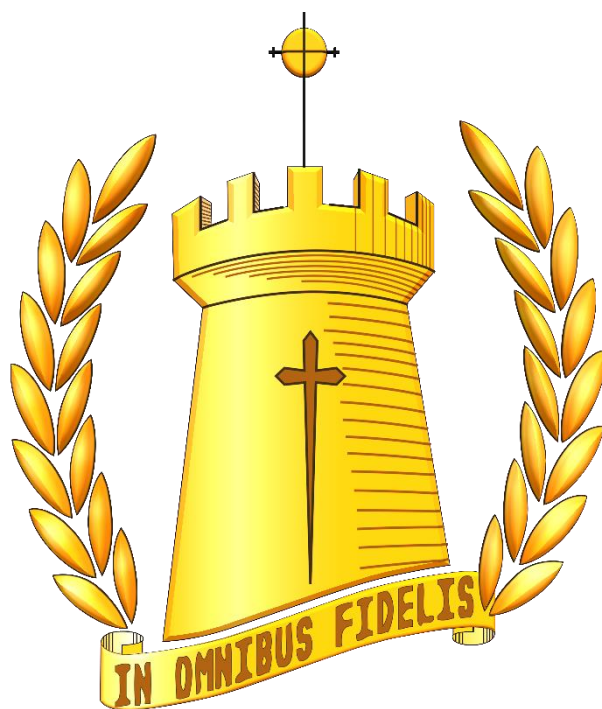


ST. DAMIAN'S RC SCIENCE COLLEGE



Curriculum Policy

Approved by Governors:	March 2024
Date to be reviewed:	Annually

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Curriculum Policy

The curriculum is all the planned activities which promote learning, personal growth and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is the 'driver of progress'. It is the key to unlocking the potential of all learners.

Rationale for the Design of the Curriculum

The Mission Statement of St Damian's RC Science College is underpinned by our intention to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their academic ability, age, gender, race, religion or disability are given the opportunity to fulfil their potential – not only academically but also spiritually, morally, socially, emotionally and physically. St. Damian's is proud of its ambitious academic curriculum which is the 'driver of progress' and ensures strong academic outcomes as well as the development of core values for all pupils regardless of starting points. Subject leaders' work, by nature, is 'ongoing', as they strive to construct an ambitious curriculum designed to give all learners, particularly vulnerable pupils such as, Pupil Premium & SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Our curriculum provides all pupils with an appropriate level of challenge and fully engages them in the learning process, thereby facilitating accelerated progress and optimum attainment in order that they are fully prepared for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of adult life. In essence the curriculum offers a strong, broad and challenging educational experience in terms of skills, knowledge, understanding, the development of values and the ability to be a lifelong learner.

Our core principles are: clear aims and rationale for each subject, deep knowledge, challenge and enjoyment, breadth and depth, cultural capital, progression, personalisation and choice. Pupils are encouraged to lead their own learning through independent learning and response to feedback. The curriculum is coherently planned & sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning & employment.

Purpose

The curriculum reflects our Catholic ethos and is a vehicle for instilling Gospel values and pursuing excellence and as such, Religious Education forms part of the 'core' offer alongside English, Mathematics and Science and is given parity with these subjects. At Key Stage 3 pupils follow a three year curriculum that statutorily meets the demands of the National Curriculum framework and builds cultural capital and at Key Stage 4 provides them with the opportunity to secure the appropriate Level 2 qualifications which meets their current and future learning needs.

The curriculum is delivered through a variety of appropriate learning and teaching styles which create conditions for effective learning. This includes provision for students with specific needs, whether they require support or extension work for the More Able. Differentiation allows teachers to provide appropriate tasks for each pupil and a level of challenge which will maximise achievement. Each pupil will be equipped to make informed and realistic decisions at each stage in his/her development so that his/her role is active in contributing to progression.

Teachers use assessment to help learners embed and use knowledge fluently as well as to check understanding and inform teaching. In addition, leaders use assessment outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and make changes, as needed, to further enhance the curriculum design within a subject area.

