

# **Curriculum Policy**

**Independent Day School for Boys and Girls (Whole School including EYFS)**

**Our Lady of Sion School**

# **OUR LADY OF SION SCHOOL CURRICULUM POLICY**

Our Lady of Sion School provides full-time supervised education for pupils from 3 – 19 years of age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996).

## **Curriculum**

Students are given experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative education, ensuring the acquisition of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills as appropriate to their age and ability.

This Curriculum Policy is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work (see below). It takes into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those with an EHC plan, and is being implemented effectively. It provides continuity and progression in the acquisition of knowledge, development of skills and development of attitudes and values for each student, prepares students for the appropriate public examinations and provides the broad range of knowledge and skills that students need for university and beyond.

This Policy does not undermine the Fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The School operates a policy of non-discrimination in line with Part 6 of the Equality Act (2010).

The School provides personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aims and ethos and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Our Careers guidance is accurate, up-to-date and impartial and enables students to make informed choices about a broad range of career options, helping them to fulfil their potential.

The EYFS provides, for pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills. The School provides students above compulsory school age with a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs.

The School ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress and prepares them effectively for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society. Students are taught to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England. They acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England and develop respect for the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

## **Teaching**

Teaching does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It precludes the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school.

The School enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subject-matter being taught and foster self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability of students to think and learn for themselves. Lessons are well-planned and employ effective teaching methods. Activities and classroom resources are of a good quality, quantity and range.

The School's Assessment Policy, incorporating our Marking Policy (see separate policies) demonstrate that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly. The information from that assessment is used to plan teaching so that pupils can progress. Teaching shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of all pupils.

Our Lady of Sion School has a framework for overall pupil performance to be evaluated by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms (see also Assessment Policy)

Students are encouraged to accept responsibility for their behaviour, to show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively not only within lessons but to the lives of those living and working in the local community and to society more widely.

This policy supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum and ensures that principles are actively promoted which enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.

We ensure that ICT is used wherever appropriate to enhance learning (see separate mobile devices policy; acceptable use policy).

Our Learning Support Department staff ensure that students on the SEN and Gifted and Talented Register are catered for appropriately.

In accordance with our Mission Statement, we further tolerance and harmony by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures, lifestyles and abilities, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

## EYFS

**The Foundation Stage Curriculum** – for Nursery and Reception is organised into seven areas of learning;

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

**Communication and language** development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

**Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

**Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

**Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

**Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

**Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

## **JUNIOR SCHOOL**

### **Curriculum Overview**

The curriculum meets the Regulations for Independent schools and covers all the required areas of learning. Long term and Medium term plans are located on the staff shared drive.

Most of our work is taken from National Curriculum subject guidance which we adapt to suit our particular children. KS1 and KS2 build on the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum and support and further the skills children learn in these early years.

English and Mathematics skills are developed through the School, with increased opportunities to use and apply skills in a purposeful way. Children are encouraged to embrace challenges that are posed for them and begin to seek further challenge for themselves. These core subjects are predominately taught in the morning. Where classes in KS2 exceed 20 students, classes are split by ability for Mathematics and are mixed ability for English.

We also provide additional subjects which enrich and supplement the curriculum, such as: Swimming, Games, French, Music and Drama.

We expect many of our children to exceed expected standards and we provide work that challenges and inspires them.

We welcome parents' contribution to their children's education, for example through parents visiting Year 1 class to read to children, support for homework and extra-curricular and enrichment events.

### **The curriculum consists of:**

Core subjects:

- English/Literacy
- Mathematics/Numeracy
- Science

Non-core subjects:

- Music\*
- Physical education (PE)\*
- Swimming\*
- Religious Studies / Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE)
- History and Geography/topic
- Computing
- Art/Design and Technology
- Drama\*
- French\*

*(Subjects marked \* are taught by Junior School and/or Senior School subject specialists.)*

In KS1 History and Geography are taught through creative topics that combine both subjects, and often include others such as Art, DT and ICT. An example of such a topic is 'Around our School'.

