

## **Curriculum with Assessment at Saintfield High School ~**

### **Miss S-L Hynds – Vice Principal with responsibility for Curriculum with Assessment**

The governors and staff at Saintfield High School have a commitment to innovation in education, and strive to ensure that every child is fully equipped to meet the ever-changing demands and opportunities of a rapidly developing twenty-first century.

The school's curriculum at Key Stage Three is both broad and balanced, affording pupils the opportunity to develop a range of transferable skills. The cross-curricular skills of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT are additionally developed across the curriculum at Key Stage Three. Opportunities to develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are embedded in the schemes of work of each subject area. At Key Stage Four, pupils can choose from a wide variety of subjects to study at GCSE level, in addition to Occupational Studies qualifications.

In line with Saintfield High School's mission statement,

*'All that can be expected from the most perfect institutions is not that they should make it possible for individual excellence to develop itself, not that they should produce the perfect individual',*

each student is encouraged to reach his/her potential and nurture her own particular talents and abilities through the planning and implementation of the curriculum. Our aim is to empower our pupils to achieve the very best of which they are

capable, by enabling them to develop as individuals and as contributors to society, the economy and the environment.

Teaching is organised through academic areas led by Heads of Departments and Subject Leaders. Programmes of Study and Schemes of Work are designed to ensure a breadth and depth of knowledge, a zest for learning and the development of skills and values necessary for life. There is a culture of self-evaluation within all departments to ensure that the school remains responsive to changes in education and open to the individual needs of pupils.

Our school building and facilities allow both curricular and extra-curricular learning to take place in an environment which promotes learning and engages pupils. All of our students benefit from excellent facilities, including our new Sports Hall, which opened at the end of 2015.

Pupils with identified Special Educational Needs are supported and provided for in Saintfield High School in order that they can fulfil their potential. In addition, the school assists and supports those pupils who are experiencing difficulties with their studies, or who require extra help, through our after-school programme of revision and learning support classes across a range of subjects at both Key Stage Three and Key Stage Four.

At Saintfield High School, we manage change collectively to ensure the very best educational opportunities for all our boys and girls. The Curriculum with Assessment, Pastoral, Careers Education, Information and Guidance, and Special Educational

Needs Teams work together to support all our pupils, and to enable them to reach their true potential through their own unique educational pathways.

Saintfield High School is wholly committed to creating a personalised learning experience for each pupil within our school. Teaching staff are encouraged to be self-reflective practitioners, to celebrate success, share ideas and good practice with each other and to be innovative in adopting new teaching and learning strategies.

### AIM

*‘To promote and develop the ‘Every School a Good School’ philosophy and policy through the delivery of an innovative, exciting, challenging curriculum where Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities, Cross-Curricular Skills, teaching and learning strategies, review and reflection are not separate programmes but integrated into a coherent whole school approach’.*

### Objectives

- Successfully integrate strategies into the school’s curriculum which allow pupils to experience a full range of learning styles to meet the needs of every child including gifted and talented and SEN students to reflect the values of the NI curriculum.
- Recognise the idea of GCSEs as the sole route to success in the curriculum to be invalid; whilst recognising their value

and importance to the students and the school, Saintfield High School will provide pathways to more vocational routes which reflect the interests and aspirations of students and their onward career progression. This will help to provide a focus for *all* students, providing relevance to their studies and personalising their learning experience at all stages.

- To successfully embed in the curriculum the ethos and techniques of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities, Cross-Curricular Skills, and assessment for learning, to allow every student to experience a full range of teaching and learning approaches so each pupil can develop a fuller appreciation of their own preferred learning style and become success independent lifelong learners.
- To have a staff who consider themselves to be educators in a wider sense, not just in delivering the requirement of subject knowledge but in embracing the key elements and skills embedded in the curriculum so that students can successfully work with others, manage information, problem solve, be creative and independent learners to realise their potential and make informed decisions throughout their lives.
- To prepare our young people for the demands of a rapidly changing 21<sup>st</sup> century, to learn how to act responsibly with the interests of the larger local and global community in mind and know how to analyse, evaluate and create information in a variety of forms, contexts and media.

### **Key Stage 3**

## **English & Media Studies**

The aim of the English Department is to encourage pupils to communicate in the three attainment targets of Speaking & Listening, Reading and Writing. We encourage our pupils to respond imaginatively to what they hear and see; to enjoy the reading of literature; to discuss topics with confidence, taking into account the views of others.

Years 8 - 10 will follow Programmes of Study, which explore a range of texts, including novels, plays and poetry. Our Drama Club adds an extra dimension to the interests offered to our pupils. This Club offers a relaxed and enjoyable way of developing each member's confidence and self-esteem.

## **Mathematics**

The aims of the Mathematics Department include developing both confidence and competence with numbers and the ability to make use of mathematical skills required to cope with the practical mathematical demands of everyday life. The department strives to develop an appreciation and understanding of information which is presented in mathematical terms. Lessons involve thinking logically, solving problems and presenting answers clearly.

## **Science**

The Science Department has three well equipped laboratories which are used to teach all aspects of Science.

