



Curriculum Policy

The over-riding ethos of the school's curriculum is that students should be allowed to develop their talents and skills in the areas in which they are interested and likely to be successful and should not be forced into subjects which they find disheartening and in which they are unlikely ever to be successful. This policy is in line with the overall aims of the school, as set out in the "St Bede's School Trust Aims", and explained in the school prospectus. It meets the needs of our diverse intake.

It is an absolute part of the school's curriculum that, at all times, the needs of individual students should come first, that provision should be made for all students, of all ages, of all abilities, and with all interests and needs. This includes students with a statement of special educational need: where a pupil has such a statement, the education provided fulfils its requirements. It will never be the case at St Bede's that a student suffers because he or she does not fit into a particular mould.

The curriculum is, at all times, broad, stimulating, and designed to facilitate the highest possible levels of attainment by those who follow it. The school provides full-time supervised education for pupils of school age, giving a full experience in the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative. The most able are stretched to the fullest extent, by acceleration or expansion; those who find academic work difficult are given the greatest possible help to enable them to display their talents. At all ages and aptitudes, the subject matter taught is appropriate to the needs of pupils, including those with a statement.

In Science, a wide range of options is available: at GCSE, as well as offering double and single award Science, as well as Physics, Biology and Chemistry as discrete subjects, we also provide courses in both Environmental Science and Rural Science – a total of seven different courses. Thus all students are able to find the science course to suit their needs and talents at the start of GCSE.

Pupils are given the opportunity to acquire skills in speaking and listening, numeracy and literacy. Students are strongly encouraged to pursue a foreign language in Year 9; those who do not usually have a strong reason not to. From Year 10 onwards, there is no compulsion to study a foreign language. Again, the school is not interested in imposing a curriculum upon students, but rather on providing a curriculum which enables each student to pursue the courses which are most appropriate to his or her needs and talents. Personal, social and health education is provided which fulfils the school's aims and ethos, while careers guidance is provided which is appropriate to children receiving secondary education. At all times, we seek to ensure that all pupils are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The following tenets guide the school curriculum at all times:

Students should be given every opportunity to pursue subjects in which they are interested and for which they have a passion. Thus, in Years 10 and 11, the number of compulsory subjects is kept very low (English and Maths, with a science course also followed by all unless there is an extreme extenuating circumstance), while options are as plentiful as is possible (six options at least are available to students at the start of Year 10).

Courses should be offered which allow all students to achieve, which permit all students to study at a level appropriate to their abilities and talents. Thus, in Years 12 and 13, we offer courses in both the Cambridge Pre-U (targeted at extending and stretching the more conventionally academic) and the BTEC (suitable for those who need a more practical 'hands-on' approach in their learning). The programme of activities for children above compulsory school age is appropriate to their needs.

Variety at all levels is as broad as is possible. A smorgasbord of different GCSE and A Level courses are available (at least 38 at GCSE and 39 at A Level); in addition, courses which stray away from the GCSE / A Level standard are embraced where appropriate, with Entry Level Maths and English sitting alongside IGCSE courses, NVQ courses, and many others. At all times, the need to offer each student the courses which are appropriate to them is paramount.

Rather than forcing students to follow a set curriculum, the curriculum is at all times adaptable enough to satisfy the needs of individual students. A student who wishes to study for Chinese GCSE within the normal school day will be given that opportunity, if at all possible; an AS Level Ancient Greek course will be provided if it is required. Thus, all students have the opportunity to learn and make progress.

The recognition of the primacy of the individual means that, where appropriate, individual education plans (IEPs) are available for students.

No one subject is accorded any privilege over any other – all are valued equally. Thus, creative, expressive and practical subjects are valued every bit as highly as all other subjects.

A fuller and more specific description of the curriculum on offer in each year is available in the series of booklets produced by the school to guide students and their parents as they contemplate each stage of their career at St Bede's (Year 9, Years 10 & 11, Years 12 & 13).

This policy should be read alongside the aims of the St Bede's Trust, as well as policies on Special Needs, PSHE and Admissions.

Appendix – DCSF Standard 1

1. (2) The school has drawn up and implemented effectively a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work.	
(a) The school provides full-time supervised education for pupils of school age, giving a full experience in the linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative.	Evidence: School timetable. School curriculum plan.
(b) At all ages and aptitudes, the subject matter taught is appropriate to the needs of pupils, including those with a statement.	Evidence: As detailed above, a wide variety of different courses is provided in order to ensure that each student's needs are addressed. Students with statements are monitored closely by the Head of Learning Support (see SEN handbook)
(c) Pupils are given the opportunity to acquire skills in speaking and listening, numeracy and literacy.	Evidence: English and Maths are at the core of the curriculum for Years 9, 10 and 11. Students who have not yet passed their GCSE examinations in these two subjects continue in Years 12 and 13.
(d) not relevant to St Bede's school	
(e) Where a pupil has a statement, the education provided fulfils its requirements.	Evidence: The SEN handbook details the process through which the education of children with a statement is monitored.
(f) Personal, social and health education is provided which fulfils the school's aims and ethos.	Evidence: The PSHE handbook details the process through which students are inculcated with their personal, health and social education.
(g) Careers guidance is provided which is appropriate to children receiving secondary education.	Evidence: The Careers handbook details the means by which students are provided with careers guidance.
(h) The programme of activities for children above compulsory school age is appropriate	Evidence: The Year 12 and 13 curriculum enables

to their needs.	students to access a wide variety of different courses. In addition, all students play a full role in the extra-curricular programme.
(i) All students have the opportunity to learn and make progress.	Evidence: As described above, the St Bede's curriculum is designed so as to allow all students to make progress, regardless of the point at which they start.
(j) All pupils are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.	Evidence: Both the academic curriculum (as described above) and the PSHE programme (as described in the PSHE handbook), as well as the Careers programme (Careers Handbook; also www.stbedesuniversitynews.blogspot.com) are designed to prepare students for adult life.