



URSULINE HIGH SCHOOL
Wimbledon

Curriculum Policy

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“Do something, get moving. Be confident, risk new things, stick with it and then be ready for big surprises!” **St Angela**

Our Mission

Inspired by the life and work of Saint Angela Merici, our Ursuline school commits itself to education for tomorrow’s world within the dynamic tradition of Catholic belief and practice.

As a Christian community, characterised by a spirit of respect, trust and joy, we promote excellence in every aspect of life, thereby fully developing each individual.

By the time they leave the Ursuline, our students live out the values of St Angela by:



Being willing in the spirit of Serviam to develop their gifts and talents for the good of others and those most in need.



Being able to recognise the uniqueness of individuals by showing respect and love for all while building a community based on the common good.



Being kind, compassionate, strong and confident women of faith with high aspirations for themselves and others.



Being able to adapt to the sign of the times whilst understanding what really matters in life.



Being able to understand their role in the stewardship of the environment.

Our curriculum is unique to the Catholic ethos of our school and is more than the formal structure of subjects, lessons and timetable organisation but is the sum of the total educational experience offered to students. Our curriculum is focused very strongly towards our Mission Statement, which is built around a clear set of core values: Serviam, respect, kindness, generosity, perseverance and gratitude. The success of our curriculum offer is benchmarked against those values that we have identified in our school leavers profile

Our curriculum;

- Supports and promotes our distinctive Catholic school ethos.
- Motivates & engages learners, helping them to succeed.
- Ensures that our students gain the knowledge and skills of literacy, numeracy, oracy & ICT they need for education, employment and life.
- Ensures that our students gain the personal skills such as teamwork, communication, and resilience they need for excelling outside of the school community.
- Sets standards of excellence in research informed teaching and learning.
- Enriches the students' learning through a wide array of memorable learning experiences.
- Provides a coherent learning experience across the key stages.
- Encourages students to become lifelong learners.
- Develops the knowledge, understanding and skills to be strong women leaders in the 21st Century.
- Enables students to make informed choices about the next stage in their education and life.
- Supports students in developing the characteristics and skills required to transition to the next stage of their education.
- Contributes positively to the students' physical, mental and personal wellbeing and safety.
- Enriches the students with a strong focus on deepening their culture capital.

In order to enable our students to grow into a strong leaders in the 21st Century, we have a very strong emphasis on enrichment with a broad extra-curricular programme that all students are actively encouraged to participate in. Our student voice, chaplaincy, PSHEC programme, commitment to social justice and successful outcomes contribute to a truly unique Catholic curriculum by enabling all students to engage in a wide range of activities that enhance and broadened their perspectives and understanding which leads to greater empathy and the development of young women who will and can make a difference in an increasingly secular world.

Sequencing

Our curriculum is sequenced through a two year KS3 and 3 year KS4 which is designed to better prepare the students for further study and better outcomes by giving more time for in-depth learning. With such a broad curriculum experience at UHS, we are confident and clear that there is no loss of curriculum experience. We have a curriculum project in year 9, where all faculties are involved in a collapsed timetable to deliver their answer to the “big question”, opportunities to perform in school musicals, engage with clubs from every faculty.

The skills and content delivered at KS3 give students a strong foundation for the demands of the KS4 course. Content and skills are sequenced by departments through their SOLs. The member of the SLT responsible for T&L meets with each HOF to discuss sequencing, learning and progress of students throughout the course. At each Key stage, we have knowledge mats and clear standard descriptors to ensure that staff and students are aware of what the standards are and where students need to be at each point on their journey. Standards at KS3 run from Bronze – Platinum based on Prior attainment and we use NC grades at GCSE. In addition, End of Key Stage documents allow students to reflect on the key skills that they should have acquired, which makes them ready for the next stage of their learning.

The curriculum is planned in a logical sequence and, at each Key Stage, staff have undergone rigorous CPD to ensure that they are aware of the standards expected and that they are supported to become subject experts, clear in the craftsmanship of their subject. This enables them to write SOLs that are layered and sequenced in such a way that skills and content are introduced at the appropriate time and that all students are challenged and engaged. Each department has clear success criteria, grade descriptors and standards at each key stage and we work backwards from the end point to enable every student to reach this goal.