INTENT

The curriculum is designed to inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future. St. Damian's aim is to develop a broad, balanced and coherent curriculum that builds on young people's experiences in the primary phase and that helps all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Specifically, the College aims:

- To offer a broad and balanced curriculum which is ambitious and pursues excellence
- To develop pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes, resulting in pupils growing as individuals in self-confidence and self-worth
- To embed Gospel values across the curriculum and embrace our Catholic Ethos
- To promote a 'Believe to Achieve' attitude based on high expectations in a culture that recognises and celebrates success
- To ensure the curriculum is relevant and personalised to meet pupils' learning needs, taking into account their prior attainment and future needs
- To enable those not achieving age-related expectations to narrow the gap and catch up with their peers in relation to the local context of the College catchment
- To develop pupils' key skills in vocabulary, literacy, numeracy and Information Communication Technology
- To foster the ability of pupils to work both independently and collaboratively
- To develop empathy, tolerance and respect of other people's point of view as well as a sense of social responsibility
- To develop the dignity, self-esteem, self-confidence and uniqueness of each individual
- To build character and leadership
- To actively promote equality of opportunity and challenge stereotypes
- To develop pupils' responsibility for their own learning and progress.
- To secure the highest possible achievement in all areas of the curriculum
- To extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in a range of extra-curricular opportunities supporting artistic, creative & sporting activities
- To ensure progression to further education, training & employment through transferable identified employability skills in each subject area
- To prepare pupils for life in modern Britain [democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance]
- To develop the skills to become lifelong learners

Key Stage 3 Priorities

- To ensure effective transition from KS2
- To ensure ALL pupils experience a range of subjects to develop cultural capital
- To ensure pupils have the **depth** of knowledge and skills to prepare for KS4
- To promote active engagement in and enjoyment of a range of subject disciplines
- To ensure all pupils benefit from a range of teaching styles and discover how they are able to learn best
- To develop learner independence and transferable skills
- To develop a successful mastery approach to learning

IMPLEMENTATION

Curriculum Leadership & Teaching & Learning

Curriculum leadership at St. Damian's is founded on key principles:

- Subject leaders at all levels have clear roles and responsibilities to carry out their role in curriculum design and delivery
- Subject leaders have the knowledge, expertise and practical skills to implement the curriculum
- Subject leaders are expected to know their curriculum design and intent, know how the curriculum is being implemented, know what impact their curriculum is having on pupils' and young people's knowledge and understanding
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, regularly review and quality assure the curriculum offer of subjects to ensure that it is implemented sufficiently well and has impact
- Leaders ensure that ongoing professional development/training is available for staff to ensure that curriculum requirements can be met
- Leaders enable curriculum expertise to develop across the school
- Leaders lead and support high quality teaching & learning
- Curriculum resources selected, including textbooks, serve the school's curricular intentions and the course of study and enable effective curriculum implementation
- The curriculum is planned to meet pupils' learning needs and builds on prior learning
- Curriculum delivery is equitable for all groups and appropriate to pupil needs
- Interventions are appropriately delivered to enhance pupils' capacity to access the full curriculum
- Curriculum mapping ensures sufficient depth and coverage of knowledge in each subject
- Progression is planned across a subject over time
- Assessment is, as far as possible, reliable and shapes future learning
- Literacy and numeracy skills underpin learning success across the curriculum

Teaching & Learning & Curriculum as 'the driver of progress'

As part of the curriculum design process, Subject Leaders have:

- Worked to create longitudinal progression models with an explicit breakdown of knowledge into components and composites to ensure it is clear when specific objectives are met
- Used subject concepts to identify clear, measurable, pupil-centred objectives
- Planned formal retrieval opportunities to ensure that the curriculum delivery is interleaved and sequenced
- Considered the pace for pupils who are starting from different points in their learning [skills development, learning, mastery & progression]
- Identified pedagogy that will support sequential learning and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding over time
- Identified opportunities for developing literacy skills & employability skills
- Looked at the structure of the content as 'narrative over time'
- Built up high-quality resources to sequence progression in a subject
- Looked for enrichment opportunities that will strengthen learning and understanding.
- Considered problem solving, group work, reflection and enquiry and how developing these skills foster progression
- Continued to engage in ongoing review of the Curriculum Overviews & Schemes of Work

** For further details, please see St. Damian's 'Teaching & Learning' Policy*

Organisation of the 'Formal Curriculum' 2023-24

- The curriculum comprises 50 hours of specialist learning over a two-week timetable

Key Stage 3

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Year 7</u>	<u>Year 8</u>	<u>Year 9</u>
RE	5	5	5
English	8	8	8
Maths	7	7	7
Science	5	5	5
Art	2	2	2
Computing	2	2	2
Drama	2	2	2
Geography	3	3	3
History	3	3	3
Music	2	2	2
PE	3	3	3
PSHE	1	1	1
Spanish	4	4	4
Technology	3	3	3

