



ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL  
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## Curriculum Policy – Senior School

Authorised by: The Board of Governors of St Benedict's School

Date: May 2018

Signature:

Review Date: May 2019

Circulation: Governors/all staff/volunteers automatically  
Parents on request/School Website

Status: Current

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## 1 Introduction

The School's Curriculum Policy is intended to meet statutory requirements and the needs of our pupils.

### 1.1 Its major objectives are to:

- a) Provide full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age, which gives a varied and broad experience in religious, linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education.
- b) Provide a wide range of optional Sixth Form A Level subjects to cater for the abilities and interests of this age group.
- c) Provide subject matter within the curriculum that is appropriate for the different ages and aptitudes of pupils.
- d) Provide schemes of work that include opportunities for pupils to acquire a broad range of skills that will equip them for further study beyond school, for their chosen career path and for their role as a citizen in society. Such skills will include; speaking and listening; literacy; numeracy; ICT skills; research and other skills necessary for independent learning. Our Teaching and Learning policy sets out the expectation that the schemes of work and planning meet the needs of all pupils, allowing all to learn and make appropriate progress relative to their ability.
- e) Provide appropriate support for any pupil with an EHC plan to cater for their identified needs
- f) Provide an appropriately personalised curriculum where this is judged to be in the best interests of those pupils who otherwise might struggle to access the full curriculum
- g) Provide an age appropriate programme of personal, social, health, economic and citizenship education which reflects the aims and ethos of our Catholic and Benedictine School
- h) Provide high quality and age appropriate Careers guidance by the Head of Careers, to assist pupils in making informed choices about their career pathway. This is delivered impartially, to ensure that pupils are informed about the wide range of career options available to them. This encourages them to fulfil their potential by enabling them to make appropriate choices at GCSE and A level
- i) Provide appropriate opportunities for the all-round growth of each individual pupil to prepare them for the challenges, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as members of British Society and the broader global community. In doing so the school actively promotes fundamental British values in a variety of ways across both the formal and the informal curriculum. These values include respect for democracy and the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The structure of the curriculum is reviewed (and may be revised) annually and is distributed to parents and pupils through handbooks and on the school website. Major reviews of the curriculum are undertaken every few years or more frequently where external changes require this, such as reform of GCSE and A level.

### 1.2 How we deliver the curriculum described above

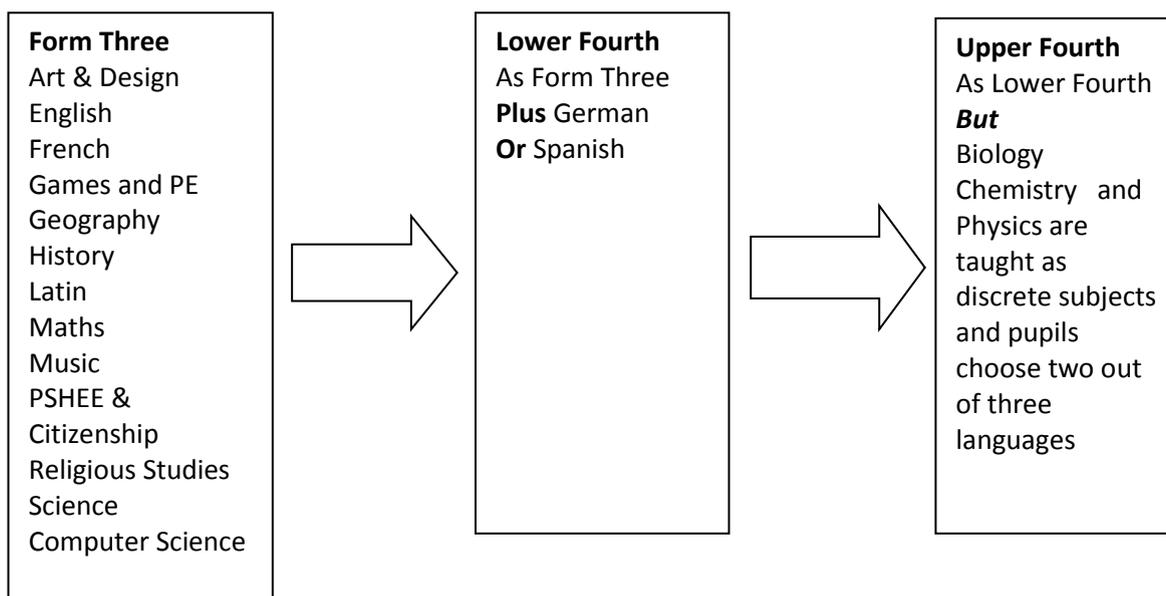
We meet our objectives by careful planning and by effective use of the resources available to us. This includes:

- Provision of a two-week timetable based on a six period day of 50 minute lessons. The daily curriculum is broken down into three sessions of two periods as follows. Periods 1 & 2 are before morning break, periods 3 & 4 after break and before lunch, periods 5 & 6 are after lunch. This enables efficient use of resources, timetabling of practical lessons requiring double periods, restricts the amount of time taken up moving around the site and encourages good lesson planning. It also enables the School to schedule subjects once a fortnight where relevant, such as PSHEE & C. Weeks are designated Red or Yellow to help identify the relevant weeks across the year.

- Highly qualified and skilled specialist subject teachers and support staff who are encouraged and supported to take advantage of the many opportunities for professional development and whose performance is appraised at least every two years
- Good accommodation and facilities that have been improved over the last few years through major capital investment, including the most recent Sixth Form /Art & Design Building completed in the Autumn of 2015
- A fair distribution of budgets between competing uses
- Consultation with those who are responsible for delivering the curriculum at those times when change is being considered or imposed externally. Subject leaders contribute to this automatically but additionally all teachers are invited to apply to take part in working parties to review specific aspects of the curriculum or matters that impact on this.
- Regular and clear communications with subject leaders e.g. through weekly briefings or regular timetabled meetings
- Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning e.g. through regular delegated scrutiny of work and lesson observations supplemented by frequent Leadership Team spot check work scrutiny and lesson observations.
- Departmental reviews on an annual basis.
- Departmental self-evaluation to assess overall performance of each department through the compilation of annual reviews by subject leaders. This includes reference to public exam results and the results of internal assessments for all year groups as well as an analysis of progress towards their departmental improvement plan.
- Effective planning to take account of the needs of all pupils based on data from various sources e.g. baseline tests MiDYIS, Alis, regular internal assessments, and screening undertaken by Teaching and Learning Support which is headed by the SENCO. External data may also be used where available to ensure that a full picture of abilities and needs is given.
- Departmental schemes of work that plan and deliver effective differentiation to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with an identified SEN and those who are able and enthusiastic.
- Annual review of departmental schemes of work that take account of issues that may have been identified through the process of departmental self-evaluation.
- Regular monitoring of pupil progress through regular standardised assessments, and frequent marking of pupil work (at least once every fortnight).

## **2 The KS3 Curriculum (Years 7, 8, 9)**

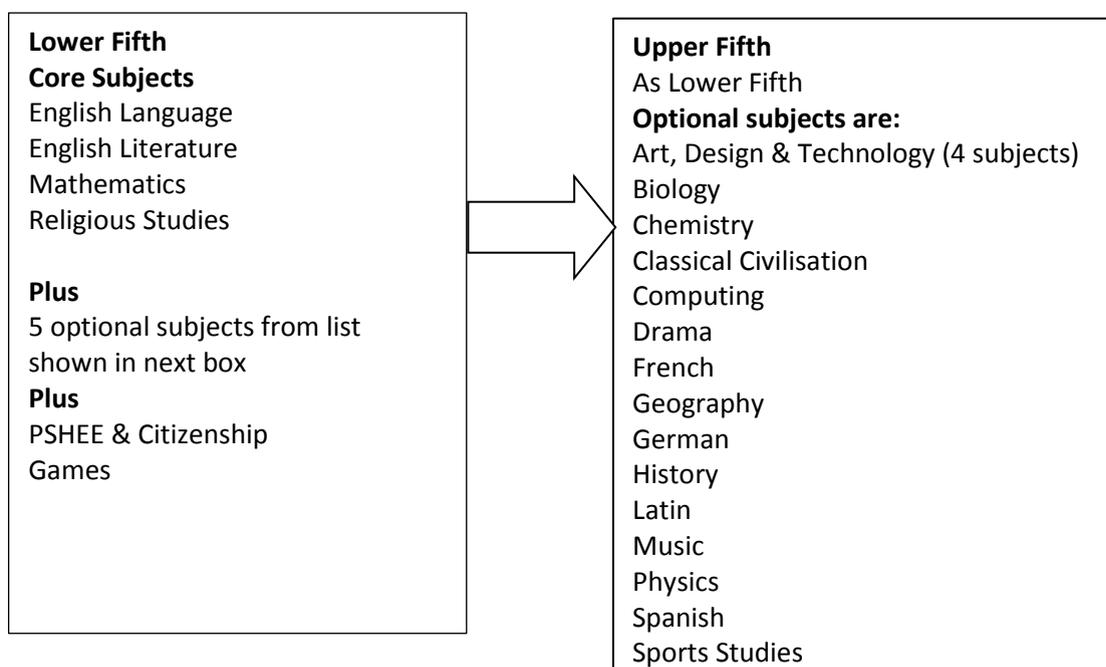
Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum in the first few years that lays the foundations for a successful transition to study at GCSE, A Level and beyond. Pupils follow an identical curriculum in Form Three adding a second modern foreign language as they move into the Lower Fourth. ICT is delivered through curriculum subjects across the school rather than as a discrete subject. I-pads and laptops are available through a central booking system to be used in class by teachers when required.



