



Curriculum at Meols Cop High School



*“Curriculum is not a component of education: it is education. Start a discourse in your school, in any school and it will lead you back to the thought, design and direction of the curriculum.” **Kat Howard and Claire Hill.***

Meols Cop High School Curriculum Intent

At the heart of our school is a curriculum that is ambitious, inclusive and transformative. We truly believe that every student, regardless of background or starting point, deserves access to powerful knowledge, rich experiences and the skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world. Our curriculum is broad, balanced and coherently sequenced, enabling students to build knowledge, develop disciplinary understanding and experience success with challenging content. At Meols Cop, where we carry a significant proportion of students with SEND and disadvantaged students, our commitment to inclusion and equity is not simply an aspiration — it is the foundation of everything we do.

KS3: Years 7-9

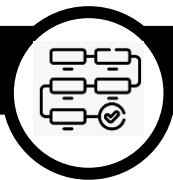
At Key Stage 3, all pupils follow a broad and equitable curriculum designed to provide a strong foundation for future learning. Pupils study a full range of subjects, including English, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Religious Education, Spanish, Computing, Physical Education, Art, Music, Drama and Design Technology. This rich curriculum ensures that every pupil, regardless of background or starting point, has access to powerful knowledge, cultural experiences and opportunities to discover and develop their interests and talents.

KS4: Years 10 & 11

At Key Stage 4, all pupils continue to study a strong core curriculum of English, Mathematics and Science (Combined or Triple Science). All pupils study at least one humanities subject and select three additional options from a wide range of courses that reflect their interests, strengths and aspirations. Alongside their examined subjects, pupils continue to access a comprehensive personal development curriculum through PSHE, Religious Education and Physical Education, supporting their wellbeing, character development and preparation for life beyond school.

Personal Development

Our personal development curriculum prepares pupils to be confident, respectful and informed citizens who are ready for life beyond school. Through a carefully planned programme of PSHE, careers education, enrichment opportunities and wider experiences, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and character needed to stay safe, maintain positive physical and mental wellbeing, make informed decisions and contribute positively to society. Provision is regularly reviewed to reflect the needs of our community and emerging local and national priorities.



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Our curriculum is built around a clear and consistent whole-school approach to curriculum design to ensure that it is knowledge-rich, coherent and carefully sequenced so that pupils build on prior learning over time. Subject leaders are empowered identify the key knowledge, concepts and vocabulary pupils need to master at each stage and ensure these are revisited through sequencing and effective assessment and curriculum review. We value that each subject has their own unique disciplinary demands and therefore balance whole-school consistency with autonomy for subject leaders to design a rich curriculum that best matches their own discipline. This balance allows us to develop disciplinary knowledge and understanding, while ensuring that barriers to learning are reduced so that all students can thrive.

Ambitious for All and Inclusive by Design

- High expectations for every pupil, regardless of background, SEND or disadvantage.
- Removes barriers to participation and achievement. Adapted rather than diluted.
- Ensures belonging and representation.
- Provides access to powerful knowledge, skills and enables all pupils to succeed and progress to the next stage of education, employment or training.

Broad and Balanced

- Maintains breadth across academic, creative, technical, physical and personal development domains.
- Reflects the diversity of modern Britain and pupils' lived experiences.
- Ensures all pupils experience a rich entitlement, not a narrowed curriculum.

Disciplinary and Knowledge-Rich

- Pupils learn the key concepts, knowledge and methods of each subject.
- Develops subject-specific thinking (e.g. historians, scientists, geographers).
- Balances substantive knowledge with disciplinary understanding.

Literacy, Numeracy and Communication Across the Curriculum

- Explicit development of reading, vocabulary, writing and oracy.
- Strong foundations in mathematical fluency and application.
- Opportunities to communicate, debate and present ideas confidently.

Coherently Sequenced

- Carefully planned progression from Year 7 to Year 11.
- Knowledge and skills build cumulatively over time.
- Clear end points and milestones within each subject discipline.
- Curriculum is designed around what pupils need to know, remember and be able to do.

Securely Learned and Remembered

- Assessment informs learning rather than drives the curriculum.
- Retrieval, practice and feedback support knowledge being revisited and built on over time, strengthening understanding and memory.
- Assessment informs curriculum adaptation and development.

Enriched Beyond the Classroom

- High-quality enrichment, cultural experiences and extra-curricular opportunities.
- Supports character development, leadership and wider aspirations.
- Broadens horizons and raises ambition.

Driven by Purpose and Continuous Improvement

- Curriculum decisions and discussions are “everyone’s business”
- Dedicated time to subject development.
- Reviewed through yearly curriculum review and informed by robust QI process.
- Responsive to pupils, community needs and future societal change.



Collaboration on Curriculum



*The job of a good curriculum is to inspire teachers, not instruct them” **Russell Hobby.***

At Meols Cop we want to liberate all staff to work collaboratively to discuss, review and refine the delivery of the material. Involving all staff in those curriculum conversations is key. We believe that work on the curriculum can revitalise the sense of satisfaction and purpose in teachers’ day to day work. Our “Subject Planning and Development Sessions” give departments meaningful opportunities to discuss, deliberate and refine their curriculum choices. Subject leaders are empowered to lead this collaboration time within their departments.

Question prompts for reflection and discussion – Subject Planning and Development Sessions

- What knowledge do we plan to teach over the next week or two weeks? How can we break this down into its component parts?
- Why do we include/not include this
- What prior knowledge do students have to know in order to access this, how will we activate this?
- What is students’ experience at KS2? How will we build on this?
- What is the core knowledge that we need to emphasise and reinforce? How will we make this stick?
- Once covered, when will this be revisited? How often is this revisited?
- What are the common misconceptions with this concept? How can we anticipate/address/pre-empt these?
- What is the necessary vocabulary for this learning episode?
- What key quotations, knowledge, practice do we need to teach?
- What reading opportunities are there for students?
- What are the best questions we can ask at this stage? What do we need to ensure that students know and can articulate and how will we tease this out?
- How will we model this to students?
- How will we check for students’ understanding?
- What are the threshold concepts in this unit of work?
- Do we need to make any modifications to the curriculum and what we are teaching based on students’ understanding of this unit so far? Or based on prior year groups’ performance on LCPS?

Additional Reading

- Kat Howard and Claire Hill – Symbiosis
- <https://saysmiss.wordpress.com/2021/11/20/a-note-on-creating-the-conditions-for-collaborative-planning/>