



# ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## A-Level Sociology: Summer Booklet

### Welcome to A-Level Sociology!

This booklet will help you gain a head start before September by introducing core ideas and giving you tasks to build your confidence, curiosity and understanding of society.

We encourage you to work through this booklet at your own pace over the summer. It will help you prepare for the course and hit the ground running in September!

### What is Sociology?

Sociology is the study of society and human behaviour. Sociologists investigate how people are influenced by the social world around them and explore issues such as education, family life, crime, religion, inequality and social change.

Sociology encourages you to question assumptions and look beyond common-sense explanations. It helps us understand why different groups in society have different experiences and opportunities, and how institutions such as schools, families and governments shape our lives.

Throughout the course, you will develop your ability to analyse evidence, evaluate different viewpoints and apply sociological theories to contemporary issues.

It is an engaging and thought-provoking subject that helps students better understand the world they live in and their place within it.

### Your AQA A-Level Sociology (7192) Course Overview

#### Year 1 (what you will begin studying in Year 12)

##### Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods

- Education
- Research Methods
- Theory and Methods

##### Paper 2: Topics in Sociology

- Families and Households

#### Year 2 (building on Year 12)

##### Paper 2: Topics in Sociology

- Beliefs in Society

##### Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods

- Crime and Deviance
- Theory and Methods

#### Assessment

At the end of Year 13, you will sit three examinations.

### **Paper 1: Education with Theory and Methods**

- 2 hours
- 80 marks
- 33.3% of A-Level

### **Paper 2: Topics in Sociology**

- 2 hours
- 80 marks
- 33.3% of A-Level

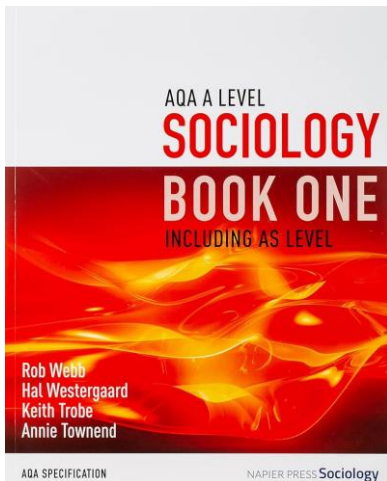
### **Paper 3: Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods**

- 2 hours
- 80 marks
- 33.3% of A-Level

All examinations include a mixture of short-answer, source-based and extended essay questions.

## **Your Essential Textbook**

To support your learning throughout the course, you will need access to the following textbook:



### **AQA A-Level Sociology Book One**

**Authors:** Webb, Westergaard, Trobe and Townend

**Publisher:** Napier Press

This textbook will be your primary resource throughout Year 12 and will support classwork, homework, revision and independent study.

A second-hand copy is perfectly acceptable and can often be purchased at a reduced price.



### **Families and Households – Understanding Family Life**

Families are one of the most important institutions in society. Sociologists study how families have changed over time, how family life differs between groups, and the role families play in shaping individuals and society.

#### **Overview**

You will explore the changing nature of family life in Britain and examine different sociological explanations for these changes. You will consider topics such as marriage, divorce, family diversity, childhood, gender roles and demographic change.

#### **Key Concepts**

- Family
- Household
- Marriage
- Divorce

- Family Diversity
- Childhood
- Gender Roles
- Demographic Change

### Summer Task:

**Create a timeline showing how family life in the UK has changed over the last 100 years.**

You may wish to include:

- Marriage trends
- Divorce trends
- Family size
- Women's changing roles
- Changes in attitudes towards relationships and family life

## Education – The Role of Schools in Society

Education is one of the key institutions studied by sociologists. Schools do much more than simply teach subjects; they also help shape values, identities and life chances.

### Overview

You will examine the role and functions of education, why some groups achieve more highly than others, and how government policies influence educational experiences and outcomes.

### Key Concepts

- Socialisation
- Achievement
- Equality of Opportunity
- Social Class
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Educational Policy

### Summer Task:

**Watch one episode of *Educating Greater Manchester* (Channel 4)**

While watching, note down **five observations about school life that a sociologist might find interesting**. Think about: Behaviour, Relationships between students and teachers, School rules, Achievement, Opportunities and challenges faced by students

## Research Methods – How Sociologists Study Society

Sociology is based on evidence. Sociologists use a variety of research methods to investigate society and understand social behaviour.