In KS2 some areas of the curriculum continue to be taught through topics to promote relevance and interest to learning. For example Year 4 'Tudors' feeds in to Art, Design and Technology as well as RS.

When children enter Year 6 they are further helped and prepared by staff for life in Senior School. They are encouraged to become more independent as they move to other learning areas of the school such as Science laboratories with more lessons taught by specialist teachers.

The personal development of each child is very important to us and opportunities to help our children in this are threaded through our entire school programme. PSHEE is usually not separately timetabled, but is combined with RS and supported by assemblies, whole-school activities, the School House system, and the ethos and everyday work of the school including: Christmas and Harvest celebrations, community fundraising, school plays and concerts, and the involvement of parents and the local community in the school.

Lessons in French are taught from Reception upwards by a Senior School specialist language teacher.

As well as Music being specialist taught from Reception, our students are able to receive individual music lessons from peripatetic staff in school. Concerts, parent assemblies and biannual musical shows are performed for family and friends to attend.

There are a large number of extra-curricular activities to choose from, including fencing, art club, Spanish and a wide variety of sports clubs and music clubs. We also run an Early Room and an After School Club. All these pursuits enhance our curriculum.

Carefully planned school trips and visiting speakers also reinforce curriculum themes, such as Year 6 visiting HMS Belfast.

### **Class structure**

Each year group, including EYFS, is single form entry. There is the space to have two classes for one year group, should the need arise.

Class teachers liaise to ensure that the curriculum helps children to build up their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively during their time with us.

EYFS and KS1 Classes are supported by teaching assistants. KS2 classes have a teaching assistant where appropriate.

The school has a strong family atmosphere which helps the children to feel safe and secure. For most subjects, children are taught by their class teacher. However, they happily accept specialist teaching and join in confidently with whole-school activities.

## **FACULTY SYSTEM (Senior School)**

Subject areas in the Senior school are organized into six Faculties as shown below:

### **English**

Pupils' communication and language skills, increasing their command of language through listening, speaking, reading and writing, are primarily developed through the English curriculum. Accuracy of punctuation and spelling is encouraged by careful marking. A range of poetry, novels and plays are studied in an age-appropriate programme to give insight into literary styles across time. Creative writing is a strength and students are encouraged to enter competitions and to have their work displayed in the local area. The expectation is for all students to take both English Language and Literature in Year 11; a very small number are advised to focus only on Language if this is in their best interest. The subject is also offered at A level. The English Department numbers two full time and two part time teachers. With a new A level and a new GCSE being launched simultaneously in 2015-16 the team has worked effectively together to devise new Schemes of Work for the exam years.

### **Mathematics**

The Mathematics curriculum develops pupils' numeracy skills and their abilities to make calculations, to understand and appreciate relationships and patterns in number and space and to develop their capacity to think logically and express themselves clearly. Their knowledge and understanding of Mathematics is developed in a variety of ways, including practical activity, exploration and discussion. The Maths department ensure that all Senior School students participate in the annual Maths Challenge and organize trips to University seminars for interested students. All students take iGCSE Mathematics; the most able take Statistics in Year 10. A level Maths is a popular choice and it is hoped that it will remain so with the move away from coursework in the new specifications.

### **Science and Technology**

The Science curriculum increases pupils' knowledge and understanding of nature, materials and forces and develops the skills associated with science as a process of enquiry: for example, observing, forming hypotheses, conducting experiments and recording their findings. The Curriculum leads to a minimum of a Double Award in Science, with separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics being a popular option. Similarly, these subjects attract large numbers of our Sixth Form students. The Science team numbers four full time and three part time teachers, supported by three Lab assistants.

Technological skills are developed through the ICT, Food & Nutrition and Design Technology curricula. DT and F&N are options for GCSE.

### **Modern Foreign Languages**

The MFL Department covers French, German and Spanish from Year 7 to A Level; Our Lady of Sion is proud to be the only independent school in the area offering three languages throughout the Senior School. At the end of Year 7 students select two languages of their choice for further study.

