



# St. Julie's Catholic High School

Headteacher Mrs Kate McCourt, BSc.(Hons), NPQH

"We must have courage in the century we live in. Great souls are needed, souls having the interest of God at heart."

St. Julie Billiart



Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Dear Parent/Carers,

## Re: AQA GCSE Citizenship

Over the last few months, we have reviewed the KS4 curriculum offer to ensure that students can continue to develop their cross-curricular knowledge and critical thinking skills. As a result, we would like to introduce a new GCSE qualification for current Year 8 and 9 students.

GCSE Citizenship Studies has the power to motivate and enable young people to become thoughtful, active citizens. Students gain a deeper knowledge of democracy, government, and law, and develop skills to create sustained and reasoned arguments, present various viewpoints and plan practical citizenship actions to benefit society.

Students will also gain the ability to recognise bias, critically evaluate argument, weigh evidence, and look for alternative interpretations and sources of evidence, all of which are essential skills valued by higher education and employers.

You can find out further information about AQA GCSE Citizenship at [aqa.org.uk/citizenship](https://www.aqa.org.uk/citizenship)

GCSE Citizenship studies investigates how the citizen is enabled by society to play a full and active part and how citizens are empowered to effect change within society. Citizenship understanding develops through the knowledge of how a society operates and functions and its underlying values.

The overarching theme of this specification is '*How citizens can try to make a difference*'. This aim is supported by three content themes: Life in modern Britain, Rights and responsibilities and Politics and participation. The skills, processes and methods underpin the specification.

The first theme, Life in modern Britain, looks at the make-up and dynamics of contemporary society, what it means to be British, as well as the role of the media and the UK's role on the world stage.

The second theme, Rights and responsibilities, looks at the nature of laws, rights and responsibilities within the UK and has a global aspect due to the nature of international laws, treaties and agreements by which the UK abides.

The third theme, Politics and participation, aims to give the student, through an understanding of the political process, the knowledge and skills necessary to understand how to resolve issues, bring about change, and how the empowered citizen is at the heart of our society.

The opening section of each theme outlines the 'key concepts'. This is followed by four questions with associated content. The final key question of each theme relates to how citizens can try to make a difference.

These key questions enable students to study the content and frame their learning through the application of the citizenship skills, processes and methods listed below. Within each of these themes there is a requirement that students develop and apply citizenship skills and gain an understanding of the following processes and methods related to issues arising from the subject content.

### Assessment

This qualification is worth a full GCSE (grades 9-1) at the end of Year 11. During the exam season in May/June of Year 11, students will sit two examination papers.

Paper 1
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <p>Section A: Active citizenship Section B: Politics and participation</p>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes</li> <li>• 80 marks</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A: Active citizenship questions: questions on the citizenship action of others and questions on the students taking citizenship action investigation (40 marks)</li> <li>• Section B: Politics and participation question (40 marks)</li> <li>• Question types: multiple-choice, short answer, source-based questions, extended answer</li> </ul>

Paper 2
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <p>Section A: Life in modern Britain Section B: Rights and responsibilities</p>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes</li> <li>• 80 marks</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A: Life in modern Britain questions (40 marks)</li> <li>• Section B: Rights and responsibilities questions (40 marks)</li> <li>• Question types: multiple-choice, short answer, source-based questions, extended answer</li> </ul>

To accommodate this additional qualification, students will no longer study Global Citizenship in Year 9 or Core ICT in Year 10 and 11. Core ICT will be taught through cross-curricular activities within each department. This is in line with statutory guidance following a full audit of the Core ICT

curriculum. GCSE Citizenship supports excellent post-16 progression routes to A Level History, Religious Studies, Politics and Criminology.

**Moving forward, the plan will be for current Year 8 and 9 students to start the qualification from September 2024.** The Humanities department will lead on this qualification.

If you have any questions or queries regarding this new qualification, please email [reception@stjulies.org.uk](mailto:reception@stjulies.org.uk) and state GCSE Citizenship in the subject title.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs K McCourt  
**Headteacher**