Science focuses on learning about the world we live in. In Key Stage 3, pupils are taught a General Science course which is centred on experiments and investigations. The experiences which are provided are enjoyable and include challenges which are achievable and motivating.

Visiting speakers are invited to the school to enhance pupils' learning of science through interactive demonstrations.

### **Modern Languages**

A Modern Language is offered to all pupils throughout the school. French is studied by all pupils in Years 8 - 10. A mixed approach is used to promote and give equal weighting to the four attainment targets of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. Knowledge of France and the French culture is naturally developed through learning the language, and through the use of authentic material.

All pupils start the course on an equal footing. Those who know a little French already will have the opportunity to revise and expand on existing knowledge. Those with no prior knowledge will catch up quickly and will not feel at a disadvantage.

### **Religious Education**

The role of Religious Education within the school continues to reinforce the overall school aims - to develop and nurture the spiritual well-being of the pupils, and to encourage mutual respect for each other, as well as in society as a whole. This is developed mainly through each class curriculum and also partly

achieved through daily school assemblies, which function in three ways:

(i) pupils are given the opportunity to organise and present suitable activities on appropriate themes chosen by themselves;

(ii) a local church minister addresses the assembly once a week;

(iii) the Principal, Vice-Principal and other staff present morning assemblies on a wide variety of themes.

Religious Education is divided into four sectors:

The Challenge of Jesus

The Christian Church

Christian Morality

World Religions

The importance of the Christian ethos is also encouraged through the school's 'Scripture Union' club. A varied programme of events takes place each Wednesday at lunch-time, voluntarily supported by a range of youth workers from churches in Saintfield and the wider community.

## **History**

The History Department's aim is to give the pupil an appreciation and understanding of the past while encouraging an enquiring

mind together with an enjoyment in looking back through time. This is achieved with the use of a variety of resources including DVDs, videos, computer programmes, source materials and various texts.

Core topics studied are the Normans in Year 8; the Tudors and Stuarts in Year 9, and Ireland and World War 1 in Year 10. The teaching incorporates the use of ICT, source studies and field trips to Carrickfergus Castle and the Somme Heritage Centre.

## **Geography**

We start the Year 8 Geography course looking at Mapskills in detail. Skills such as understanding direction, grid references, using scale to work out distances and being able to read contour lines are central to this course.

Following our study of map skills we 'go on a tour' around Northern Ireland during the lessons, stopping to look at places such as the Mourne, and The Giant's Causeway. The 'tour' begins in Saintfield where fieldwork is carried out on the Main Street. Pupils observe land use and buildings along the Street. A written project is produced after the data collection. Enquiries are also produced for microclimates, geology of NI including the use of IT tools such as 'infomapper' and 'Google Earth', and opportunities are available to work closely with students from different schools where appropriate.

## **Home**

## **Economics**

As part of the Home Economics curriculum every pupil is expected to gain experience in practical food handling and preparation of meals. Food is purchased by the school and a voluntary contribution is requested to enable children to take their work home.

## **Music**

The Department aims to have all pupils making music via a variety of methods. All pupils will follow a keyboard course which will enable them to read music and play a reasonably difficult tune with choral accompaniment by the end of the course.

Instrumental tuition is available on woodwind and brass instruments during school and these players will form the basis of the school band, although anyone who can play an instrument is welcome in the band. As part of the curriculum pupils will have access to other forms of music-making such as percussion groups. Tuition is available on a private basis during school on the drum kit and on all kinds of guitar.

Keyboard Certificates are awarded to pupils reaching the appropriate levels in the classroom, and Associated Board examinations are followed by the pupils having instrumental tuition. The Drum school and guitar pupils take 'Rock School' examinations.

## **Physical Education**

We aim to make the pupils proficient competitors in the major sports while giving them knowledge and understanding of as many sports as resources allow. Years 8 - 10 receive grounding in gymnastics, dance, swimming, athletics and major games.

Girls - the physical education curriculum covers a diversity of activities: gymnastics, dance, netball, hockey, swimming, volleyball, badminton, athletics and major games. Minor, Junior and Intermediate teams compete in the Northern Ireland Netball League and Cup. Inter-schools events are arranged for netball, hockey, athletics and swimming.

Boys - the range of activities includes gymnastics, swimming, cricket, athletics, basketball, football and cross-country running. The main sport in term one is football with under 13, 14, 15 and 16 age groups competing in North Down Cup events and under 15s also playing in the league. In term 2 pupils enter basketball, rugby and hockey galas and in term 3 enter the North Down and Co Down Athletics Championships.

## **Art and Design**

The Art Department is a modern fully resourced teaching and learning facility covering a wide range of techniques and skills.

The Department specialises in printing, drawing, painting, model making, ceramics, textiles and graphics including computer graphics. Other areas of the subject are covered to provide a sound background for examinations. The aim of the department is to give pupils an awareness and understanding of visual

language, to give a basic knowledge and appreciation of art, to develop practical skills and to appreciate the impact of art and design upon the environment.

## **Technology and Design**

Technology and Design is primarily concerned with the solving of practical problems through the production of products or systems which meet human needs and desires. In both cases an important part of the process is Design where pupils develop their creative and imaginative skills to plan their intended solution.

