



St Catherine's
Together a voice, a future

St. Catherine's School KS2 – KS4

The Modified Curriculum
2018-2019

Background

THE MODIFIED CURRICULUM

St Catherine's is a non-maintained residential special school for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs. The curriculum offered by the school takes into account the requirements of the revised National Curriculum, the 0-25 Special Education and Disability Code of Practice and the individual needs of each child as detailed on his/her Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care Plan.

This document relates to St Catherine's main school for students aged seven to 16. St Catherine's Sixth Form has its own document setting out its integrated programme of education, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and residential care for students aged 16 to 19.

Our approach

St Catherine's ethos echoes the sentiments of the National Curriculum. We believe that the curriculum should enable all our students to become:

- successful students who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve;
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives; and
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

These aims are at the heart of St Catherine's work. They are embedded in all aspects of the curriculum and each scheme of work highlights opportunities to meet them.

St Catherine's believes that it is essential for all students to receive as broad and balanced an education as possible. The specific difficulties faced by our students mean that it is necessary to take the National Curriculum recommendations and create a curriculum which is modified in terms of content, pace and levels of support.

All National Curriculum subjects are covered through Key Stages 2, 3 and 4, with the exception of modern foreign languages. In Key Stage 4 there is more variety, taking into account the initiatives of the 14-19 agenda. Throughout all Key Stages, great emphasis is placed upon literacy and numeracy. Staff promote a whole-school approach to improving standards in literacy and numeracy, believing that these basic skills underpin the whole curriculum. Whilst English and Mathematics are taught as discrete subjects, in line with the revised curriculum, St Catherine's view is that it is the responsibility of all staff to encourage improvement in these basic skills within their own subject areas. To this end all classes have some form of literacy tuition on most school days. All education and therapy staff are involved.

Delivering the modified curriculum

Speech and language therapy is an integral part of the programme offered to our students and is very carefully woven into the curriculum. Each individually-tailored programme aims to help each student directly with their speech, language and communication needs and to support him/her in accessing the curriculum. This approach ensures that the individual needs of every student are met, and that their access to the National Curriculum is enabled.

Speech and language therapy is delivered in three ways: individually, in one-to-one sessions through withdrawal from the class; in therapist-led whole group social interaction sessions; and through in-class therapist support.

Teachers and therapists are involved together in the planning and delivery of the curriculum, to ensure that the best approach is adopted. Additional support in class from teaching assistants, occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants and some care staff provides high adult to student ratios, and helps to ensure that students are best able to access the curriculum that is being delivered.

Over-arching principles

The National Curriculum identifies a number of dimensions which permeate the entire curriculum. Some of these fit the curriculum as discrete entities. Others are woven into various subject areas. Specifically they are:

- identity and cultural diversity;
- healthy lifestyles;
- community participation;
- enterprise;
- global dimension and sustainable development;
- technology and the media; and
- creativity and critical thinking.

Another aspect of the curriculum is the development of personal learning and thinking skills. These are generic skills which are essential for students if they are to become successful individuals in life, learning and work. The curriculum as a whole aims to help individuals as far as possible to become:

- independent enquirers;
- creative thinkers;
- reflective students;
- team workers;
- self-managers; and
- effective participants.

Cross-curricular activities offer many opportunities to meet these extra areas and a record of these activities highlights where they fit into the curriculum's aims.

This document outlines the role that each subject plays in the modified curriculum. Separate individual policy documents give the full rationale for each subject area with students in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 studying the full range of subjects. Due to the nature of the speech, language and communication needs of the young people at St. Catherine's, MFL (Modern Foreign Languages) is not taught as a discrete subject in the curriculum. Instead opportunities are sought, where possible, to explore the language and culture of a range of different countries.

Because St Catherine's students are generally working at levels below their mainstream peers, we believe it is important to maintain the full range of curricular subjects to ensure they leave with the breadth of knowledge necessary for them to be successful after their time at special school.

External accreditation

The school offers a range of external accreditation options, which ensures that all students gain certification for their studies at an appropriate level. Options currently available are, the ASDAN Key Steps Award Scheme, the AQA Unit Award Scheme, WJEC Entry Pathways, Entry Level Certificates, ITQ, GCSEs and BTEC qualifications.

