



CURRICULUM POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

Christ is our teacher.

At St Bernard's we believe that all persons are created by God, unique and equal. We strive to create a caring Christian community in which we provide education based on Gospel values where all people reach their full potential. We aim to develop positive relationships with every individual and family, the parishes and the wider community.

"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full"

John 10:10

Reviewed by:	L McCarthy, Vice Principal, July 2025
Reviewed by:	A Riding, Principal, July 2025
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Signed:	Sue Kelly, Chair of Governors

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1. Aims

In line with our Mission Statement, our curriculum aims to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education for all students
- Enable students to develop knowledge, understand concepts and acquire skills, and be able to choose and apply these in relevant situations
- Support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support students' physical development and responsibility for their own health, and enable them to be active
- Promote a positive attitude towards learning
- Ensure equal access to learning, with high expectations for every pupil and appropriate levels of challenge and support
- Provide subject choices that support students' learning and progression, and enable them to work towards achieving their goals
- Develop students' independent learning skills and resilience, to equip them for further/higher education and employment

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements for academies to provide a broad and balanced curriculum as per the [Academies Act 2010](#), and the [National Curriculum programmes of study](#) which the school has chosen to follow.

It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#) and [Equality Act 2010](#), and refers to curriculum-related expectations of governing boards set out in the Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

ST BERNARD'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets
- The school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a "broad and balanced curriculum" which includes English, Maths and Science, and enough teaching time is provided for students to cover the requirements of the funding agreement
- Proper provision is made for students with different abilities and needs, including children with special educational needs (SEN)
- All courses provided for students below the age of 19 that lead to qualifications, such as GCSEs and A-levels, are approved by the secretary of state
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Students from Year 7 onwards are provided with independent, impartial careers guidance, and that this is appropriately resourced

3.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements
- The governing board is fully informed of the processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to understand decisions taken
- Proper provision is in place for students with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

3.3 Other staff

School leaders will ensure that staff:

- Have high expectations of all students
- Employ a variety of teaching styles and pedagogical methods
- Deliver programmes of study which build on previous experiences and learning, providing progression and continuity
- Provide work which meets the needs of their students and extends their aspirations to motivate and inspire them
- Involve the students in the learning process through discussions, regular feedback in line with the marking policy and evaluations of student practice
- Develop skills to become independent and resilient learners
- Encourage, reward, value and praise achievement and effort
- Work in partnership with other staff and the wider community in order to achieve shared goals
- Keep parents and carers regularly and fully informed about the progress and achievements of their child

4. Organisation and planning

The curriculum is based on a two-year KS3 and three-year KS4 enabling students to access GCSE foundations early. The curriculum is designed to be aspirational for our students leading to broad and deep learning. It is very much focused on quality of qualification rather than quantity.

Key stage 3 is an absolute priority for us. We have a very considered curriculum which ensures that students have access to a broad range of subjects whilst also places the need for students to be excellent readers at the forefront.

The inclusion of READ! as a subject at Key Stage 3 allows our students to develop in their reading abilities, their cultural awareness as well as their reading for pleasure.

Homework is a phased approach in Y7 where reading is the focus of the first half term, with the introduction of core homework in the second half term and all subjects from term 2 onwards. This allows students to develop their skills and coping strategies for working beyond the school day.

Our Careers Curriculum is as much of a priority in key stage 3 as in key stage 4. Options choices are therefore more considered and future focused. Mental health is also an aspect of the choices that students make. Our students actively discuss balancing learning and giving themselves opportunity for both theoretical and practical learning.

The curriculum model is as follows:

Year 7 and 8 (Key Stage 3) – two-week timetable		
Core	Ebacc	Non-Core
English x 6	MFL x 4	Art x 2
Maths x 6	Geography x 4	Computing x 2
Science x 7	History x 4	Design and Technology / Food x 2
RE x 5		Performing Arts x 2
PE x 4		Read Programme x 2

Year 9, 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4) – two-week timetable	
Core	3 x Options (allocated five hours each week over two-week timetable)
English x 9 in Y9 & x 8 in Y10 & Y11	Art Textiles
Maths x 8	Fine Art
Science x 11	Photography
RE x 5 in Y9 & x 6 in Y10 & Y11	Business Studies
PE x 2	Computer Science
	Construction
	Design & Technology
	Food Preparation and Nutrition
	Geography
	Health & Social Care
	History
	Media
	French

	Spanish
	PE
	Sport
	Performing Arts – Dance
	Performing Arts – Acting
	Music

English, Maths, Science, PE and RE are core learning areas for the full five years.

As a Catholic School, Religious Education is central to the academic, religious, spiritual and moral formation of our students. We follow the directory of the Bishops of England and Wales at KS3. All students have 10% of curriculum time allowing for full exploration and examination of beliefs and practices and the impact that they have on individuals and communities. At KS4 all students study GCSE Religious Education following Eduqas Route B (Catholic route).

Students follow our option process at the end of Year 8 in order to facilitate GCSE choices for the following three years. Option choices include:

- Art Textiles
- BTEC Health & Social care
- BTEC Music Technology
- BTEC Performing Arts - Acting
- BTEC Performing Arts - Dance
- BTEC Sport
- Computer Science
- Construction
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Design Technology
- Fine Art
- French
- Geography
- History
- Media
- Music
- GCSE PE
- Photography
- Spanish

SMSC is weaved through the curriculum areas and schemes of learning.

RSHE at St Bernard's is a full, broad, published curriculum written by the school in collaboration with TenTen. It is taught through daily form periods and dedicated Positive Discipline time. The RSHE policy can be found on the following link: <https://www.sbch.org.uk/welcome-sbcs/policies/>

5. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all students. They will use school-set ambitious targets in order to plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able students
- Students with low prior attainment
- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Students with SEND
- Students with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that students with SEND can study every subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of students whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help students to develop their English, and to support students to take part in all subjects.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

6. Monitoring arrangements

Governors monitor whether the school is complying with its funding agreement and teaching a “broad and balanced curriculum” which includes the required subjects, through their link departments and meetings with leaders, staff and students as well as committee meetings.

Curriculum Leaders monitor the way their subject is taught throughout the school through quality assurance procedures including observations, learning walks, work scrutiny, progress reports and meetings, student feedback, moderation and staff collaboration.

Curriculum Leaders also have responsibility for monitoring the way in which resources are stored and managed.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal.

7. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Assessment policy
- SEND policy and information report
- Equality information and objectives
- RSHE Policy