

St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School CURRICULUM STATEMENT

"The curriculum, in all its aspects, must reflect the fact that the person of Christ, and the message which the Church has received from Him, is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school. Although it may be convenient to speak of the 'religious' curriculum and the 'secular' curriculum in the Catholic school, as though these were separate and distinct, in reality the curriculum as a whole, and every part of it, is religious, since there is nothing which does not ultimately relate to God. For the school to be truly Catholic, this vision must be shared by all connected with its work."

*Evaluating the Distinctive Nature of the Catholic School,
Bishops Conference of England and Wales 1999*

We are a Catholic school and our curriculum, both in its pastoral and academic dimensions, stems ultimately from the vision and mission which is distinctively ours as a Catholic school. Through our curriculum, content and delivery we must re-affirm our love for the child as a child of God on a faith journey to Christian maturity. This perspective enables us to recognise and respect the uniqueness of all individuals within our community and thus we wish to provide a curriculum which will:

- provide for the spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional well-being, mental and physical development of all students at the school;
- A St Bernard's learner is able to question appropriately, express their ideas eloquently and work independently.
- prepare all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- allow students to achieve their considerable academic potential and to go above and beyond the confines of the National Curriculum.
- provide the skills and knowledge to fulfil their vast ability.

We need to ensure that:

- the school's Mission Statement is clearly understood by all;
- each student's individual self-esteem is encouraged and upheld;
- individual differences, capabilities and characteristics are celebrated and supported;
- the whole school approach to the learning process is pervaded by a sense of fairness and justice.

In recognition that each student is different, the school will endeavour to provide each student with an individualised curriculum suited to his/her needs and interests. Key points in this process are:

- The offer of a broad and balanced curriculum: our students in Key Stages 3 and 4 study a varied curriculum, which caters for and facilitates the development of a wide range of skills and talents. Details of the curriculum on offer in each year can be found below.
- Language choices: In Year 7, our students study four languages. At the end of Year 7 students opt for two languages to take in Year 8.
- GCSE Option choices: at the end of the Easter Term, students coming to the end of Key Stage 3 identify four option choices to complement their core curriculum for study in Key Stage 4. In addition to the study of Religious Education, English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Statistics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics to GCSE level and non-examined Physical Education, the students study to GCSE level at least one language (from the four listed above), their choice of History and/or Geography and at least one subject (maximum of two) from the choices of Art, Business, Computing, Drama, Music, Physical Education, Resistant Materials and Food and Nutrition.

- A Level Option choices: at the end of Year 11, our students (and external applicants) are given the opportunity to select three subjects (or four subjects for those with an average GCSE points score of 8 or above) that they wish to study in Years 12 and 13 to A level. All the subjects that are currently on offer at GCSE are available for selection at A level, apart from Food and Nutrition. In addition, there are also the A level subjects of Ancient History, Economics, Philosophy and Ethics, Psychology and Product Design, and Sociology; these are joined by the EPQ qualification.

The school will respond to the needs and preferences of each student and will try to provide the curriculum desired. The Governors recognise that there will be occasions when students may not be able to study exactly what they want due to logistical or financial constraints – but will plan staffing to minimise these occurrences and balance the curriculum desired by students with the financial constraints of running a school.

Where there are concerns regarding an option subject being able to run at A level due to insufficient student take-up, various strategies will be considered to facilitate the subject still being on offer to the students. These will include:

- Exploring the possibility of the subject being taught with Years 12 and 13 together.
- The number of teacher-led hours being reduced from 4 per week to a minimum of 2 per week, depending on numbers, with an increase in independent study hours from 1 per week to a maximum of 3 per week.

At A level, the required student numbers for a subject to receive the full teacher-led curriculum hours of 4 per week is a minimum of ten. Where student numbers are above five but less than ten, and the teaching of Year 12 and 13 together is not possible, teacher-led curriculum hours may be reduced to 3 per week; for groups of five or less, and the teaching of Year 12 and 13 together is not possible, teacher-led hours may be reduced to 2 per week. If the alternative strategies to facilitate the subject remaining on offer are not viable, regrettably the course may not run.

At GCSE, it is not possible to consider the same strategies to facilitate a subject running with lower student take-up. However, to retain the breadth of course on offer to the students, the Governors will do all they can to ensure that subjects with less than fifteen students do still run. In exceptional circumstances, the decision to remove the course from the curriculum offer may need to be taken.

Curriculum Offer by Year Group:

	Year 7	Year 8	Years 9, 10 & 11	Years 12 & 13
Religious Education	X	X	X	X
English Language & Literature	X	X	X	X
Mathematics	X	X	X	X
Statistics			X	
Science	X	X		
Biology			X	X
Chemistry			X	X
Physics			X	X
Core PE	X	X	X	X (not Y13)
Citizenship	X	X		
PHSE	X	X	X	X
Art	X	X	X	X
Computing	X	X	X	X
Drama (shared with UCGS at A level)		X	X	X
Food & Nutrition	X	X	X	

French (shared with UCGS at A level)	X	X	X	X
Geography	X	X	X	X
History	X	X	X	X
Japanese	X	X	X	X
Latin	X	X	X	X
Physical Education			X	X
Resistant Materials	X	X	X	
Spanish (shared with UCGS at A level)	X	X	X	X
Ancient History			X	X
Business			X	X
Economics				X
General Studies/EPQ				X
Philosophy & Ethics				X
Psychology				X
Sociology				X
Product Design (taught at UCGS)				X

The Curriculum Statement was approved by the Full Governors' Meeting on 25th November 2020

This Statement will be next be reviewed and considered for approval in Autumn 2022