In addition to Design, pupils develop the practical skills required to carry their designs into realisation. Such skills will be developed in a comprehensively equipped Technology Suite. The Suite contains facilities which enable pupils to realise their designs in a range of materials including wood, metal and plastics. The facilities also enable pupils to realise their system designs through a wide range of electronic and pneumatic media.

The use of computers and other associated equipment is a vital part of Technology and Design. Pupils will be involved in report writing, computer generated graphics (2D and 3D), system modelling, CAD/CAM using digital cameras and computer control.

## **Information**

### **Technology**

Information Technology is used on a cross-curricular basis by all pupils. This means that pupils will come to the Computer Suites with the relevant subject teacher and use whichever application is best suited to their needs. There are three computer rooms in the School's new extension, all containing RM One computers and colour printers. All computers have internet access. Years 8 – 10 are allocated two periods of Information Technology each week.

Pupils can also enjoy the Computer Club on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons.

### **Learning for Life and Work**

This course has been designed to address the Northern Ireland Key Stage 3 Curriculum requirements for:

- Education for Employability
- Home Economics
- Local and Global
- Citizenship
- Personal Development

Learning for Life and Work has been included as a key component of the NI Curriculum because research indicated a need for closer links between the curriculum and the development of skills and capabilities necessary for life and work. It concluded that young people require an engaging and relevant curriculum that helps them develop as individuals and members of society; delivers the skills and capabilities needed for adult life

and work; helps them cope with the changing global economy; and helps them learn how to make informed choices.

## **Key Stage 4**

### **2015-2016**

In addition to embracing any curriculum changes at Key Stage 3, Saintfield High School takes an innovative approach to curriculum provision at Key Stage 4. As a school, we combine our vision for what constitutes an exciting curriculum at 14-16 reflecting the background, skills, ambitions and future career pathways, with the guidance given in the NI Entitlement Framework. The school is an active member of the Lecale Learning Community to widen the breadth and opportunities for students to experience at Key Stage 4.

### ***Vision***

*“Between the ages of 14 and 19, young people make choices which will shape their future as students, workers and citizens, as well as individuals with their own network of family and social relationships and responsibilities.”*

At Saintfield High School, a great deal of educational development takes place with the aim of providing greater breadth and flexibility for our pupils. Our Key Stage 4 curriculum provision is reviewed and revised annually to take into account the needs and aptitude of our pupils, beginning with preparations in Year 10.

Currently, the curriculum for Key Stage 4 consists of a number of core subjects and a number of choices which have been included to offer every student a pathway which reflects their individual strengths and future aspirations. The Curriculum with Assessment team works in close collaboration with the CEIAG Team to establish the preferred learning pathways of each individual pupil.

Each member of staff is asked to review the current courses they offer at KS4 to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the specification and structure in the context of the pupils who may be following the subject in the next academic year, and each member of staff is asked to research alternative programmes in their subject area to find out if other courses would be more beneficial to our students at Saintfield High School. Using this information staff can review the current KS4 offer and more closely match the requirements of the students in each year group with the skills and expertise of teaching staff to adapt the programme of study each year.

The following subjects are Core Subjects for all pupils for the current academic year (2015-16):

- English Language
- Mathematics
- Learning for Life and Work
- Religious Education (GCSE/Short Course/Entry Level)
- Careers Education
- Physical Education

The following courses are currently studied by our Senior School classes, in addition to our core subjects:

*Additional Science, Art and Design, BTEC Science, Business Studies, English Literature, French, Geography, Health and Social Care, History, Home Economics, Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Journalism, Music, Occupational Studies (Technology and Innovation, Environment and Society, Engineering and Engineering Services, Construction), Performing Arts, Physical Education, Science, Technology and Design*

All courses below fit into the NQF at level 1 or 2 and have clear onward progression routes at post 16.

Level 3	GCE A Level	Level 3 NVQ
	Level 3 Certificate	
Level 2	GCSE Grades A* - C	
	Applied GCSE Grades A* - C	
	Level 2 NVQ	
	Level 2 Certificate	
Level 1	GCSE Grades D - G	
	Applied GCSE Grades D - G	
	Level 1 NVQ	
	Level 1 Certificate	

## **ENTITLEMENT FRAMEWORK 15-16**

### **General Subjects**

Additional Science

French

Geography

History

Science

Art & Design

Mathematics

English Language

Music

Physical Education

English Literature

Religious Studies

### **Applied Subjects**

Additional Applied Science

BTEC Science

Business Studies

Health & Social Care

Home Economics

ICT

Journalism

Learning For Life & Work

Motor Vehicle & Road

Users Studies

Performing Arts

Technology & Design

Occupational Studies

Environment & Society

Engineering &

Engineering Services

Construction

Technology & Innovation

Design and Creativity

At this stage pupils are required to make some choices which may influence the future course of their education. Pupils are encouraged to think about possible future careers or occupations, however, this should not dominate choice at 14+. It is important to keep options broad and flexible to maximise future opportunities.

In Year 10, pupils will be guided and supported by members of staff to make their Key Stage 4 subject choices, in collaboration with parents/carers.