## Implementation of the MFL curriculum:

Year	Language(s) compulsory	Language(s) option
7	French, German & Spanish	
8	A choice of two: French/German/Spanish	
9	A choice of two: French/German/Spanish	
10/11	One Modern Foreign Language is compulsory: French/German/ Spanish	A second language can be studied: French/German/ Spanish
12/13	n/a	French/German/ Spanish

The study of foreign languages strongly supports the ethos of our School by promoting better understanding of other countries and cultures, thus encouraging the development of tolerance, empathy and consideration for others. The Department is made up of a team of five MFL teachers and three language assistants, the majority of whom are native speakers. The team is committed to widening students' horizons by sharing their enthusiasm for foreign languages, countries and cultures within the context of high expectations and standards. Teachers also visit the Junior School to give them the benefit of specialist teaching in French.

## Creative and Expressive Arts

The Physical Education programme is compulsory throughout the school and develops pupils' physical control and co-ordination as well as their tactical skills and imaginative responses and helps them to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils also acquire knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of fitness and health. A variety of activities is offered to pupils in order to ensure their physical development needs are fully met.

The pupils' experience of the processes of making, composing, performing and inventing are primarily developed through Music, Art, Drama and Dance because they call for personal, imaginative, creative and often practical responses. A number of students study aspects of the creative and expressive curriculum through private tuition and their achievements are celebrated through opportunities to display their work in concerts, services, competitions, public forums and Open Evenings. The creative arts

## Humanities

Geography and History lessons and Topic lessons with the younger pupils, ensure that pupils are taught about people and their environment and how human action, now and in the past, has influenced events and conditions.

Due to the School's ethos, history and continuing influence of the Congregation of Sion, RS has a fundamental role within the curriculum.

The Humanities Curriculum is further enriched by the inclusion of Psychology, Law and Philosophy as A level options in the Sixth Form.



## **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education**

This is provided for students through the School's PSHEE programme which is designed to reflect the school's aims and ethos. In the Junior School this is not necessarily constrained to just the PSHEE programmes but will frequently also feature in form time and within topics. Our PSHEE curricula encourage respect for others and pay particular regard, at age appropriate stages, to the protected characteristics as listed in the 2010 Act. Students are also prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life through aspects of Citizenship, taught primarily in Year 9 but with regular references to Fundamental British Values and Prevent For Schools in PSHEE lessons in Years 7 and 8, Assemblies and Form Periods. (See PSHEE handbook and scheme of work).

## **Careers Education**

Appropriate careers guidance is primarily provided through Form Tutor sessions. The Careers Coordinator meets with all Upper 4 and Upper 5 pupils to discuss their GCSE and A level option choices. The careers advice is delivered in an objective and impartial manner enabling pupils to make informed choices and fulfil their potential.

A programme of activities, appropriate to the needs of the Sixth Form pupils, including careers and University Entrance guidance, is delivered through the Extension Programme. (See Sixth Form Extension Programme, Extended Project, Options Booklet,).

## **Students' Learning and Progress**

The Curriculum and associated policies are designed so that all students (including those with special educational needs or learning difficulties, those for whom English is an additional language and the most able) have the opportunity to learn and make progress.

Learning and progress are monitored and recorded regularly through the School's reporting and assessment procedures (see separate Assessment Policy).

We aim to help our students to build on prior learning and achievements, providing a love of learning that will stay with them through their lives

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

We aspire to reflect the School's comprehensive aims, ethos and Mission Statement in all aspects of the Curriculum. To achieve this, we endeavour to:

- support the development of each student's self-knowledge, self-confidence and self-belief
- actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the schools is situated and to society more widely
- enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England
- further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework provides students with further opportunities to acquire knowledge and extend their understanding of what they have learned in school, as well as helping to develop the important skills of independent study and research. Homework also teaches pupils that school is not the only place for learning and that home and parents can play an active part in the process. Meaningful tasks are set according to age and ability and should be carefully monitored by the teacher. All homework is set on the Learning Platform and with the introduction of the Parent Portal in January 2016 is therefore accessible to both students and parents.

