

Sociology curriculum plan

Rationale

Our vision for students studying Sociology at A Level is that every student will leave Cedars Martin Sixth Form with an awareness of the importance of the social structure and social action in explaining social issues. We want our students to develop into socially responsible citizens in contemporary society and studying Sociology will foster their development of critical and reflective thinking with a respect for social diversity. Our A Level aims to inspire students to reflect upon the world we live in, fostering an understanding of the inter-relationships between individuals, groups, institutions and societies. Sociology provides students with the exciting opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the world around them and reflect on social issues that are often relevant to their own social experiences. They have the opportunity to develop a broad set of key skills, including the ability to analyse and formulate clear, logical arguments, with scope for extensive evaluation from a range of theoretical perspectives. They develop strong critical thinking skills and are able to consider issues with a global outlook. This will be of huge benefit to students moving forward, whether this is in further education, the workplace or society in general.

Students must study the following two core themes:

- socialisation, culture and identity
- social differentiation, power and stratification

Students are taught the key concepts first in an introduction to sociology so that they understand that these concepts interleave between the topics.

- Education with theories and methods
- Families and households
- Crime and deviance with theory and methods
- Beliefs in society

Year 11 students joining our Sixth Form have had varying prior knowledge of the subject at GCSE. To ensure that all students commence the course with an understanding of the core themes they have to complete the 'What is Sociology?' booklet as part of a robust transition programme. It introduces learners to the core themes, concepts and perspectives that interleave through each topic. The transition task also provides challenge for those students who have a prior knowledge of Sociology through the provision of wider reading and research activities to broaden their sociological imagination.

Curriculum overview

Year 12

Half term 1	Half term 2	Half term 3	Half term 4	Half term 5	Half term 6
Education with Theory and Methods Families and Households	Education with Theory and Methods Families and Households	Education with methods in context Methods	Education with Theory and Methods Families and Households – revision in preparation for trial AS exam	Education with Theory and Methods Families and Households – revision in preparation for trial AS exam	Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods. Beliefs in Society.

Year 13

Half term 1	Half term 2	Half term 3	Half term 4	Half term 5	Half term 6
Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods. Beliefs in Society	Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods. Beliefs in Society	Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods. Sociological Theories	Revision across all topics	A- level revision and preparation.	

Timetabling

Students are timetabled for five lessons a week in year 12 and 13. Teachers teach to their subject specialisms and give students a broad perspective. Teaching the topics simultaneously enables student's to gain an understanding of how the topics and perspectives interleave.

Key topics

Two of the main topics are mandatory:

Education with Theory and Methods

Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods

As a centre we have opted to study Families and Households and Beliefs in Society as our topics in Sociology. We have selected these because it enables students to critically evaluate the impact that primary socialisation within the family can have on the core topics studied in

terms of attainment in Education and interactions with the Criminal Justice System. These topics are also readily accessible to students because they can pull from their own experiences of family life, education, beliefs and crime. We have selected Beliefs in society as a topic as it contains philosophical elements that develop higher order reflective and critical thinking skills within our students and builds upon the skills and knowledge they have been exposed to in PSHE and RE.

Assessment

Formative and summative assessment are timetabled on a regular basis. Assessments are summative because the course is summative: students gain a greater understanding of the core themes the more topics they study because they gain a broader and deeper understanding of the sociological perspectives.

Retrieval activities are embedded in lessons and these enable teachers to assess pupil's knowledge and skills. Summative assessment occurs at the end of each topic when students have to apply their knowledge to exam and essay questions.

Literacy

Subject specific literacy is taught and utilised in lessons and knowledge of the key terms is checked through low stake quizzes and test and assessment of student's workbooks, essays and exam questions. Due to the nature of Sociology students have the opportunity to express and debate their ideas orally before conveying debated and arguments on paper.

Examples of debates that students will take part in are;

Which factor has the biggest impact on attainment in education, gender, class or ethnicity?
?

Do men and women now share the domestic division of labour equally?

What are the reasons that people commit criminal acts?

The above questions enable students develop their skills in constructing an argument and debating topics considering a range of perspectives. Students also have to give evidence that supports the argument that they are making based upon factual evidence and sociological perspectives. These skills prepare them for further study at university or in the workplace. Modelling is used heavily at the start of the course to assist students in developing their extended writing essay skills and how to structure answers in line with exam board requirements. Modelling is also used to enable students to identify the 'hooks' in Item's that they apply to develop the debates within their 10, 20 and 30 mark questions.

Beyond the classroom

Students can utilise their learning from English in order to aid them in the essay writing elements of the course as well as other social science subjects such as Psychology and Health and Social Care when considering socialisation and ethical considerations connected to each topic.

We work collaboratively with our partner schools across the Trust in developing resources and sharing best practice.

Differentiation

Students accessing the courses with varying levels of confidence are supported through three main strategies

1. Teaching to the top and ensuring that students are challenged and supported through all material. Articles are utilised from magazines such as the Sociology Review giving them access to rich material, vocabulary and exemplar exam responses. Students are also challenged by being encouraged to draw conclusions on live news
2. Support through workbooks which allow SEN students to access words and concepts before teaching takes place so they can reference the booklet at any time. Further support is provided through lots of examples relating to news articles and explicit teaching of exam skills.
3. Differentiated questioning in the classroom also ensures that students are both challenged and supported.

The school wide PP policy and T&L strategies are implemented to support students from poorer socio-economic backgrounds. The teacher works with the SEN coordinator to ensure that the needs of any SEN students is being met.

To further support PP students, we provide a bursary to ensure that they are able to purchase the textbooks and equipment to study at A level. Teaching and learning strategies that we are focusing on as an academy this year ; teaching to the top, retrieval practice , cold calling and modelling also support our PP learners ensuring they are involved in lessons, embed key terms and concepts in long term memory and are clear about what good quality answers look like .

Marking and Feedback

The school wide marking and feedback policy is implemented.