



Gunnersbury Catholic School

Curriculum Intent and Realisation

Curriculum Intent

Gunnersbury Catholic School's curriculum intent and its realisation is founded upon our Mission Statement:

Gunnersbury Catholic School strives to educate all its pupils within an environment where the Catholic traditions of learning, truth, justice, respect and community are promoted. It encourages all to engage in as broad an interpretation of education as is possible, and one which is in keeping with the motto 'Ad Altiora' - 'To Higher Things.'

The curriculum is central to our efforts to maximise the potential of the individual within the school in academic, personal, physical, social and spiritual terms. An education of such quality enables Gunnersbury to shape young men and women who will take their exceptional values beyond school to promote a better, more just society.

Students require an education that effectively and appropriately furthers their knowledge whilst concurrently enabling the acquirement of new skills. In essence our curriculum seeks to enable our pupils to progressively know more and do more. The curriculum content, the delivery and the receipt are underpinned by educational research. We consider the work of Rosenshine and the science of metacognition of great significance. Students must be engaged in learning that is planned and well sequenced. Pupils experience a knowledge-rich curriculum and value the importance of retrieval practice in every lesson. A deep pedagogical insight has informed our departments' development of learning journeys with aspects such as interleaving, chunking and TRIO effectively integrated into schemes of work. We are building awareness of cognitive load and practical solutions so as to ensure lessons are most effective and do not over-burden students' cognitive load.

Our broad curriculum from Year 7-13 serves to enrich and develop all our students, we aim to have an engaging and stretching curriculum that can be accessed by all students in their relevant year group. We aim for all students, regardless of social background or prior attainment, to make progress and engage in opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. Opportunities to further cultural capital are embedded within our curriculum and constantly sought for. Students joining in Year 7 embark upon a curriculum that individually effectively builds on their learning at Key Stage 2. Each department from Year 7-13 follows a clear, extensive, detailed progress map which sets out the knowledge to be acquired and the skills to develop alongside the planned opportunities for recall and revision of content and skills previously encountered. We enable students to leave with a high standard of academic achievement that empowers them to achieve much success within higher/further education and/or the workplace. Furthermore, we are passionate to ensure all students thrive and develop as healthy and good citizens within the wider community and by learning, living and celebrating our Catholic tradition. We ensure SMSC values are embedded into both our pastoral and curriculum plans. Our PSHE (Living Faith) programme complements and develops students' skills and knowledge.

Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum is organised around a 34-period week with lessons each being 45 minutes in length. In Key Stage Three students are offered a broad curriculum including Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science, Languages, History, Geography, Computing,

Design Technology, Physical Education, Music and Art. Students follow an exciting Key Stage Three curriculum in Years 7, 8 and 9 which has been designed to stimulate and inspire students to build on the work covered in primary school, whilst enhancing and refining essential skills and making connection between subject matter. Our curriculum is intended to prioritise the growth of a broad and rich general knowledge through exposure to well-planned, age-related core content, factual information and powerful language. High quality teaching and vivid learning experiences, which are carefully and imaginatively sequenced, contribute to students' acquisition of knowledge. During Key Stage Three it is our ambition that students grow in confidence and develop skills of application and flexibility of thinking, capturing their creative imaginations and developing their talents. They also cover PSHE, RSE, British Values and undertake a comprehensive Careers programme.

From Key Stage 4 Business Studies, BTEC Sport and Business are also offered in addition to the subjects already in place. Furthermore; students are taught British Values, RSE, PSHE, as well as given a full careers programme. As they embark on a more personalised Key Stage Four curriculum in Years 10 and 11, students have laid solid foundations for study in a suite of subjects which they have chosen to pursue for GCSE. Gunnersbury Catholic School is fully inclusive, offering a curriculum that meets the needs of each individual and enables every student to succeed. Students will be inspired by their teachers and, through their learning in all subjects, will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to succeed in their courses alongside achieving a sense of personal fulfilment.

At Key Stage 5, students can continue with their subjects studied in the lower school – additionally Psychology, Economics, BTEC Level 3 Sport and BTEC Level 3 Business are available. Our Sixth Form students are also provided with the opportunity to join the Aquinas Programme . Our Sixth Form curriculum continues the learning journey with a greater emphasis on personalisation through, embracing a more scholarly ethos and promoting the value of independent learning and research, encouraging students to take on new activities, make a positive contribution to the wider school and community, and flex their leadership muscles in a range of diverse opportunities.

Excellent attainment and progress of students is of fundamental importance in preparing our young people for their education and employment beyond secondary school. Regular and robust formative and summative assessment provides opportunities for students to apply their learning and allows teachers to adapt teaching where necessary to ensure content is stored in the long-term memory. Careful planning of the curriculum seeks to support long term retention rather than short term performance, and students revisit and embed valuable skills across the key stages, re-engaging with content at a deeper level as they progress to reinforce prior learning and strengthen understanding and confidence.

The curriculum places high importance on the development of literacy and oracy skills for all students in all subjects, with the clear intention of enhancing their

ability to communicate effectively. It is the responsibility of all teachers in all subjects to help students develop their vocabulary as a way of improving the fluency of their writing and speaking. This is implemented through ensuring that in lessons, at all key stages, and for students of all abilities, exposure to extended written texts and speaking activities will be central to the learning experience, both with classwork and homework.

The wider school enrichment curriculum is intended to encourage belonging and a sense that wider opportunities, within and beyond the classroom, exist and are equally valued. A broad range of enhancement and extra-curricular activities are provided, allowing students access to opportunities that cater for all interests and abilities. These are implemented with a clear focus on the importance of giving young people a chance to shine and develop skills that are often not accurately measured in the classroom setting, such as leadership and teamwork. This will also help to improve students' 'mental wealth', promoting positivity, reducing levels of anxiety and providing a healthier work-life balance, all of which are important dimension of success.

Curriculum Impact

The overall impact of the curriculum at Gunnersbury Catholic School is sought to be sustained excellence in terms of knowledge acquisition and application, academic achievement and the development of rounded young people who are thoroughly prepared for life in a rapidly changing world – a world where transferable skills, including communication, technology, creativity and problem solving, will help succeed. Students' cultural capital, outcomes and the characteristics they develop will be a cause for celebration and there will be clear evidence of progression towards career-enhancing opportunities in employment, education and training.