Equality of opportunity

St Catherine's has a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice which relates to all kinds of discrimination. Opportunity for achievement will be created for each student regardless of age, disability, race, sex, religion or cultural beliefs or sexual orientation.

Multicultural awareness

We live in a multicultural society and therefore believe that the education provided at St Catherine's should reflect this. We encourage all students to appreciate that learning about other cultures enhances their own. At the same time it is important that students gain a sound sense of identity and the concept of being British is included in the curriculum.

SUBJECTS TAUGHT AT ST CATHERINE'S

English/Literacy

Literacy, in its many forms, is at the heart of the curriculum at St Catherine's. In order for our students to progress in any subject, a solid foundation in communication skills is essential.

Students receive lessons in English covering all aspects of language and literature but they also receive lessons in social interaction, which is particularly important for the development of their expressive and social skills. Literacy is a focus across the whole school. Most days involve specific literacy lessons. All education staff are involved in these lessons (teachers, therapists, and assistants), which ensures a whole school approach and high adult to student ratios. Great emphasis is placed upon helping students to become confident readers. Suitable reading programmes have been developed as part of the English curriculum. Regular assessment helps to identify those students who need additional help and an individual programme is set up for them. This involves regular withdrawal from selected parts of lessons for one to one input. Many students have individual support to help them develop their literacy skills and students are given scope to express themselves creatively in this subject.

The curriculum dimensions of media and creativity are a particular focus in English and some elements of drama are included within English lessons. Creative arts weeks and workshops have brought professional groups into school to give students wider experiences of dance and drama. Each year there are various performances within school for students. These include plays, variety shows and music concerts.

In Key Stage 4, most students gain accreditation through the Entry Level Certificate, although there is the opportunity for the more able to attempt GCSE English.

Mathematics

Numerical skills are often poorly developed in students with speech and language impairments and yet are essential for them both to make progress in some of the other subjects and to be successful when they leave school. Elements of enterprise and critical thinking apply particularly to mathematics.

Students are given a firm foundation in number, shape, space and measure and data handling in line with the National Curriculum. They learn about the application of number and problem solving looking at real life contexts. This focus on functional mathematics exists to help our students cope in the real world and prepare them for life away from St Catherine's.

Students work towards the OCR Entry Level Certificate although more capable students can work towards an IGCSE qualification.

Science

Science is a subject of significant importance for our students. Science encourages students to make enquiries about the world around them, it develops problem-solving and team working skills, as well as helping students to acquire practical skills. There is a focus on healthy lifestyles and a fully equipped laboratory allows delivery of the full programme, with much emphasis placed upon practical work and working scientifically. Students are often more engaged and can develop their understanding from a hands-on approach.

Students are able to work towards the Science Entry Level Certificate, as well as BTEC Level 1 and 2 courses in Applied Science – which covers elements of the three subject areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Technology

Technology is important in allowing students to express themselves creatively and in helping to improve their fine and gross motor skills. Much emphasis is placed upon the planning process to help students gain skills which encompass logical thinking and sequencing, helping them to become creative thinkers and independent enquirers. Clearly, the dimension of technology is covered as well as elements of enterprise and sustainable development. The literacy problems experienced by so many of our students do not need to impair their ability to achieve in this subject and this can be a very real boost to their confidence.

Students are taught Design Technology in a fully-equipped workshop and Food Technology in a fully equipped multi-station kitchen.

Accreditation is through the AQA Unit Award Scheme and the Entry Pathways Certificate for our less able students. GCSE programmes have been developed for students as appropriate as well as BTEC Level 1 or 2 in Home Cooking Skills.

Geography

Learning Geography allows students to develop an understanding and awareness of the world around them and their place within it. Geography covers the global dimension and cultural diversity elements of the curriculum. It enables young people to gain an understanding of environmental issues which affect us all. It also allows them to learn about their immediate surroundings.

In Key Stage 2 Geography is delivered through topic-based planning whereas in Key Stages 3 and 4 Geography is taught as a discrete subject. In Key Stage 4 the students work towards an Entry Pathway qualification in Humanities. This is a course during which they complete a number of units and assignments for their portfolio. More able students are given the opportunity to complete further units in order to obtain a higher level qualification through the scheme.