The range of tasks may include:-

- continuation of class work (including extension work)
- preparation for future work (flipped learning can be useful for students with SpLD)
- learning of spellings, tables, facts or information
- a research task using a variety of sources including media
- regular reading – fiction and non-fiction
- drafting work
- writing up work, including extended writing
- making a model
- recording, videoing or interviewing
- sketching or designing
- practising or composing music

## **Related Policies and documentation**

**(available on the School website, on the Learning Platform or on request):**

School Aims and Ethos

Mission Statement

Assessment Policy incorporating Marking and Feedback Policy

SEN/SpLD Policy

Gifted and Talented Policy

Mobile Devices Policy

Acceptable Use Policy

Options Booklets

Departmental Handbooks

Schemes of Work

### **Our Lady of Sion School Curriculum Policy**

Signed by Chairman of Governors.....

Dated.....

## APPENDIX A

### TIME ALLOCATION AND TIMETABLING

#### JUNIOR SCHOOL

Timings of the school day depend on the year group a child is in (see below).

##### Nursery

8.45 - 11.45: Morning session

11.45 - 13.00: Lunch

13.00 - 15.00: Afternoon session

##### Reception Year 1/2

Period 1	Period 2	Break	Period 3	Period 4	Lunch	Period 5	Period 6	Break	Period 7	Period 8
9.00-9.40	9.40-10.20	10.20-10.40	10.40-11.20	11.20-12.00	12.00-1.00	1.00-1.30	1.30-2.15	2.15-2.30	2.30-3.00	3.00-3.30

Reception and Year 1 finish afternoon school at 15.15

##### Year 3/4

Period 1	Period 2	Break	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Lunch	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8
9.00-9.40	9.40-10.20	10.20-10.40	10.40-11.20	11.20-12.00	12.00-12.40	12.40-1.50	1.50-2.30	2.30-3.00	3.00-3.30

In the Autumn Term Year 3 have an afternoon break at the same time as KS1 and Reception

##### Year 5/6

Period 1	Period 2	Break	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Lunch	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8
9.00-9.40	9.40-10.20	10.20-10.40	10.40-11.20	11.20-12.00	12.00-12.40	12.40-1.50	1.40-2.20	2.20-3.00	3.00-3.40

## TIME ALLOCATION

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>
English	5 including library
Maths	4½/5
Science	1-2
Geography/History	1½-2
RE	2 x 30/40 mins.
ICT	30-45 mins.
Art	One afternoon

### **Specialist Subjects**                      **Hours per week**

Science                      Year 6:        2 x 40 mins

French                      Reception: 2 x 15 mins  
Year 1:        2 x 20 mins  
Year 2/3:     2 x 30 mins  
Year 4/5/6: 2 x 40 mins

Music                      Reception: 2 x 30 mins  
Year 1:        2 x 30 mins  
Year 2/3:     2 x 30/40 mins  
Year 4/5/6: 2 x 30/40 mins

P.E                      Reception: 4 x 30/40 mins  
Year 1:        4 x 30/40 mins  
Year 2/3:     4 x 30/40 mins  
Year 4/5/6: 4 x 30/40 mins

Reception and Years 1 - 4 have two lessons taught by the Head of P.E.  
Year 3 –Year 6 has one term of swimming and Year 2 has two terms.

PSHEE is incorporated across the curriculum, mainly in R.E. and Science lessons, with a dedicated timetabled lesson of at least 40 minutes within KS2.

Science, History and Geography are cross-curricular at KS1 but are taught as discrete subjects at KS2.

