



Sociology Curriculum

Intent

Curriculum Vision

Humans are complex beings. Sociology is the study of human behaviour and how that connects to our social structures. Students develop an insight into the functions and purpose of social structures from an individual and societal perspective. Students use current events and their own experiences to analyse the long- and short-term impact of these structures, and critically evaluate their impact on every day interactions and large-scale social processes. Students are equipped with better reasoning empathy, and analytical skills that can be applied to all aspects of life.

Students develop an understanding of structures and culture, such as religion and beliefs, crime and deviance, and education, using the lens of sociological perspectives to interpret them. Students research the demographic and historical changes that contribute to these structures, and evaluate the impact of these changes. Students learn how to conduct research in Sociology, from a practical and ethical angle, applying theory to evaluate a hypothesis. Students apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to undertake their own sociological investigation.

Despite the complex nature of humanity, sociology equips students to not only see things from their own perspective, but also from the perspective of others. This enables students to apply this understanding to a range of careers, and prepares them for future study at greater depth.

Concepts and Skills

The overarching concepts for Sociology are:

- Sociological perspectives (Marxism, feminism, functionalism, post-modernism, neo-postmodernism and neo-Marxism)
- Crime and deviance
- Understanding family and kinship
- Beliefs in society
- Education
- Methodology

The overarching skills we aim to develop in Sociology are:

- Analytic skills
- Evaluative skills
- Empathy skills
- Interpersonal and cross-cultural skills
- Reading skills
- Communication skills
- Metacognitive skills
- Mathematical skills

Disciplinary Literacy

Disciplinary approach

In Sociology, we support the development of disciplinary vocabulary and the students' ability to read, write and communicate at an academic level so that they master the nuances of the curriculum. At Key Stage 5 there is a great focus around reading current news articles and interweaving this into the study of sociology, making those vital connections between the news today and sociological theory to Sociologists who seek to understand the social world. We also explore more traditional texts, taking abstracts from writers such as Max Weber, Karl Marx and Durkheim to allow students to gather evidence to support their theories. This also allows students an opportunity to understand the style of the text and how context impacts their theories, and to assess how relevant the theories are in present day. Students are supported through this journey with a range of strategies, such as studying etymology (origin) of words to increase awareness and understanding of vocabulary.

At A-Level, there is an increased demand for the application of both tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary. In short, tier two is mature language that is frequently used, whereas tier 3 is specialised to Sociology. This increased focus on tier 3 vocabulary for Sociology enables students to achieve mastery, where they are confident to speak like a Sociologist. Another strategy we use to enforce this language is through teacher modelling of extended writing tasks and giving students the tools and confidence to be able to achieve mastery. Students are also expected to use word banks and glossaries and are encouraged to highlight tier 3 terminology in their work so they themselves can visually see the progress they are making throughout the course.

Interdisciplinary approach

In order to support the mastery of key concepts in Sociology, our interdisciplinary approach unites elements of Health and Social care, Psychology, Economics and Politics. The critical analytical skills used in this discipline allows students to excel in other subjects because of the cross-curricular links between Psychology and Sociology in regards to the free will and determinism. The consideration of consumption, consumerism and transfer of wealth can also be found in Economics. Sociology offers students the opportunity to revisit and extend aspects of other subjects into their lessons. It is this application that promotes solidified knowledge in the social world. This interdisciplinary approach gives Sociology students a variety of future careers, for example Sociology is proving to be a valuable unit within undergraduate fields in nursing.

Intellectual autonomy

In order to develop intellectual autonomy and confidence, we foster the willingness and ability of students in Sociology to comprehend challenging texts, assimilate key concepts and synthesise them with prior learning. Students are equipped to think critically and apply strategies independently so that they can form their own cohesive conclusions and be able to express that in writing. This is facilitated by the use of checklists alongside independent activities, so students can track and assess their own progress with the content. Students are given time to reflect on texts, concepts and theories in Sociology to allow them to embed this into their knowledge. Starter tasks at the beginning of every lesson are adapted to meet learning needs so all students find content accessible. This gives students the confidence, tools and areas of improvement to independently study sociological ideas and concepts.

In addition, students have access to Key Stage 5 resources held centrally in our library which holds a range of textbooks on sociology, for example Webb et al's *Sociology* text book (Napier Press, 2016) and students also have access to *Sociological Review* journals. Students are encouraged to make use of Curriculum Press which is an external resource centre for sociology-specific articles; using this resource, students can gather further evidence to support sociological claims and thus improve their writing and analytical skills needed in the study of sociology.