Key Stage 4

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Year 10</u>	<u>Year 11</u>
RE	5	5
English	9	9
Maths	8	8
Art	5	5
Construction [BTEC]	5	5
Computer Science	5	5
CPLD [BTEC]	5	5
Drama	5	0
Food Technology	5	5
French	5	5
Geography	5	5
History	5	5
Music	5	0
PE [Core]	1	1
PSHE	1	1
Science [Combined]	10	10
Science [Triple]	15	15
Spanish	5	5
Sport [BTEC]	5	5
Masterclasses [3 Lit & 2 Num]	5	5

Key Stage 3

- There are 2 ability bands, the X Band [High Ability and Middle Ability] and the Y Band [Middle & Low Ability]. Y9 upwards these are based upon the Key Stage 2 SATs results and transition information from primary schools.
- In Y9 & Y10, where pupils have not taken SATs tests, these are initially based on information from primary schools until pupils sit baseline assessments in the Autumn term.
- Year 7/8 are set using information from Primary school (KS2 SATS), internal baseline assessments, reading age data and CAT scores (year 7 only)
- Bands are adjusted if necessary following performance in the baseline tests completed as part of the induction process in the Autumn Term.
- Pupils are set by ability in Maths and English
- In Y7, 8 & 9 pupils are taught in ability groups for Science, RE, History, Geography and Spanish.
- Technology is grouped with Maths in year 7-9 to allow smaller groups for safety
- Pupils are taught in mixed ability groups in Year 7,8 & 9 for Art, Drama, Music, PSHE and Computing
- The maximum class size in Technology is 24 and groups will range from 20-34 in all other subjects.
- The least able learners are placed into Y3 on entry to Year 7 to support the development of the key skills required for a successful transition to GCSE study from Year 9. Pupils are taught in a group of approximately 15 pupils and will study phonics to support reading

KS3 Options Process – ‘Informed Choices’

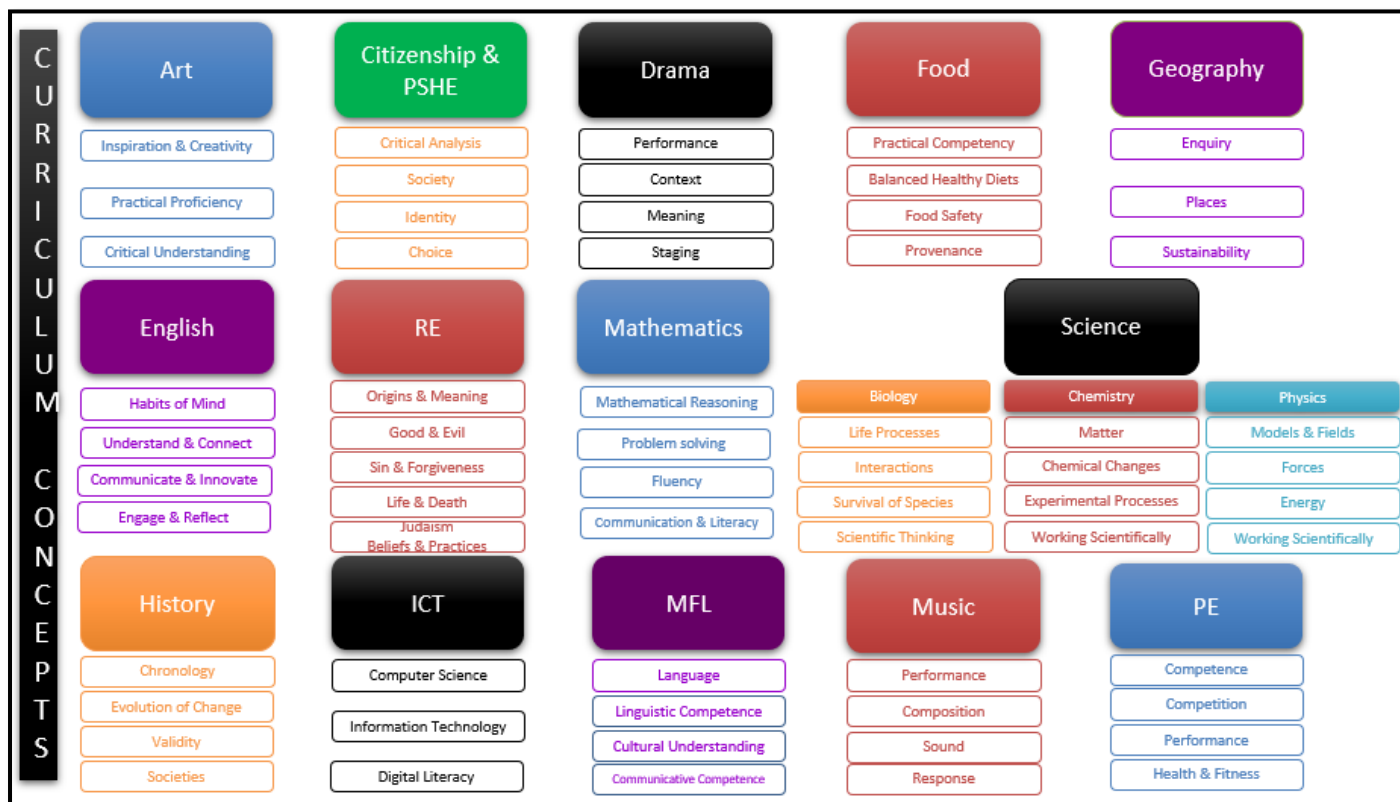
- There is equal access to information about subjects & recommendations [Assemblies, Options Evening, Taster Lessons, Marketplace & Options documentation]
- Personalised recommendations are based on prior attainment & current progress to ensure ‘informed choices’
- The comprehensive Options consultation process includes SL, HOY, SENCO, FT & SLT, pupils & parents
- All Y9 pupils can access impartial CEIAG via the Careers Adviser