### 3 The KS4 Curriculum (the GCSE years)

A much greater element of choice is available to pupils as they move to this stage of their education and major choices have to be made by them. They are given considerable information, advice and support in choosing their optional subjects to ensure that they choose a curriculum that is balanced and right for them as individuals. Pupils are advised and normally expected to choose: at least two sciences, at least one language, one humanity subject (Geography or History), and one arts based subject (Art, Music, Drama). While most pupils follow the curriculum indicated below, a very few pupils study slightly fewer than 3 optional subjects where this is considered to be in their best interests. This is discussed fully with pupils, subject teachers and parents before decisions are made, and mostly applies to pupils with a history of following a reduced curriculum at Key Stage 3 (refer to Section 5 – Personalised Curriculum).

#### 3.1 The GCSE Curriculum



#### 4 The KS5 (Sixth Form) Curriculum

At this stage all subjects become optional and students are given much help and advice to select subjects that are right for them as individuals but that also leave their choices for future careers as open as possible. For some careers, certain subjects are required, and this is discussed fully with pupils who use the services of our specialist Head of Careers.

The majority of students choose three subjects to study to A Level. The new A levels are delivered as two year linear courses with all exams being taken at the end of the two year course. In addition, students take General Religious Studies, PSHEE & Citizenship (including careers/ Higher Education advice) and Games. A good number of students undertake The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). This is highly regarded by universities as it involves an extended piece of independent research to answer a question of special interest to the student, and is therefore a great opportunity for students to tailor their own A level learning experience. Analytical research and writing skills are honed in preparation for university. Other qualifications in Drama or Sports Coaching may be taken by a minority of students. Students are also required to undertake some form of "Service" (voluntary work) and a number undertake work experience at different stages across the two years of the A Level course.

##### **Sixth Form A Level optional subjects**

Art & Design	German
Biology	Government & Politics
Business	History ( <i>Modern or Medieval &amp; Early Modern</i> )
Chemistry	Latin
Classical Civilisation	Mathematics
Computer Science	Further Mathematics
Drama & Theatre Studies	Music
Economics	Physics
English Literature	Religious Studies
French	Sociology
Geography	Spanish
	Sports Studies

#### 5 Personalised Curriculum

All requests to drop subjects must be referred to the Director of Teaching and Learning, who will liaise as appropriate with the relevant Division Head, Head of Department and with the SENCO. Advice or guidance on dropping a subject may also come from the analysis of progress at tracking meetings, held 3-4 times a year after key assessment weeks. If the decision to drop is thought to be in a pupil's best interests, and if written parental permission has been obtained, the Director of Teaching and Learning will make the change. Due consideration will be given to how and where the student then spends their additional time. This may be in the TLS Centre under the supervision of a member of staff, in the library, or in the Scriptorium, depending on the age and stage of the pupil.

## 6 Additional Information

Further information about the curriculum and how it is delivered effectively can be found in the following documents:

- Departmental schemes of work
- PSHCE Policy (called PSHEE & C Policy at our school)
- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- SEND Policy
- Able and Enthusiastic Policy