

The Sociology Curriculum at Our Lady's Catholic High School

We aim to inspire students to reflect on the world they live in, giving them a sense of something more than themselves. Sociology enables students to foster an understanding of the issues in society, which may be relevant to their own social experiences or worlds apart, as well as being able to see issues from different sociological points of view. Sociology allows students to see connections between individuals, groups and institutions, allowing them to see beyond appearances and look upon society with humanity as well as hopefully engaging them in wider social issues.

During the two year course students develop skills that have been acquired through studying other subjects in Year 7 to 9. These skills are transferable from other curriculum areas, especially History. Sociology also requires learners to develop new skills. Sociology teaches valuable skills including the ability to analyse, organise and construct arguments from different points of view. To understand and evaluate methodology and a range of research methods. It encourages critical thinking skills as well as literacy and oracy.

The course follows the AQA syllabus and is delivered to students across two years in KS4 with Family and Education taught in Year 10 and Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification taught in Year 11. The topics are underpinned by key theoretical perspectives and methods which are interweaved throughout both years. The same themes, concepts, theories and skills will be reinforced throughout the two years.

The scheme has been sequenced so that students are able to build on their sociological vocabulary throughout the course, beginning with an introduction to Sociology and the main sociologists and their viewpoints. The order of the topics has been selected to ensure that the students' knowledge is able to grow sequentially. For example, we study the Family and Education before Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification as in order to understand some of the causes of the social issues in society we have to understand how they may have begun.

The department use a wide range of teaching strategies to enable students to critically evaluate and compare and contrast theories and explanations. We use practical activities to deepen understanding as well as well-structured debates and discussions to verbalise knowledge.

We have high expectations for all students in Sociology. SEND students access the full curriculum and activities are scaffolded to ensure we are ambitious for all, as well as supportive. We offer extra revision sessions on a weekly basis as well as a targeted intervention programme.

Students knowledge is assessed each and every lesson through effective questioning, knowledge checks and retrieval activities to ensure the teacher is aware of the level of understanding, pacing issues or any misconceptions. All written assessments take the form of a GCSE style question and are carried out regularly in class throughout the course. Regular feedback is given to support and improve students understanding in both verbal and written forms. They are set 'formal' assessments at points in the year as well as end of unit tests.

Students have the opportunity to apply their understanding to current events and topics in the real world as they are encouraged to keep up to date with current affairs by watching or reading news articles on a regular basis.

Sociology teachers discuss with their students the possible career paths that studying Sociology can lead to. These include teaching, social and community work, plus working in the criminal justice system and policing. Many of our students go on to study Sociology at A-Level. The knowledge, understanding and skills students develop will provide a basis for further study and career choices.

The department used development time to share best practice and discuss different pedagogical approaches that have worked in the past two weeks. Best practice is shared on the resource area to be used by others.