

## St. Mary's Curriculum Policy

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#### 1. St. Mary's College Curriculum Policy

St. Mary's College is a learning community. We promote care and respect and expect high standards in all aspects of College life. Our aim is to meet the needs of young people preparing them for adult and working life in the 21st century.

##### a. The educational vision and curriculum design for St. Mary's College recognises that:

- Life has a spiritual dimension.
- ~~The world of 2020 will be very different to the world of today~~
- The pace of change is increasing, hence the importance for flexibility.
- Young people have, and will have increasingly, greater access to information and learning material independently of school.
- Adulthood entails economic participation and service to others.
- 18+ year olds will still be at an early stage of learning.
- The current curriculum defined in subject terms is not always well suited to equipping every young person with the knowledge, skills and understanding they will need for a fulfilling adult life.
- Curriculum delivery should involve a greater use of adults other than teachers. These could include support staff, graduates, artists, sports people and people from industry and business to support curriculum delivery.

##### b. St. Mary's College's curriculum policy is based on the following aims, to:

- Have students at its heart, putting their interests above those of the institution.
- Have a curriculum that is fit for purpose, offering differentiation and personalisation.
- Be a centre of excellence in learning and teaching.
- Prepare all students for a successful adult and working life in a 21st century global society.
- First achieve and then exceed national standards in achievement, attainment and progression.

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- Be committed to excellence and continuous improvement.
- ~~Value vocational and academic routes equally.~~
- Work with Primary Schools to ease transition.
- Work more effectively with the Liverpool Archdiocese and its schools and colleges.
- Involve the community and parents/carers.
- Be a learning environment that is above all else inspiring.

## 2. Curriculum

### a. Curriculum aims

The curriculum should inspire and challenge all learners and prepare them for the future. The College's aim is to develop a coherent curriculum that builds on young people's experiences in the primary phase and that helps all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

Specifically, the curriculum should help young people to:

- achieve high standards and make good/excellent progress.
- enable those not achieving age-related expectations to narrow the gap and catch up with their peers.
- move towards enabling students to more easily progress based on ability not age and to be able to enter students for public examinations when they are ready rather than dictated by age.
- have and be able to use high quality personal, learning and thinking skills (plts) and become independent learners.
- have and be able to use high quality functional skills, including key literacy, numeracy and ict skills.
- be challenged and stretched to achieve their potential.
- enjoy and be committed to learning, to 19 and beyond.
- value their learning outside of the curriculum and relate to the taught curriculum.

### b. Curriculum outcomes

St. Mary's College's curriculum will:

- lead to qualifications that are of worth for employers and for entry to higher education.
- fulfil statutory requirements.
- enable students to fulfil their potential.
- meet the needs of young people of all abilities at the College.
- provide equal access for all students to a full range of learning experiences beyond statutory guidelines.
- prepare students to make informed and appropriate choices at the end of KS3, KS4, KS5 and beyond.
- help students develop lively, enquiring minds, an ability to question and argue rationally and an ability to apply themselves to tasks and physical skills.
- include the following characteristics: breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, progression, continuity and coherence.

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- ensure continuity and progression within the College and between phases of education, increasing students' choice during their College career.
- foster teaching styles which will offer and encourage a variety of relevant learning opportunities.
- help students to use language and number effectively.
- help students develop personal moral values, respect for religious values and tolerance of other religions' and races' beliefs and ways of life.
- help students understand the world in which they live.
- ensure that the curriculum for key stage 3 emphasises a focus on the core skills of numeracy and literacy and the development of the personal, learning and thinking skills of all students.
- design a key stage 4 curriculum, within available resources, which meets the needs of students, parents and wider society.
- benefit other secondary and primary schools in the area.