History

History is important so that students gain a sense of time and an understanding of the importance of key events in shaping the present world. Students often find the concept of chronology difficult and much effort is given to helping them to acquire this understanding.

In Key Stage 2 History is delivered through topic-based planning whereas in Key Stages 3 and 4 History is delivered as a discrete subject. Students gain hands-on experience through the use of artefacts and site visits. Elements of identity, cultural diversity and global dimension fit into the History curriculum. Project work helps students to become independent enquirers and reflective students.

The Key Stage 4 course contributes to the Pathway Scheme. More able students are given the opportunity to extend their learning and obtain a higher level qualification through the scheme.

Physical Education

Physical Education helps students to improve their fine and gross motor co-ordination skills, as well as improving their spatial awareness, orientation and general fitness. It encourages healthy lifestyles. Team games help students with their interaction skills and their team-working ability.

All students have two sessions of Physical Education each week. Students are encouraged to join after-school training sessions and clubs and to take part in inter-school team events. In addition, all students are assessed for swimming capability and non-swimmers/improvers follow a programme. A variety of outdoor pursuits activities are arranged at various times, throughout the year.

Art

Art is a subject where students are able to express themselves creatively and achieve, despite the language difficulties they may have. It is regarded as a very important part of the curriculum and is taught in Key Stage 4 even though it is not a statutory requirement. Students are encouraged to become creative thinkers. The curriculum focuses upon the dimensions of creativity and cultural diversity.

Projects have taken place in conjunction with the Quay Arts Centre, Dimbola Lodge and the Carnival Company which give students a wider range of experiences. Arts weeks

within school are another feature of the school year and bring in artists from a variety of spheres. Students gain certification in Creative Media and Performance Arts through the Entry Pathway scheme. More able students are able to take a GCSE exam in 'Fine Art' and a further GCSE course specialising in 'Photography' has been developed.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Computer literacy is recognised as an important skill for all our students, and for many it acts as an essential aid to communication.

To ensure these skills are embedded, our Key Stage 2 students are taught to use the full range of the Microsoft suite including PowerPoint, Publisher, Excel and Word enabling them to utilise these skills across the curriculum. Key Stage 3 and 4 students at St Catherine's also receive a discrete lesson in Information and Communication Technology each week in a fully resourced ICT suite delivered by a specialist teacher during which they work towards adding modules to the Entry Pathway scheme or a Level 1 qualification in Information Technology if they are more able.

To bring the curriculum in line with recent changes to the National Curriculum, students are now taught to touch type through the use of software and learn about web 2.0 applications and basic programming skills. Across the school, ICT is a cross-curricular dimension in all other subject areas. All classrooms have a number of networked computers. The school also has a growing number of laptop computers. Students are given opportunities to use the internet under strict supervision with a strong focus on e-safety. The global dimension, technology and the media feature in the ICT curriculum and students work towards gaining units to build their own ITQ qualification.

Music

Music is another creative subject that is beneficial for many of our students. It is taught from Key Stage 2 throughout school, despite there being no direct requirement for it at Key Stage 4. All students receive at least one lesson a week and have the opportunity to receive individual instrument tuition according to interest. (At present there is individual tuition in singing, keyboards, piano, drums and guitar).

By studying music from different parts of the world, students gain an understanding of cultural diversity. Students gain accreditation through either AQA Unit Awards or Entry Pathways at Key Stage 4.

Religious Education

The school delivers a broad Religious Education programme across all Key Stages, which aims to give students a good understanding of their own beliefs, and those of others. It encourages respect and tolerance. The school has good links with the local church. The school also has its own chapel which gives students first-hand experience. Students gain an appreciation of identity and cultural diversity.

Accreditation is through Entry Pathways. In Key Stage 4, students also complete a number of challenges towards the ASDAN programme.

Children of all faiths and denominations are welcome at St Catherine's and we endeavour to meet their specific religious requirements. Non-Christian children may be excused parts of Religious Education, church services or chapel visits at parents' request. If a child has

a particular belief that he/she wishes to practise we are happy to support them to attend services held locally wherever possible.