### Overview

During the course you will learn how sociologists gather, analyse and evaluate evidence. You will also consider the strengths and limitations of different research methods.

### Topics to Explore

- Questionnaires

- Interviews
- Observations
- Official Statistics
- Experiments
- Ethical Issues in Research

## Data Skills for Sociology

Sociologists frequently use statistics and data to identify patterns and trends in society.

### Skills You Will Develop

- Interpreting percentages
- Understanding graphs and charts
- Analysing demographic trends
- Using official statistics
- Evaluating evidence

### Practice Tasks

1. A survey found that 72% of students planned to continue into further education. If 250 students were surveyed, how many planned to continue into further education?
2. The UK population increased from 60 million to 68 million. By how many million people did the population increase?
3. Find a graph or chart from a recent news article about UK society and write three observations about what it shows.

## Stretch Yourself – Bonus Tasks!

- Listen to selected episodes of **The Rest Is Politics** podcast.
- Listen to an episode of **Thinking Allowed** (BBC Radio 4).
- Watch additional episodes of **Educating Greater Manchester**.

## Explore Online

### Useful Online Resources

- **Tutor2u Sociology** – Detailed notes, revision resources, exam guidance and current sociological examples.
- **AQA Sociology** – Specification, past papers, mark schemes and examiner reports.
- **Kate Flatley (@theteachersociology)** on YouTube for introductions to key A-Level Sociology topics.

### Sociology and Current Affairs

Sociology is about understanding the society we live in. Throughout Year 12 and Year 13 you will be expected to keep up to date with current affairs.

Over the summer, begin following the news using television, radio, newspapers or a news app (even TikTok, if you absolutely must!). Focus on stories that relate to the UK and UK society.