### c. Roles and responsibilities

The Principal will ensure that:

- all statutory elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the College chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the College and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met. This will include how the subject will be taught and assessed.
- the amount of time provided for teaching the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governors' annually [through the Education Executive Group \(EEG\)](#).
- where appropriate, the individual needs of some students are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from the national curriculum.
- the procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements and students and their parents/carers receive information to show how much progress the students are making and what is required to help them improve.
- the governing body is fully involved in decision making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- [the governing body is advised on statutory targets in order to make informed decisions.](#)
- [Pupils with English as an Additional Language \(EAL\) are given adequate support in order to access a curriculum delivery in the English Language.](#)

The governing body will ensure that:

- it considers the advice of the Principal when approving this curriculum policy and when setting statutory and non-statutory targets.
- progress towards annual statutory targets is monitored.
- it contributes to decision making about the curriculum.

The Vice Principal and members of the Senior Leadership team will ensure that:

- they have an oversight of curriculum structure and delivery within all key stages
- detailed and up-to-date learning programmes are in place for the delivery of courses within their key stage.

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- learning programmes are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
- levels of attainment and rates of progression are discussed with Heads of Department and Line Managers on a regular basis and that actions are taken where necessary to improve these.
- Accurate, up to date careers guidance is provided in an impartial manner enabling pupils to make informed changes about a broad range of career options.

Heads of department will ensure that:

- long term planning is in place for all courses. Such learning programmes will be designed using the College pro-forma and will contain curriculum detail on:
  - the subject,
  - the time of year of year it is being delivered,
  - for which year group and set or form,
  - the title of the unit of work (if applicable),
  - details of what the students will learn and what they will be able to do by the end of the unit,
  - key terms they will encounter,
  - classwork and homework which will be undertaken,
  - how the unit will be assessed and
  - how learning will be extended.
- learning programmes encourage progression at least in line with national standards.
- there is consistency in terms of curriculum delivery. Learning programmes should be in place and be used by all staff delivering a particular course.
- appropriate awarding bodies and courses are selected so that they best meet the learning needs of our students.
- where necessary, and within available resources, an appropriate combination of qualifications or alternative qualifications can be offered which best suit the needs of learners
- assessment is appropriate to the course and the students following particular courses. There should be consistency of approach towards assessment.
- they keep the Vice Principal informed of proposed changes to curriculum delivery.
- all relevant information/data is shared with the relevant [SchoolBasIMS](#) admin. staff or 'Super User'. This includes meeting deadlines related to exam entries etc.
- student performance data is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any necessary changes in terms of curriculum delivery are planned and carried out in a timely fashion.
- they share best practice with other colleagues in terms of curriculum design and delivery.
- oversee CPD needs with regard to curriculum planning and delivery within their area of responsibility.

Teaching staff and learning support staff will:

- ensure that the College curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.
- keep up to date with developments in their subjects.
- have access to, and be able to interpret, data on each student to inform the design of the curriculum in order that it best meets the needs of each cohort of students.
- share and exchange information about best practice amongst their colleagues in different schools and through external networks, resulting in a dynamic and relevant curriculum.

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- participate in high quality professional development, working with other teachers to develop their skills in understanding the learning needs of their students and how best to address those needs and engage them.
- work in partnership with other agencies to provide an appropriate range of curriculum opportunities.

Students will:

- be treated as partners in their learning, contributing to the design of the curriculum.
- have their individual needs addressed, both within the College and extending beyond the classroom into the family and community through a curriculum which offers breadth, support and challenge.
- be given additional support if they start to fall behind in their learning, helping them get back on track quickly.
- receive co-ordinated support to enable them to make the appropriate curriculum choices at key stages 4 and 5.

Parents and carers will:

- be consulted about their children's learning and in planning their future education.
- be confident that their child is receiving a high quality education that is designed to meet their learning needs and which will equip them with the skills they need to thrive throughout their lives.
- be informed about the curriculum on offer and understand the rationale behind it.

#### **d. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The governing body will receive an annual report from the Principal on:

- the standards reached in each subject compared with national and local benchmarks.
- the standards achieved at the end of Key Stages 4&5 (GCSE & A Level) taking into account any important variations between groups of students, subjects, courses and trends over time, compared with national and local benchmarks.
- the number of students for whom the curriculum was disapplied and the arrangements which were made.