Life Skills

Due to the nature of our young people's special needs, we offer support to our students to help them acquire many of the basic life skills needed for them to lead active, independent lives. Key Stage 2 children experience life skills through topic-based activities whereas our older students experience this through ASDAN Key Steps.

Much of the work focuses on functional literacy and numeracy. Some students will also follow an individualised life skills curriculum where units are delivered through occupational therapy programmes. Links with St Catherine's residential houses help students to work through independence programmes which feature a wide range of life skills elements. Accreditation is through ASDAN Key Steps and in some instances, through the AQA Unit Award Scheme or BTEC Home Cooking programme.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

PSHE offers students an awareness of a variety of key issues which are essential for them to develop so that they can live successful lives. All students receive a lesson of PSHE once a week. The PSHE programme includes modules on keeping safe, personal identity, sex education (see separate policy for SRE), relationships, drugs' education, finance, the world of work and careers education. An awareness of life in a multicultural society is a key element of this as well as an understanding of the concept of being British.

Careers education involves direct input from an independent careers advisor. Students gain an understanding of identity and how to live healthy lives. The programme is complemented by visits from relevant professionals (e.g. the police, Alter Ego Theatre Group and the NHS Sexual Health Team).

Should parents make a written request, young people can be wholly or partly excused from sex education lessons.

Citizenship

Citizenship has been introduced into the timetable as part of the topic-based approach at Key Stage 2, and as part of the wider curriculum in Key Stages 3 and 4 (e.g. as part of PSHE and ASDAN lessons). It is recognised that many of the elements are addressed in a number of other subjects, such as PSHE, Religious Education, Geography, and Science.

Citizenship focuses on many important areas that will help students to become active participants in society. A number of the curriculum dimensions are covered in citizenship including identity, cultural diversity, community participation and global dimension.

ASDAN Scheme

As part of our curriculum for Key Stage 4, we deliver the ASDAN Key Steps scheme. This focuses very much on key skills. It also helps to develop all of the personal learning and thinking skills, helping students to become independent enquirers, creative thinkers, reflective students, team workers, self-managers and effective participants.

The ASDAN Key Steps scheme offers a range of challenges which are designed to encourage students to develop independent learning strategies and improve their organisational skills. It also allows students some flexibility to develop their own interests and offers a pathway to external accreditation.

Careers Education

Students follow a careers programme in Key Stages 3 and 4 to help them make informed choices when they are preparing to leave St Catherine's. As part of this, the school arranges a week's work experience for each student in Key Stage 4. The programme also includes direct input from an Independent Careers Advisor. The careers programme is supplemented by a college links programme in Key Stage 4.

Enterprise Education

There are elements of enterprise in various activities at St Catherine's. For example, students bake cakes and organise coffee mornings to fundraise for their chosen charities, organise mufti days and table-top sales to raise funds for local causes and design and run stalls to raise funds for the school at the annual summer fair. Specific enterprise activities have been developed for students in Key Stage 4; project examples include offering a healthy snack tuck shop and producing a school magazine.

Work Experience

All students in Key Stage 4 spend a period of time on work experience, which is usually for a week in the Summer term during Year 11. Work experience helps students to acquire and develop a range of independence skills. Examples of placements include those at cafes, supermarkets, local shops, pubs and visitor attractions across the Isle of Wight.

EXPLANATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

The table below shows the different types of accreditation that can be offered at St Catherine's School and how they fit into the National Qualifications Framework.

National Qualifications Framework Level	Accreditation offered at St Catherine's (according to individual need)
<u>Entry level</u> Which is broken into: Entry 1 Entry 2 Entry 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entry Level Certificate (English, Maths, Science) - Entry Pathways (RE, Art, Design and Technology, Music, Humanities, ICT) - ASDAN Key Steps - AQA Unit Awards (various subjects)
<u>Level 1</u> (e.g. GCSE grades 4 - 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GCSE (Maths, English, Art, Music) - Information Technology Qualification (ITQ) - BTEC Award (Science, Home Cooking)
<u>Level 2</u> (e.g. GCSE grades 9 - 5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GCSE (Maths, English, Science, Art, Music) - BTEC Certificate (Science, Home Cooking)

For further information about St Catherine's, please contact the Admissions Officer on 01983 852 722 or email general@stcatherines.org.uk

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