

Sociology

Curriculum Information



Intent

Sociology equips students with the knowledge, understanding and intellectual curiosity needed to make sense of the complex social world in which they live. Through the study of individuals, groups, institutions and social structures, students explore how society shapes identities, opportunities, beliefs and life chances, while also considering how individuals and groups can influence and change society. By combining academic scholarship with real-world relevance, students gain a deeper understanding of society and their place within it.

As an academic discipline, Sociology develops students' ability to think critically, analyse evidence, evaluate competing perspectives and construct well-reasoned arguments. Through engagement with sociological theories, concepts and research methods, students learn to question assumptions, scrutinise evidence and explore the relationship between individual experiences and wider social forces. The study of families, education, inequality, crime and social difference enables students to investigate some of the most significant questions facing contemporary society.

Sociology encourages students to recognise the dignity and value of every person while developing an understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion and social justice. Students explore how social change occurs and consider how individuals, communities and institutions can contribute to a fairer society. In doing so, they develop respect for different experiences and perspectives, confidence in informed debate, and the courage to challenge prejudice and injustice with integrity and compassion.

Through Sociology, students develop the intellectual skills, independence and social awareness needed for further study, employment and active citizenship. We aim for students to leave the subject as informed, reflective and responsible young people who are able to question the world around them and contribute positively to their communities and wider society.

Implementation

At Key Stage 4, students are taught Sociology over three lessons each week. Students begin by developing an understanding of key sociological concepts and perspectives before exploring the research methods sociologists use to investigate society. They then study Families, Education, Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification. Throughout the course, sociological perspectives, research evidence and contemporary examples are revisited so that students learn to make connections between different areas of the curriculum rather than viewing topics in isolation.

At Key Stage 5, during the six lessons per week students develop an increasingly theoretical understanding of Sociology. Students study Sociological Theory, Families and Households, Education, Stratification and Differentiation, and Crime and Deviance. As they progress, students are expected to draw together knowledge from across the course and apply sociological theories and research to a range of social issues. Teaching combines clear teacher explanation with modelling, discussion, independent and collaborative work, practical research and examination practice. New concepts, sociological terminology and extended writing are carefully scaffolded, with support gradually reduced as students become more confident and independent.

Students are explicitly taught the specialist vocabulary of Sociology and are given regular opportunities to read, discuss and write about sociological theories, research and evidence. Retrieval and revisiting of prior knowledge are embedded throughout teaching, allowing students to strengthen their understanding of key concepts and perspectives whilst apply them across different topics.

Discussion, debate and presentation provide opportunities for students to articulate sociological arguments, respond to alternative perspectives and use evidence to support their reasoning. Contemporary research, current affairs, articles, documentaries and podcasts are also used where appropriate to connect classroom learning with the society students experience beyond school. Independent learning is encouraged throughout both Key Stages. Students are supported in developing effective reading, note-making, research and revision habits, with increasing responsibility for extending and consolidating their knowledge as they progress through the course.

Impact

Students are assessed regularly using a range of activities and examination-style questions. These range from hands down questioning, shorter written knowledge and application questions to extended essays requiring students to analyse evidence, consider different sociological explanations and reach supported conclusions. Students receive regular feedback and are encouraged to reflect on their work, identify areas for improvement and apply feedback to future responses.

Examination skills are taught explicitly so that students understand what different questions require and become increasingly confident in demonstrating their knowledge under timed conditions. Progress can also be seen beyond formal assessments. As students move through the course, they become more confident in discussion, debate and presentation and increasingly able to use sociological terminology, key studies and real-world examples to support their ideas.

We want students to leave Sociology able to question assumptions, recognise different perspectives and think critically about the society in which they live. Students should be able to consider evidence carefully, understand that people's experiences of society are not always the same and form informed judgements about contemporary social issues.

These skills provide a strong foundation not only for further study in Sociology, but also for subjects and careers involving research, communication, analysis, public policy, education, law, social care and many other areas concerned with people and society.

Research Links/Professional Links

Our curriculum follows the AQA specifications for both GCSE and A-level Sociology. Students and parents can find further information about the courses through:

- AQA GCSE Sociology (8192) [here](#)
- AQA A-level Sociology (7192) [here](#)
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Teaching is also supported by contemporary sociological research, current affairs, academic studies and relevant media so that students are able to connect their classroom learning with developments in society.

Sequencing

Our Sociology curriculum is designed so that students gradually build the knowledge and skills needed to become confident sociological thinkers.

At Key Stage 4, students begin with an introduction to Sociology, key sociological perspectives and Research Methods. This gives them the foundation needed to understand how sociologists investigate society and why sociologists may reach different conclusions about the same issue. Students then study Families and Education, allowing them to apply these new ideas to social institutions with which they are already familiar. As their sociological knowledge develops, they move on to Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification, where they consider increasingly complex questions about inequality, power, social control and life chances.

At Key Stage 5, students revisit and extend many of these ideas in greater depth. The course moves from key theories and concepts into the study of Families and Households, research methodology and Education before progressing to more abstract debates within Theory and Methods. Students later explore Stratification and Differentiation and Crime and Deviance, drawing together knowledge from across the course.

As students progress, they move from explaining sociological ideas to comparing perspectives, applying evidence, challenging arguments and reaching informed conclusions of their own.

Key Stage	Qualifications	Exam Board
Key Stage 4	GCSE	AQA
Key Stage 5	A – Level	AQA