## SENIOR SCHOOL

The timetable is built on a weekly 40-lesson cycle, each lesson being 40 minutes in length. The timing of the 8 lessons on each day is given below:

Period 1	Period 2	Break	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Lunch	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8
9.00-9.40	9.40-10.20	10.20-10.40	10.40-11.20	11.20-12.00	12.00-12.40	12.40-1.40	1.40-2.20	2.20-3.00	3.00-3.40

At KS3, with the exception of some Science and Arts subjects, most lessons are taught as single periods, whereas at KS4 & KS5 most lessons are taught as doubles. Due to the pattern of the school day, some double periods are inevitably taught across lunch but teachers are able to accommodate this in their planning. In the case of the Sixth Form, lessons may continue through the lunch hour, with students postponing their break until P6.

This system recognises the greater concentration ability of older students. Although it has been considered, changing to a one-hour lesson pattern would make this differentiation impossible.

The timetable is set in June and distributed to staff during the Summer term, although small adjustments may be made at the beginning of the academic year if circumstances make this unavoidable.

### Key Stage 3

Time allocation for each subject at KS3 within the curriculum is set out in the table below. This shows the average number of periods per week allocated to the subject.

Note that:

- a) subjects which are on a cycle are given a letter in italics with the number of groups in the cycle following (e.g. *A4* means cycle A has 4 groups)
- b) subjects which are taught in sets are indicated by an asterisk

Subject		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English		5	5 *	5 *
Maths & ICT	Maths	5*	5*	5 *
	ICT	2	1	1
Humanities	History	2	2	2
	Geography	2	2	2
	RS	2	2	2
	PSHEE/Citizenship	1	1	1
Arts & PE	Art	2	2	1 A2
	Drama	2	2	1 A2
	Music	1	2	2
	PE & Games	4	4	4
Languages	French	3 *	3 *	3 *
	German	1	3 (option)*	3 (option)*
	Spanish	1		
Science	Science (combined)	5	5	-
	Biology	-	-	2
	Chemistry	-	-	2
	Physics	-	-	2
	CDT	1 A2	1 A2	1 B2
	F&N	1 A2	1 A2	1 B2

#### Key Stage 4

At KS4, the curriculum is divided into compulsory and optional subjects.

Compulsory subjects are English, Mathematics, Science, Religious Studies and Games. The Religious Studies GCSE examination is taken at the end of Year 10. Students are also obliged to take at least one modern language, chosen from French, German or Spanish. These languages, together with other optional subjects (listed below) are set out in 4 option blocks from which the students make their choices. In addition a programme of PSHEE is undertaken outside of the timetable. In Year 11, the 2 periods a week previously given to RS are now shared between RS (non-examined), Careers and Private Study.

The KS3 SOW for IT leads to an online qualification in Computing Science set by OCR. From 2017 it is envisaged that a new GCSE in Computing Science may be introduced.

The time allocation for this is as follows:

	<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Year 11</b>
English	6 *	6 *
Mathematics	5 *	5 *
Science	8 *	8 *
Religious Studies	2	cycled with Careers and Private Study
Games	3 (triple)	3 (triple)
Each Option Group	4	4

The Head of Timetabling ensures that the maximum number of students achieve their desired option choices by not fixing the blocks until their option forms have been received. Therefore, blocks may change annually. Representative blocks are shown below:

<b>Block A</b>	<b>Block B</b>	<b>Block C</b>	<b>Block D</b>
French	Art	Triple Science	French
German	Geography	Drama	Design Technology
Spanish	History	History	Dance
Geography	Physical Education	Geography	Business Studies
	Music	Spanish	Food & Nutrition
			Triple Science

### **Key Stage 5 Advanced Level (A/S and A2)**

Currently, the following subjects are offered to A/S and A2 level, and run provided sufficient students opt for the course:

Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Design Technology, English Literature, French, Geography, German, History, Law, Mathematics, Music, Philosophy, Physical Education, Physics, Psychology and Spanish. Each subject is allocated six periods a week in Year 12 and seven in Year 13. In addition a course of General Studies is offered in Year 12, comprising of two periods a week. One period of Careers is taught throughout the Sixth Form. Occasionally, a subject which has been selected by fewer than the required number of students is permitted to run with a reduced allocation of periods.