twice a week with their reading mentors, are enrolled on the Bedrock literacy programme and asked to complete additional Bedrock homework to help them develop their vocabulary. They are given positive rewards for regularly completing all their additional reading work. This programme is administered by reading mentors, and overseen by the Assistant Head in charge of reading. Reading mentors are trained in reciprocal reading strategies.

The progress of these students is monitored termly, using the Take Test Literacy Assessment, and the results are collated and cross referenced against a termly Bedrock report. Outcomes of the tests are used to inform adjustments to the following sessions.

### **Disciplinary Literacy:**

#### **Writing:**

##### **‘I write to know what I think’**

The college has used ‘The Writing Revolution’ as the foundation for developing staff expertise to support students written literacy within their subjects. In line with the writing requirements of individual subjects’ students are explicitly taught how to link ideas and sentences as well as how to build paragraphs and whole texts, so that writing enables them to scaffold their thinking.

In addition, Students are expected to write and spell accurately, presenting work clearly and neatly and all teachers follow a marking policy where spellings, punctuation and grammatical errors are worked on and corrected in green as a regular part of lessons. It is policy that one extended piece of writing is set per subject each half term in order to build in students the stamina and the capacity to plan and write the longer responses required at both KS4 and A level.

#### **Reading:**

The college approach to reading acknowledges that each subject has different reading demands. To support students to understand texts, the colleges prioritises ‘**disciplinary reading**’ in subject domains where subject specialist teachers provide targeted instruction of how best to read in their subjects.

Starting with the question ‘what does it mean to read like ...a mathematician, a historian, a geographer (etc). The college is working on identifying the specific demands of each subject, including the words required for conceptual understanding of the subject and the way that these are mapped across the curriculum, as well as identifying best practice in supporting students to access texts within specific subjects. Strategies for supporting disciplinary reading were the teaching and learning priority for 23 -24.

As well as this, within lessons, it is an expectation that students have regular opportunities to read and respond to extended, authentic and challenging pieces of text from a range of genres to both increase their cultural understanding as well as develop their literacy skills.

### **Speaking and Listening:**

Within lessons students are given opportunities to develop their thinking and their learning through peer, group and whole class discussion. Staff are expected to ensure that students develop their responses and make good use of standard English when speaking. This is supported through personal development opportunities such as the Junior UN, membership of the student council, the debating society, chaplaincy and other student voice opportunities across the college.

### **Literacy Enhancement:**

#### **Reading: 'We are a school that reads'**

In addition to specific literacy strategies, the college also places a large emphasis on the importance of reading for pleasure.

Whole school reading takes place every Friday morning in form time so that it is given rightful importance by all staff. The reading of joint novels in KS3 forms allow students to see staff modelling excellent reading habits, seeing their teachers enjoy reading for pleasure.

All staff are also encouraged to promote and regularly share what they are reading with students on the posters on office and classroom doors.

Our school library has a range of books for students, both fiction and non-fiction divided into the various year groups. There are a team of student librarians who order books from Southwark library written by diverse authors that they think students will enjoy. The librarians write and share reviews of the books in the library. Reviews are posted in The LINK each week, and the best one wins a prize.

The English department runs Key Stage 3 book club at lunch times, where students get to read and discuss contemporary novels. The English and MFL run a KS4 reading group focused on Literature in translation. The college also produces an annual college magazine, that gives students the chance to showcase and celebrate what they have been reading and writing.

All initiatives to promote reading for pleasure are recorded on the 'Reading for Pleasure' portal on the college website:

<https://sites.google.com/stmichaelscollege.org.uk/readingforpleasuresmcc/>

### **Writing:**

Students are provided with different opportunities to develop their writing skills: by writing articles for the College newsletter 'The Link'; contributing articles to faculty newsletters, The St Michael's Review and writing competitions advertised by the English Department or the challenge competitions. Nanorimo takes place in the Autumn term for Key stage 3 and 4 students.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- The Senior Leadership team alongside heads of department will monitor the impact on standards of literacy by work sampling and lesson observation or dipsticks. Functional skills for English are embedded in the new GCSE syllabus

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and progress in these will be tracked using internal assessments and external examination results. The impact of college literacy activities and interventions is measured through outcomes in GCSE English.

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**Reviewed June 2024**

**Signed .....** **Date .....**

**Chair of Curriculum Committee**

**Review Date: 2026**