Enrichment

A strong enrichment offer provides breadth and depth to the curriculum experience through residential trips, clubs, musicals, UHSFest week, Curriculum Project in Year 9 and chaplaincy work. All of this ties in with the ethos and mission statement of the school. We recognise that, in order for our students to grow into women leaders of the 21st century, we have to give them a wide variety of learning experiences. This enables all students to engage with the curriculum in a manner that enriches them and deepens their personal development. Through our Serviam passport, we track all of our students and ensure that they are all engaging with the culture capital on offer.

Through our commitment to Serviam we run an extensive Chaplaincy network that enables our students to see their Faith in action, showing its relevance in the 21st Century. Through Serviam, we reach out to local charities and people in need, developing in our students’ empathy and an understanding of the needs of others.

Through our extensive provision of extra-curricular sporting activities, from Borough Football to tennis, we enable our students to understand the value of team work, commitment and resilience. We also strive to achieve great success with our Duke of Edinburgh programme and enable students to overcome new challenges and experiences. Our Student

Leadership Strategy aims to give students responsibilities across a wide range of subjects and areas of school life that develop their communication and team work skills, encouraging their ability to be proactive and responsible for others and themselves.

We understand that students' physical and mental wellbeing is improved through engagement with the enrichment programme and take measures to ensure that every student is an active part of our community.

Teaching and Learning

Our subject leaders ensure that the content delivered is challenging and deepens the students' understanding of the subject area and delivers skills that can be used across the whole of the curriculum to create a connective tissue between subjects.

Subjects have a clear understanding of standards at KS2 and have designed the SOLs at KS3 to build upon those standards. Students are given diagnosis assessments upon entry and this enables staff to tailor their teaching to ensure that all gaps in standards are closed.

There is a clear teaching pedagogy at UHS, focused around Challenge, Checking the learning (AfL), consolidation, feedback that enables progress and high expectations in all aspects of learning. Our SOLs are designed to provide an extensive range of different activities that enable students to access the material from a variety of different teaching styles. The KS3 curriculum is designed to give a strong learning foundation, focusing on knowledge, understanding and skill, sequencing the work so that a greater depth of understanding can be acquired. This is then built upon in KS4. Our learning conferences give students an opportunity to understand and use the language for learning that enables staff to engage in a deeper manner with the subject content through a variety of teaching styles. Staff design the SOLs around their subject expertise to facilitate a wider range of memorable learning experiences.

Real emphasis is placed on the teaching of individual subjects, which enables students to acquire knowledge and skills that are transferable. We have a clear language for learning where students learn how to learn. This is done through learning conferences, which also teaches soft skills, and SOLs. Staff are informed through TED talks, CPD on these same strategies and so there is a common language used in all lessons. We have an oracy, literacy and numeracy strategy, which enables students to see common threads through their lessons. Each subject commits to oracy specific lessons and extended writing tasks. Staff give feedback on their progress in these areas and forms part of their DDP

We have a strong culture of evidence informed practice at UHS and use the appropriate research for each of the different curriculum strands. For Teaching and Learning, we use research from the Sutton Trust, Hattie, EEF, IEE and always engage with new research that supports our teaching practice. In order that teachers continue to develop their knowledge, subject understanding and craft, we have a CPD programme with strong links to external agencies and internal sessions. These sessions are based around identified needs in T&L and pedagogy. Through our Appraisal process, staff are encouraged to reflect on areas of development and we provide CPD to meet those needs.

Pathways

We have a clear transition programme for Year 7 students, culminating in a residential PGL trip for all year 7 students. Staff meet students in Year 6 during primary school visits, we receive all data and information about each student from KS2 so that we may support them in all areas of the curriculum and build a community to support their personal growth and development.

Our curriculum is fit for purpose and does meet the need of all our learners. We have three pathways in KS4, Green, Orange and Purple and we monitor student progress, student voice and staff knowledge of students to ensure that we provide the right offer and support students in making the right pathway choice. From Ks3 into 4, we have an options evening with parents, engage with 1-2-1 meetings and have the careers advisor and pathways beyond Ks4 as a clear focus. From Ks4 into 5, the process starts in Year 10 with a 1-2-1 meeting with a 6th Form Senior Leader who will support the student in making their choices.