Key Stage 4

- All pupils follow the Core Subjects: Religious Education, Maths, English Language, English Literature, Science & Core PE [Non-Examination]. The majority of pupils will sit 9 GCSEs, with a very small number taking 8 GCSEs alongside additional Literacy & Numeracy or Masterclasses in English, Maths & Science.
- Pupils follow one of four recommended pathways which allows them to follow a curriculum best suited to their interests & learning needs and will maximise their attainment outcomes. Recommendations include:
- **Separate Science:** EBacc subjects with Triple Science
- **Ebacc:** EBacc subjects-with a Free Choice. Pupils have access to a range of GCSE and BTEC courses.
- **Humanities:** EBacc subjects [Combined Science & either MFL or Humanities] with a Free Choice. Pupils have access to a range of GCSE and BTEC courses.
- **Masterclasses:** Additional Literacy & Numeracy and **two** Free Choices. Pupils have access to a range of GCSE and BTEC courses.
- Pupils are set in English, Maths, Science, RE and where possible other subjects when more than one option runs in that block. For example, History A1 and History A2

Curriculum Concepts

- Curriculum Concepts have been identified across all subjects and underpin the planning for depth in knowledge and understanding across subjects.



Curriculum Overviews

- Are fundamental to the delivery of the curriculum intent AND teaching & learning
- Are reviewed and updated at least annually
- Are used to establish what coverage is intended and subsequently implemented
- Are used to ascertain that sequencing is used to build upon prior learning
- Identify key components & composites of subject knowledge and understanding
- Ensure that all the requirements of the NC are met
- Ensure that all teachers are following the same curriculum diet for all pupils
- Demonstrate curriculum transition from KS2
- Are used to establish the breadth and depth of the curriculum
- Are used to address any 'gaps in knowledge'? [e.g. those at a foundation level, post Covid lockdown gaps]
- Are underpinned by more detailed schemes of work
- Outline planned assessment opportunities
- Ensure equality and high expectations across all pupil 'groups'
- Are used to monitor the 'implementation' of the curriculum 'intent' and quality of delivery through teaching & learning
- Curriculum snapshots** are shared on the website and with all staff to provide a half termly 'snapshot' of the curriculum

Schemes of Work

- Are bespoke to the subject in terms of format and are ‘working documents’
- Indicate the sequencing of components to enable pupils to do more complex composite tasks
- Focus on opportunities to increase fluency through interleaving & retrieval in order to improve retention of key content, ‘knowing more & remembering more’
- Include key vocabulary so pupils improve their literacy skills
- Plan for skills development based on prior knowledge
- Include reference to resources
- Give an overview of timing and assessment points

Curriculum Enrichment

Our academic curriculum is complemented by:

- **Rich spiritual opportunities** – These include the Liturgical Group, GIFT and chaplaincy, promoting the awareness of culture and diversity [St. Damian’s Day], Masses & Liturgies following Liturgical Calendar, assemblies & form-time reflection activities
- **Academic activities** – Usually these include STEM activities [develop leadership, team building skills], Field Trips [Geography], University Trips, Theatre trips, MFL cultural visits, Raising Aspirations. Some of these activities still remain limited due to Covid-19 mitigations
- **Health & well-being activities** – Activities promoted by the SSOs, Anti-Bullying week, PSHE curriculum, Promoting healthy lifestyles, Mental Health Awareness Week, Internet Safety Week
- **Promotion of Careers** - These include enterprise activities e.g. Dragons Den, The Apprentice, National careers week, Y9 Workplace visits, Y10 Work experience, Y10 Loreto Masterclasses & Ashton Sixth Form ‘Realising Aspirations’ programme, Y10 Mentoring by Brother, UK
- **Extra-Curricular Activities** - Expressive Arts productions and sports clubs as well as entry into inter-school competitions
- **Character Development** - Leadership opportunities, promoting ‘transferable skills’ as well as fostering the ability to work both independently and collaboratively

Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance [CEIAG]

CEIAG empowers our pupils to make informed decisions about their future and career pathways. Please see our Careers Policy & Careers Delivery Plan for further information.

Spiritual Moral, Social & Cultural Education [SMSC]

At St. Damian’s we aim to deliver spiritual, moral, social and cultural education through all aspects of school life, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, the pastoral system, assemblies as well as themed events. We work in partnership with parents and the wider community and do our best to engage them with opportunities which further develop SMSC.

Curriculum Values

Our Curriculum Values are a part of the ASPIRE system. They reflect the qualities, skills and values which pupils will explore and develop through the mission and ethos of our Catholic school. Most importantly these values will equip pupils to take on the opportunities, responsibilities, challenges and experiences of adult life.

Religious Education & Collective Worship

Prayer and collective worship are a central part of our Catholic faith and identity. Collective Worship takes place each day in the form of assemblies, prayers & reflections in tutor time and Chapel Liturgies. There are further opportunities through Masses, Retreats and celebrations including Christmas, Easter and welcome/ leavers' Masses

Sex & Relationship Education

In our College, sex and relationships education is taught in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. This programme is linked closely to the programme of study for RE, Sex and Relationships Education Guidance from the DCSF and the Bishops' Conference and the National Healthy School Standard Guidance. St. Damian's meets the requirements of the DfE document entitled 'Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education', published in 2019 and the Equality Act 2010.

PSHE, Citizenship & British Values

- Citizenship/PSHE is delivered through discreet, timetabled lessons, a cross-curricular approach where some themes are mapped to other Subject Areas, contribution of visiting speakers, whole-school events, tutor time and assemblies.
- PSHE includes provision for Citizenship as well as personal, social, health, emotional and economic education and the promotion of British Values.
- The promotion of British Values includes democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. Democracy is promoted through the Pupil Learning Forum, pupil voice and the appointment of the Senior prefect teams [Blue Ties & Black Ties].
- The College hosts two ASPIRE Days [Oct & July] where a range of speakers are involved in the delivery of a PSHE curriculum, including meeting the needs of our pupils in the local context of our school.
- On the Feast of St Damian each February the College delivers a day of celebration of cultural diversity & our Catholic Mission.

Extra-curricular Activities

- Extra-curricular activities enrich a pupil's experience and are an integral feature of the St. Damian's ethos.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate, whether it is sporting, liturgical, musical, visits or other of the multiplicity of experiences offered.

Curriculum Progression between the Key Stages

Key Stage 2-3

The Head of Year 7, overseen by an AHT, leads the Transition programme, working with our Primary partner schools to ensure effective transfer of information for Key Stage 2-3. The Head of Year 7 visits our Primary partner schools to ensure we have a detailed profile of each pupil to assist with planning their move to St. Damian's. The SENCO plays a key role in planning and monitoring the personalised transfer process for students with special educational needs. We have a developing programme of curriculum links with local Primary schools sharing expertise and specialist facilities in English & Maths. KS2 QLA [Question Level Analysis], most recently Sixintoseven, led by ASCL is used to inform staff about the strengths and weaknesses of pupils in English and Maths.

Key Stage 3-4

The Key Stage 3-4 transfer is overseen by the Head of Year 9 and Year 9 Form Tutors, who liaise with the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Curriculum and the SENCO as appropriate, to ensure students make informed and relevant curriculum choices.

Key Stage 4-5

The Key Stage 4-5 transfer is overseen by the Head of Year 11 & Year 11 Form Tutors, AHT i/c Inclusion, the Careers Officer & the Deputy Headteacher. Liaison occurs with Sixth Form Colleges to ensure that students make informed and relevant curriculum choices.

