



St Francis of Assisi Catholic School - Curriculum Statement

We offer a curriculum which is annually reviewed to meet the needs of all our students and enables them to fulfil their potential. Our curriculum is the description of how we aim to fulfil the challenges of our Mission and Vision, and it is based on 4 cornerstones:

- **Catholic**
 - *The curriculum is framed within our mission as a Catholic school.*
- **Inclusive**
 - *Allows for all to have access regardless of starting points or any barriers to learning.*
- **Broad**
 - *Covers a wide range of subjects and disciplines.*
- **Knowledge Rich**
 - *Entails teacher-led rather than enquiry-based instruction, with a focus on 'core' academic knowledge rather than creative activities.*

We are all the inheritors of the greatest ideas, writings and discoveries of the past. Our Knowledge Curriculum is designed to enable pupils to learn about these ideas, creating a relevant and ambitious curriculum underpinned by expert teaching, effective memorisation, a no excuses approach to discipline and an academic ethos where all students can thrive.

Knowledge provides a driving, underpinning philosophy: The **grammar** of each subject is given high status; the specifics of what we want students to learn matter and the traditions of subject disciplines are respected. Skills and understanding are seen as forms of knowledge. Acquiring powerful knowledge is seen as an end itself; we are all empowered through knowing things; this cannot be left to chance. We believe that the creative, 'rounded and grounded' citizens we all want to develop – with a host of strong character traits – will emerge through being immersed in a knowledge-rich curriculum.

The knowledge content is specified in detail: Units of work are supported by statements that detail the knowledge to be learned – something that can be written down. We do not merely want to 'do the Romans'; we want our students to gain some specified knowledge of the Romans as well as a broad overview. We want them to know specific things about plants and about The Amazon Rainforest, Culture, Shakespeare and Climate Change. We want our students to have more than a general sense of things through vaguely remembered knowledge **encounters**; in addition to a range of experiences from which important tacit knowledge is gained, we want them to amass a specific body of declarative and procedural knowledge that is planned. This runs through every phase of school: units of work are not defined by headings but by details.

Knowledge is taught to be remembered, not merely encountered: Our knowledge-rich curriculum embraces learning from cognitive science about memory, forgetting and the power of retrieval practice. Our curriculum is not simply a set of encounters from which children form ad hoc memories; it is designed to be remembered in detail; to be stored in our students' long-term

memories so that they can later build on it forming ever wider and deeper schema. This requires approaches to curriculum planning and delivery that build in spaced retrieval practice, formative low stakes testing and plenty of repeated practice for automaticity and fluency.

Knowledge is sequenced and mapped deliberately and coherently: Beyond the knowledge specified for each unit, a knowledge-rich curriculum is planned giving thought to the optimum knowledge sequence for building secure schema – a kinetic model for materials; a timeline for historical events; a sense of the canon in literature; a sense of place; a framework for understanding cultural diversity and human development and evolution. Attention is also given to known misconceptions and there is an understanding of the instructional tools needed to move students from novice to expert in various subject domains.

Summary of Teaching periods for 2025/2026

Year 7

Subject	Periods per week
RE	3
English	5
Mathematics	5
Science	4
Art	1
Computing Technology	1
Carousel*	2
Geography	2
History	2
French	2
Music	1
PE	2

* The carousel consists of 4 areas which the students will each do once per year. Food, Drama and 2 Design Technology topic areas. Some take part in Direct Instruction for maths improvement during these sessions.



Years 8 and 9

Subject	Year 8 Periods per week	Year 9 Periods per week
RE	3	3
English	4	5
Mathematics	5	4
Science	4	4
Art	1	1
Computing Technology	1	1
Carousel*	2	2
Geography	2	2
History	2	2
French	3	3
Music	1	1
PE	2	2

* The carousel consists of 5 areas which the students will each do once per year. Food, Drama, PE and 2 Design Technology topic areas.

Years 10 / 11

Subject	Periods per week
RE	3
English	5
Mathematics	5
Combined Science	6
PE	2
Option subject	3
Option subject	3
Option subject	3



Years 12 / 13

Subject	Periods per week
RE	1
Option subject	6
Option subject	6
Option subject	6

Students in years 12 and 13 typically opt for, or are guided towards, 3 subject choices. Some students (who express a desire to and do exceptionally well at GCSE) will start with 4 subjects and be encouraged to slim this to 3 by Year 13. Any student who has yet to achieve at least grade 4 in English or Maths has to attend lessons in those subjects in order to support a re-sit

Extra -Curricular activities

We provide a broad range of extra- curricular activities designed to enhance, even further, the experience each student may have. These activities range from short lunch time opportunities to residential trips both in the UK and abroad.

SFA