Staff and students are aware of what they need to be able to know, understand and do at each key transitional point. We have knowledge mats for the end of KS3 and KS4 and these outline the content and skills required by each student at the end of Year 8 and 11 in each subject. At KS3, we have built a system of measuring attainment and progress through our Bronze to Platinum standards, with Silver being ARE. Our End of Key Stage ready documents outline what skills and at what level students should have, such as oracy, careers pathways, resilience, organisation, attitudes and so on, which ensures that the whole curriculum feeds into their personal development.

Assessment

Assessment both formative and summative has a clear role in the learning process in ensuring that all students are acquiring the appropriate level of understanding and support. Students have clear targets and each department has clear standards criteria at each level. Students know that their target is the least that they should achieve and are encouraged to aim higher. A student with a Gold target at KS3 would be expected to aim for Platinum. As such, assessments are used to gauge progress against the target. Where there are gaps and the student does not meet the target, the gaps are identified and closed. Each half termly assessment is quality assured by the T&L coordinator. AfL is also especially important and use a variety of different assessments to gauge progress and understanding. Students receive detailed feedback every two weeks on a piece of work that enables the student to make progress. Staff use assessments to tailor their teaching to ensure that they are meeting the needs of every student. Our end of year exams and external assessments work through the raising standards group to ensure that all students make progress and intervention is put in place to close gaps, whatever form that may take.

Increased emphasis is placed on developing student's long term memory and the retention of knowledge through consolidation and interleaving. The SOLs have been redesigned over the last 2 years to provide more consolidation activities and the Units have been

reassessed to determine the best sequence of interleaving work. We have two summative assessments in the calendar and these provide opportunity to revisit work and build on long term memory skills. The learning conferences provide students with an opportunity to develop these skills as part of our language for learning and to use effective techniques throughout the course and not just as part of active revision.

Using ICT to Transform Learning

We utilise the most up to date technology to engage learners and equip them for the world of further education and employment. Our Digital Learning strategy is based on extensive research and aims to combine all aspects of ICT with the curriculum to ensure that all of our students are proficient in its application. By teaching the five key skills of ICT through the seven key applications of ICT, we are empowering our students to be future ready. We use our Virtual Learning Environment, powered by Microsoft Teams in conjunction with our unique lap top scheme to ensure that every student has access to the curriculum at all times.

Careers

Our Careers offer is judged against the Gatsby benchmarks and we use the START and UNIFROG platforms to ensure that our Careers education, guidance and information promotes high aspirations, equality for all students and supports the values of the school. We work with an extensive array of external agencies to ensure that our provision is of the highest quality and relevant to the changing needs of society. We use surveys, evaluation forms, work shadow focus groups, 1-2-1 career appointments, the school council and the latest research in careers guidance to ensure that our careers curriculum empowers strong women in the future.

Disability Equality Policy

The Ursuline Disability Equality Policy sets out our values, together with the systems already in place to ensure we meet our legal responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). We have a Disability Equality Scheme in place that is reviewed and evaluated annually and as need arises.

We are committed to making all aspects of school life accessible to all members of our school community including learners, staff and our wider stakeholders. This embraces both the physical environment and at all stages of a stakeholder's involvement with us - from admission, through the interview process, to curriculum support, use of special facilities, learning support from dedicated staff and special arrangements for taking examinations.

In the context of curriculum provision at Ursuline, we meet the requirements of the DDA through a variety of means including:

- Providing structures and strategies for personalised learning.
- Offering a range of options, courses & pathways to suit individual needs.
- Setting individual targets for students, which address their specific needs.
- Catering for EHCPs & Action Plans in our curriculum planning.

- Incorporating the targets of Individual Education Plans into our lesson planning.
- Communicating with parents/ guardians.
- Differentiating courses & adapting schemes of work, tasks & learning outcomes.