Inclusion

- St. Damian's sets high expectations for every pupil. Challenging work is planned for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard. Lessons are carefully planned for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.
- Teachers carry out their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief and sexual orientation
- Lessons are planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. This also occurs in relation to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Where possible, planning allows these pupils to be able to study the full national curriculum. A minority of pupils need access to specialist equipment and different approaches.
- Teachers cater for pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress takes into account the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages. Teachers plan learning opportunities to help pupils develop their English and provide the support pupils need to take part in all subjects.

Language & Literacy

Teachers develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. The school promotes wider reading and provides library facilities. Pupils are expected to develop the skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation and to give extended verbal responses.

Numeracy and mathematics

Teachers use their subject where relevant to develop pupils' confidence in numeracy and other mathematical skills. This may be in the form of problem solving or collecting, presenting and analysing data.

Assessment

- Assessment is implemented to shape future learning
- There are systems to ensure reliability through the processes of marking, moderation, standardisation and feedback

- See St. Damian's 'Assessment Policy'

Timeline for Curriculum Planning

Autumn Term 2023

- Through SLT Line-Management Meetings there is discussion with all Subject Leaders which highlights any issues from the previous academic year. Feedback to SLT / Governors of outcomes of that discussion.
- Review of KS4 accredited qualifications available. Information shared with relevant Subject Leaders.

Spring Term 2024

- Review of Curriculum Policy
- Curriculum Review: Subject Leaders present their current curriculum offer & future vision for development of subject area to Assistant Headteacher (Curriculum), including planning and timeline for updating of Schemes of Work.
- Review of system of pupil groupings. This process is carried out through consultation with all Middle Leaders and members of the teaching staff.
- Suggested Curriculum Models are drawn up and shared with both Senior and Middle Leaders – the agreed Curriculum Model in place for end of March.
- January: Draft curriculum costing – staffing implications versus financial position.
- February: AHT produces choices which enable the production of a timetable which the college budget can deliver.
- March-April: Intensive focus on Option Choices
- Beginning of May: Consultation with Subject Leaders regarding staffing allocations.
- Middle of May: System set up for timetabling process to begin.
- End of May: Intensive timetabling.

Summer Term 2024

- June: Timetabling continues.
- June: Heads of Year to confirm pupil allocation to banding.
- June: Request to Subject Leaders for Class Lists.
- July: Subject Leaders to verify class lists/check for accuracy.
- Middle of July: Staff timetables released. Pupil timetables printed for release in September.

Curriculum Response to the Covid Pandemic – Autumn 2021 onwards

Principles of St. Damian's Interim Curriculum - Curriculum 'leads' the learning NOT a culture of 'catch up'

- A robust, challenging & ambitious curriculum for ALL pupils
- An opportunity to eliminate disadvantage
- Staff and pupils know the key concepts & key knowledge that needs to be secure
- Subjects deliver the most important components for progression
- Subjects have a plan for knowledge-based learning as well as skills development
- Focus on sequencing & retrieval to ensure fluency & changes in long-term memory
- Subjects provide opportunities for literacy and numeracy and fill gaps in knowledge e.g. through an emphasis on reading
- Subjects embed positive social & emotional well-being and mental health
- Curriculum resources are shared in order to manage teacher workload

Curriculum Provision in the Case of Remote Learning

St. Damian's Online School is being used to:

- teach a planned and well-sequenced curriculum in all subjects so that knowledge and skills are built incrementally, with a good level of clarity about what is intended to be taught and practised in each subject
- provide frequent, clear explanations of new content, delivered by a teacher in the school in the form of 'live lessons' or through high quality curriculum resources such as voiceover power-points / videos
- track how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum, using questions / assignments / MS Teams 'Chat'
- encourage teachers to adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure pupils' understanding

IMPACT

Monitoring and Evaluation

This is a continual process and involves all members of the teaching staff. However, all Subject Leaders will discuss and analyse the effectiveness of the curriculum through an annual review which will be across all three terms. This will include the following:

- Review of Curriculum Overviews & Schemes of Work
- Progress Checks & Progress Check Analysis
- Tracking of the progress of pupil 'groups'
- Detailed analysis of external examination results
- Governors' Analysis
- Monitoring of Teaching & Learning via learning walks, work scrutiny, pupil voice
- Review of data around the prior attainment of pupils and their future learning needs
- Recruitment of subjects in the options process
- Consideration of further and higher education pathways & Destinations data
- Curriculum review & evaluation prior to the annual curriculum planning process & timetabling