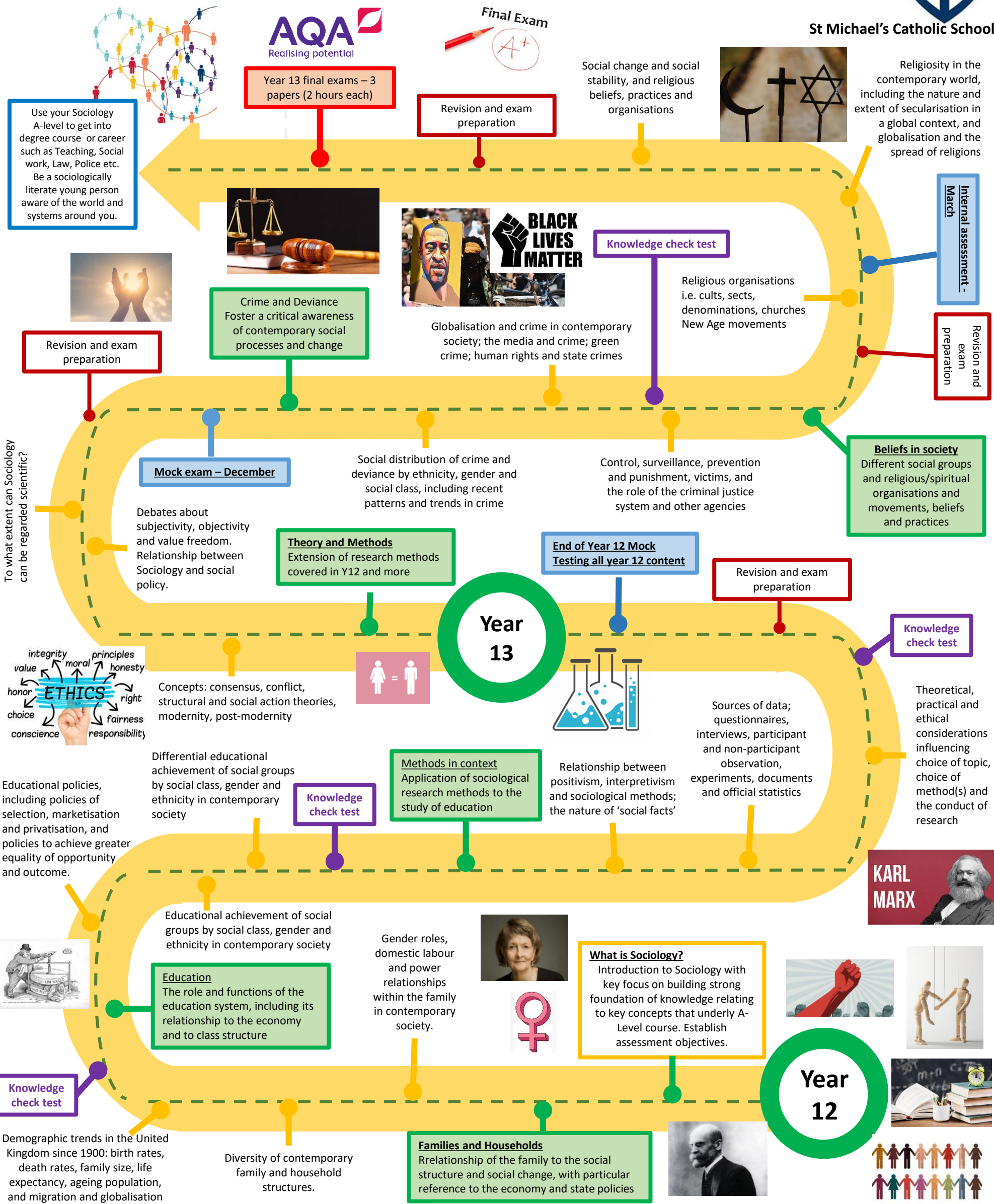
### Summer Task

**For your first Sociology lesson in September, come prepared with one recent UK news story that you can briefly share with the class.**

# Sociology Curriculum learning journey



St Michael's Catholic School



**AQA**  
Realising potential



Year 13 final exams – 3 papers (2 hours each)

Revision and exam preparation

Social change and social stability, and religious beliefs, practices and organisations



Religiosity in the contemporary world, including the nature and extent of secularisation in a global context, and globalisation and the spread of religions

Use your Sociology A-level to get into degree course or career such as Teaching, Social work, Law, Police etc. Be a sociologically literate young person aware of the world and systems around you.



**Crime and Deviance**  
Foster a critical awareness of contemporary social processes and change



Globalisation and crime in contemporary society; the media and crime; green crime; human rights and state crimes

Knowledge check test

Religious organisations i.e. cults, sects, denominations, churches New Age movements

Internal assessment - March

Revision and exam preparation

Revision and exam preparation

**Beliefs in society**  
Different social groups and religious/spiritual organisations and movements, beliefs and practices

To what extent can Sociology be regarded scientific?

Mock exam – December

Debates about subjectivity, objectivity and value freedom. Relationship between Sociology and social policy.

Social distribution of crime and deviance by ethnicity, gender and social class, including recent patterns and trends in crime

Control, surveillance, prevention and punishment, victims, and the role of the criminal justice system and other agencies

**Theory and Methods**  
Extension of research methods covered in Y12 and more

End of Year 12 Mock Testing all year 12 content

Revision and exam preparation

**Year 13**



Concepts: consensus, conflict, structural and social action theories, modernity, post-modernity



Knowledge check test

Theoretical, practical and ethical considerations influencing choice of topic, choice of method(s) and the conduct of research

Educational policies, including policies of selection, marketisation and privatisation, and policies to achieve greater equality of opportunity and outcome.

Differential educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society

Knowledge check test

**Methods in context**  
Application of sociological research methods to the study of education

Relationship between positivism, interpretivism and sociological methods; the nature of 'social facts'

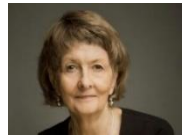
Sources of data; questionnaires, interviews, participant and non-participant observation, experiments, documents and official statistics



Educational achievement of social groups by social class, gender and ethnicity in contemporary society

**Education**  
The role and functions of the education system, including its relationship to the economy and to class structure

Gender roles, domestic labour and power relationships within the family in contemporary society.



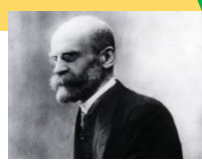
**What is Sociology?**  
Introduction to Sociology with key focus on building strong foundation of knowledge relating to key concepts that underly A-Level course. Establish assessment objectives.



Demographic trends in the United Kingdom since 1900: birth rates, death rates, family size, life expectancy, ageing population, and migration and globalisation

Diversity of contemporary family and household structures.

**Families and Households**  
Relationship of the family to the social structure and social change, with particular reference to the economy and state policies



**Year 12**



**Department Intent:** Shape young Sociologists who understand and analyse the world around them and allow them to gain knowledge and understanding of how and why society works in the way that it does. The curriculum shapes young students' ethical and moral understanding of equality and justice, encouraging students to become intellectually active young individuals who develop opinions about society rather than being passive social actors within it.