

In serving a vibrant, culturally and ethnically diverse community, where a significant number of our pupils (on average 48%) are from disadvantaged backgrounds, St Mark's Church of England Academy's mission of 'transformation for all' is unequivocal and just. Our curriculum is the vehicle which drives this mission and vision, with inclusion and equity at its heart. We are committed to cultivating academic and character excellence in all our students and we desire them to flourish, regardless of their starting points, and live 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). We want all of our young people to realise their God-given potential and not just 'conform' to stultifying and stereotypically limiting societal norms but be 'transformed by the renewing of their minds' (Romans 12:1-2) through their learning journey at St Mark's. Through enriching knowledge and experiences – founded on the inclusive Christian values of love, hope and trust – we desire our students to become courageous advocates, responsible and influential members of society who promote a culture of equality and make a positive change in our world.

St Mark's curriculum is underpinned by the strands of the national curriculum, whilst being tailored to celebrate, speak to and reflect the diverse background of our students so that they are supported to rise to the many challenges they face. By decolonising our curriculum, we desire that our students can see themselves reflected in the topics that they study and the knowledge that they develop. Through the texts that we teach in English, the examples that are used in Maths lessons, and the diverse role models that we explore in the arts and humanities we allow our curriculum to speak to the experiences of our students and empower them to have high ambitions and expectations for their future.

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Life in all its fullness

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John 10:10

We ensure that our subject offer is broad and balanced so that our students have access to a wide range of subjects at KS3 including Art, Music, Drama and Computing, and have access to meaningful pathways at KS4/5. Our personalised subject pathways mean that we are able to that meet the needs of our learners with a combination of GCSE/A-Level and BTEC subjects on offer including BTEC courses such as Applied Science and Health & Social Care in KS5 and study support options such as EAL/SEN support curriculums in KS4. As a Church of England Academy all students study RE for GCSE. The variety of subject choices, support students with a range of academic interests and abilities, ensuring that all students are ready for their next steps in further and higher Education and University, or for apprenticeship pathways which ready them for the world of work.

Our ambitious target setting model ensures that all groups of students including those with SEND, who are from disadvantaged backgrounds or come to us with High Prior Attainment are appropriately challenged and supported to realise their God-given potential within every lesson. At St Mark's we believe that learning is a persistent change in long term knowledge or skill, and our researched informed curriculum planning enables learners to meet Big Ideas and key concepts in different contexts, and with an increasing level of challenge from KS3 – 5, ensuring that each of their subjects supports long term memory retention and love of learning. The majority of students at St Mark's study the EBacc. Entry rates are well above other schools nationally and rising, including for PP and students with SEND. This represents the high expectations we hold for every member of our community and demonstrates our ability to break down the barriers to learning.

Our curriculum is sequenced and spiralled so that students are able to build on the foundational knowledge at KS3 in preparation for GCSEs. We have bespoke support for different groups of learners SEND/HAP at Key Stage transition points to ensure that they are prepared for their next steps into GCSE, Post-16, University, Apprenticeships and the world of work. Our students throughout their future will be competing against those from world class institutions and our aim for our curriculum to set them up on a level playing field and develop their cultural capital so that they have rounded experiences and knowledge to build upon. In order to ensure that our Enrichment Days provide transformational experiences for students, there is a strategic sequenced offer across KS3-KS5. Our Enrichment Days are centred around three core themes or big ideas which will be central to student's ability to live 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). Those three big ideas are: Cultural Capital, Employability and Experiential Learning.

The personalised support alongside our tailored careers programme ensures that they have the ability to secure life changing employment opportunities including our Enrichment Days. St Mark's curriculum sequencing and focus on both academic and character excellence supports our students to become active citizens who will challenge injustice and be courageous advocates in their community, this desire is typified by our Lifeology (PSHE) Curriculum which is tailored to meet the local and national needs of the young people we serve.

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Transformed by the
renewing of their minds ”

Romans 12:1-2

Our enrichment curriculum and pastoral support, ensures that alongside their academic development students have the wider skills to live happy and healthy lives with a positive understanding of their mental health. Enrichment runs throughout KS3 to 5 and gives students a range of experiential learning opportunities which expand their learning beyond the classroom, develop them spiritually and enhance their curriculum experiences and employability skills.