Application of Mathematics

The curriculum recognises the need for students to be able to apply mathematics effectively. In Sociology, students use and develop their knowledge of statistics and apply this to demographic trends that have occurred in society over different time periods. For example, students when they study Family and Households have time to look at government statistics to formulate theories of how the UK family is being shaped. Students have opportunities to look at graphs to then create their own graphs, for example converting a table into a stacked bar graph or pie chart. The mathematical skill of using statistics is frequently used throughout the Sociology course. This allows students to look at how mathematics can play a large part in how data is presented. This will give students insight to the practical skills needed for a Sociologist, as well as improve the ability to look at values and interpret data both numerically and graphically.

Independent Study

In Sociology students undertake both directed and self-directed independent learning activities that support the strengthening of long-term memory and retrieval. Independent study helps our students achieve mastery in Sociology and prepares them to work at an undergraduate level.

Directed independent learning tasks set in Sociology can include background reading to build knowledge and deeper connections to the existing frame of learning, or responding to interlocking questions on a given topic across more than one text source. Self-directed independent study in Sociology involves retrieval practice which is a crucial component of mastery. As students encounter challenges and learn to wrestle with demanding concepts and texts, they develop not only their knowledge and understanding but also resilience through perseverance.

Instead of revision being perceived as something that is crammed into a few weeks, independent study supports spaced practice throughout the curriculum. By repeatedly returning to content covered, students' knowledge has time to 'rest and be refreshed.'

We recognise that not all students process material at the same rate. Students who need extra support to achieve mastery are supported by targeted intervention in Sociology where a staged or 'scaffolded' process is used to enable students to move from being dependent learners to autonomous ones.

All students have access to our Academy library where a wide range of academic texts, journals and other resources are available.

Implementation

Overview Statement

The curriculum in Sociology is sequenced coherently so that knowledge, concepts and skills are rigorously developed over time. This supports all students, including the most disadvantaged, and those with high levels of need, especially SEND. Planning is informed by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and Cognitive Theory which support students in building secure schemas.

Interdisciplinary links and the application of mathematics are explicitly referenced and exploited in order to deepen understanding. Vocabulary is developed in Sociology using the principles outlined in the Frayer Model and students are equipped to be able to read, write and speak like a Sociologist. This is done by introducing students to key vocabulary through the use of: tier 2 and tier 3 language, vocabulary lists and glossaries to aid the ability to write like a Sociologist; whole class debates and individual discussions to aid the student's ability to speak like a Sociologist; and the questioning and analysis of texts with ideas on how they themselves or others would conduct research promotes thinking like a Sociologist.

Regular retrieval-based activities strengthen long-term memory and aid fluency, as do our cumulative mid-term and end-of-year assessments.

Technology is employed through the use of online articles, Kahoot quizzes and short clips in lessons and for students' independent study time. Students are able to use their own laptops or make use of the Sixth Form laptops to support them in gathering information, collecting notes and enhancing their own technological skills that are vital for lifelong learning. Students are also encouraged for homework tasks and independent study to collaborate together for team projects, whereby they use technology to create presentations and pitches to strengthen their learning.

Learning character is developed through the six learning applications; these are interweaved into every lesson so that students are able to see how their lesson links to character building. In Sociology, we often pick apart the world that we live in and question the functions and processes that each part has. Students therefore develop learning character through *awareness* and *collaboration*, which in turn offer a true insight of the world we live in. Students are taught *resilience* in a variety of ways, through being inquisitive to the content and being resilient to their own study habits. Students are supported by this, through independent study guides and tasks to support their own journey towards *independence*. *Creativity* in Sociology often coincides with independence where students are expected to design their own research study, as well as their own examples of research methods, such as writing a questionnaire.

An imperative skill that comes with Sociology is that of *empathy*. To be able to think like a Sociologist, students need to have an awareness of other people's opinions and experiences in order to create social cohesion. It is this empathy that can be a force for social change.

Impact

The Key Stage 5 curriculum builds upon students' initial understanding, extending their knowledge in the areas of research methods, crime and deviance, education and families and households. Through developing their knowledge of sociological perspectives, traditional and modern, they are able to apply theory and taught knowledge to current topics. Students also develop an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of their studies and this is supported through explicit cross-curricular links in Religious Studies with looking at the enlightenment and explanations of society. Links to History are evident when students look at data of how society has changed over time, for example with religiosity. Sociology also has a strong cross-curricular links to English Literature where students are also encouraged to look at Sociological perspectives to explain texts.

Students use their knowledge of cognitive theory to recognise and use the most impactful methods of revision and retrieval practice.

Academic progress in Sociology is recognised through the AQA A-level Sociology qualification which acts as a benchmark of mastery; this provides students with the national currency needed for access to higher education and apprenticeship courses, and prepares them for a career in any workplace.