The governing body will review this policy at least once a year and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the College.

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## Appendix 1

### 1. Teaching groups, class sizes and grouping by ability

In year 7 students are placed in tutor groups of approximately ~~24~~ and work in these groups for all subjects other than games where they are taught as boys and girls separately.

In years 8-9 students are placed in tutor groups of approximately 24 and work in these groups for all subjects other than maths where students are grouped by ability to allow for appropriate support and challenge and a second language where students can make an additional choice from four languages. Students who, for a valid educational reason, do not start a second language are offered additional support in English, Literacy and Mathematics.

In years 10-11 class sizes vary considerably due to the open nature of the options process but, wherever possible are smaller for those students for whom more support is required.

The College day for students starts at 8.45 am and ends at 3.45 pm and consists of nine 35 minute lessons split by three breaks, one at 10.45 am (15 mins), lunch at 12.10 pm (60 mins) and one at 2.20 pm (10 mins).

### 2. Key stage 3

Currently students have the following number of periods per subject per week:

Year 7: Subject Periods

English 5, Maths 5, Biology/Chemistry/Physics 2 (each), Physical Education 2, Design Technology (including Cooking) 2, Art 2, French or Spanish 4, Music 1, Instrumental Music 2, RE 4, Games 3, Form Period 1, Geography 2, History 2, ICT 2 and Latin 2.

Year 8: Subject Periods

English 5, Maths 5, Biology/Chemistry/Physics 2 (each), Physical Education 2, Games 3, Design Technology (including Cooking) 2, Geography 2, Art 2, History 2, Music 2, French or Spanish 2, RE 4, Classics 2, Form Period 1, ICT 2, plus a choice of second language from French, German, Latin or Spanish 3, or additional support in English, Literacy and Maths 3.

Year 9: Subject Periods

English 5, Maths 5, Biology/Chemistry/Physics 2 (each), Physical Education 2, Games 3, Design Technology 2, Art 2, Geography 2, History 2, RE 4, French or Spanish 2, IT 2, Classics 1, Latin 1, Form Period 1, Music 1 plus a choice of second language from French, German or Spanish 3, or additional support in English, Literacy and Maths 3.

### 3. Key stage 4

Students follow a set of core courses (Science, Maths, English, ~~ICT~~, RE and a language) all (apart from Games) leading to a potential qualification or qualifications. This core will be supported by a range of optional courses. ~~Within the combination of subjects available we aim for students to have the chance to study for the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) qualification if desired.~~

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Years 10 ~~& 11~~: Subject Periods

Maths ~~5~~6, English ~~7~~6, Games 3, Science – separate Biology 4, Chemistry 4, Physics 4 (plus Study Period 1) or Trilogy Science Dual Award 9, RE 4, ~~IT 2~~.

Year 11 as above.

6 option columns (including Science and language options): French, German, Art, ICT, PE, ~~Triple science~~, Triple Science, Trilogy separate Science Dual Award, History, Geography, Music, Classics, DT, Latin and Spanish. There are currently 4 lessons in five columns and 5 lessons in one column.

#### 4. Sixth Form

Years 12 and 13:

Students choose to study 3 A Level subjects (8 periods each) plus all study for the Extended Project Qualification in Lower 6<sup>th</sup>. Students have the option to study four A Levels plus EPQ if they wish.

The College offers an extensive post-16 provision providing a range of academic A Level qualifications. Every effort will be made to offer subjects in which students demonstrate particular interest as well as those that are enhanced by our specialist facilities.

All year 12 & 13 students are required to take part in two lessons of General RE Outreach per week as well as three lessons of Games. ~~Access to General Studies is also available.~~

Reviewed by: Vice Principal

Reviewed: August 2020

Date of Review – ~~August~~October 20~~16~~216

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