Monitoring, review & evaluation

The curriculum delivery is subject to internal reviews at subject level by HOF/HOD and AHT responsible for T&L/Curriculum on a yearly basis to meet the needs of the present students. Wider reviews are led by the AHT responsible for the Curriculum. The Teaching & Learning Strategic group leads school wide and curriculum design. Findings and recommendations are presented to Governors and SLT.

Curriculum provision from design through to delivery and evaluation involves as many different stakeholders as possible. We have a strong student voice at UHS, through student surveys on T&L, learning conferences, PSHEC sessions and every aspect of the curriculum. We receive feedback from parents during ARD days, Section 48 Inspections, External Reviews and parents evenings. For staff, we use TED talks, CPD sessions, 1-2-1 support and middle leaders to enable them to build and deliver the curriculum. The work from staff through to SLT goes to the Governors and this input goes directly into the SDP and then the DDPs.

Managing the curriculum: Roles & Responsibilities

The Governors agree the Curriculum Policy and monitor its implementation through the Curriculum Committee, receiving a plan for the curriculum annually. The governing body receives an annual report from the Senior Leader on standards & curriculum provision, detailing the curriculum plan for that academic year and a summary of any parental complaints concerning the curriculum.

Senior Leadership Team: Assistant Head Teacher

- Ensures that the curriculum meets the needs of all learners in KS3, 4 & 5.
- Provides the annual curriculum plan.
- Monitors and reviews the implementation of the curriculum plan.
- Supports the Strategic Teaching & Learning group.
- Provides training & support for curriculum innovation.
- Provides clear expectations of curriculum standards & delivery.
- Receives and investigates parental complaints relating to curriculum provision.
- Ensures that the curriculum is reviewed using Ofsted criteria.
- Conducts departmental reviews.
- Maintains an informed overview about the quality of teaching across each key stage and the outcome priorities needed for individual students.
- Consults on agreed organisational matters relating to curriculum e.g. timetabling, format of Schemes of Learning, courses, subject specialisms at GCSE & Post 16 etc.
- Write and annually review the curriculum guide.
- Create and maintain effective partnerships with other institutions e.g. Wimbledon College at KS5, Catholic consortium schools at KS4, St. Philomena's, Teach Wimbledon, Merton Deanery School Avila Partnership and feeder schools at KS3.
- Ensures that statutory curriculum requirements are met.

Teaching & Learning Strategy Group

- Acts as a steering group for the half termly Key Stage Teaching & Learning meetings.
- Provides strategic direction in terms of pedagogy.
- Manages & leads on curriculum developments & innovation.
- Ensures continuity & progression across the key stages.

Heads of Faculty & Department

- Ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all learners in their subject/s.
- Provide strategic overview for their subjects/s, linked to the School Improvement Plan.
- Review and consult on choice of syllabus at GCSE & Post 16 for their subject.
- Manage, coach & lead their key stage co-ordinators as appropriate.
- Keep abreast of developments in their subject/s, updating SLT as needed, by attending relevant CPD and ensuring that all staff within the Faculty undergo relevant CPD as required.
- Ensure that Schemes of Learning are reviewed, quality assured and delivered appropriately by teaching staff.
- Monitor the standard & quality of teaching & learning in their areas.
- Develop & review annually a cohesive curriculum plan for their subject/s that is challenging, inspiring and accessible to all students.

Heads of Year

- Ensures that the curriculum meets the needs of all learners in their year group.
- Evaluate the impact of strategies used to support teaching and learning through Year Team reviews.
- Monitor the impact of the curriculum on the progress of individuals & specific groups through report cards, interviews, work samples etc.
- Liaise with HODS/HOFS as necessary in supporting individual students & specific groups.
- Monitor the setting of homework for their year group through book & planner sampling.
- Work with AHTs to ensure that students make informed choices about options, courses & Pathways.
- Liaise with parents/guardians where students need support across subjects.
- Ensure that external providers meet the needs of our students.

Tutors

- Monitor the progress of students in their tutor group.
- Work with HOY to ensure that students make informed choices about options, courses & pathways.
- Liaises with parents/guardians where students need support across subjects.

Next Policy Update; May 2022