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**St Malachy’s College**

**CURRICULUM POLICY**

**January 2019**

**INTRODUCTION**

**The Board of Governors, through the Principal, Vice Principal (Curriculum) and SLT, has drawn up a curriculum policy. The Board of Governors will ratify the Curriculum Policy and review the Curriculum offered on a regular basis within the remit of the Policy Review Schedule.**

**The College's primary purpose in formulating a Curriculum Policy is not only to ensure that legislative requirements are met, but to provide teachers with guiding principles, based on the school's mission statement and general aims (Appendix 2), that will offer them a framework for action in terms of achieving their curricular goals, and to ensure ultimately that our pupils' learning experience is enhanced.**

**This policy document also provides parents with details of the subjects on offer in the College curriculum at each Key Stage.**

St. Malachy's, as a Diocesan College, aims to create a Catholic ethos in which students flourish and develop **all** their talents. The College therefore begins from the principle that its curriculum, which is seen as the total range of learning experiences and activities provided by the school, including its pastoral provision, is intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person. Belief in a God of love, justice and forgiveness is seen as being essential to this process.

The College motto *Gloria ab Intus* (Glory from within)reflects our conviction that education is not merely concerned with the imparting of information but is also about helping young people to mature as individuals and develop a real love for learning. The College seeks to preserve its traditions of spirituality and learning so that all pupils and staff can experience continuity in achievement and further their own spiritual, educational and personal growth in a pleasant, interesting and stimulating environment.

This aim is in accordance with the duties laid down in recent legislation viz. the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and the values which underpin the main aim and objectives of the KS3 Northern Ireland Curriculum (Appendix 3).

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2. Summary of Curriculum provision - KS3, KS4 & KS5.

Overview of College Curriculum

The College seeks, in accordance with its Statement of Aims (cf. appendix 2), to develop the potential of every pupil through the provision of a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that is in keeping with legislative requirements.

The curriculum on offer is reviewed annually and all measures are taken to ensure its composition reflects the needs of the current cohort of students at each key stage, particularly at GCSE (KS4) and AS/ A2 level (KS5).

Pupils are offered an experience of a learning community, marked by a distinctive **Christian** **identity** to enrich the lives of all who are involved, and to help pupils prepare for the changing world of work, leisure and responsibility, including duties and obligations to family and society.

The curriculum on offer is not restricted to the statutory elements but seeks to introduce pupils to a wider range of learning experiences, both formal and informal, designed to equip them for adult life. Pupils throughout the College are encouraged to participate in curricular and **extra-curricular enrichment** activities designed to enhance their school experience. This often involves links with the local community, alumni and the business world. (See College website for an example of the various activities).

Provision is made within the College to ensure that the **Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Additional Educational Needs** **(AEN)** of all students are addressed. The Learning Support Co-ordinator maintains a register of students who have been identified as having special and additional learning needs. The Learning Support Co-ordinator and SEN department also maintain the medical needs records.

Diagnostic and baseline tests (PIE, PIM) are all used in Year 8 to identify students who require particular learning support including the areas of numeracy and literacy.

In Year 11, CAT4 testing is used to assist teachers, pupils and parents / guardians to establish GCSE targets and baseline a GCSE starting point. Individual differences are recognised in terms of the educational provision offered so that all pupils can gain maximum benefit from their school experience.

Teaching staff are supported by the Learning Support Team, which consists of Specialist Teachers, Learning Mentors, Classroom Assistants and General Care Assistants. In addition, specific teaching staff from the Mathematics department have additional timetabled time for individual and small groups of Numeracy and Literacy support. The work of the Learning Support Team and specialist staff is coordinated by the Learning Support Co-ordinator.

Each department devises strategies for:

 (i) identifying and helping under-achieving pupils & those with specific learning challenges

 (ii) extending and challenging able pupils *(Gifted and Talented).*

Where under-achievement is related to personal / social / motivational factors, support is sought from the College's pastoral care team. PASS testing is used in KS 4 and the data has been used to further inform both pastoral and curricular staff about the student’s attitudes and dispositions towards learning. This data is used to inform planning within pastoral and curricular areas.

It is recognised that the **effective use of ICT** can measurably enhance the learning environment and enrich the educational experience of all our pupils. Well used, ICT can encourage a more participative and independent approach to learning, thereby laying the foundations for lifelong learning and personal development.

Within the new SDP (2018-21), the effective use of ICT will remain a priority. A senior leader appointed to lead this exciting area of development will manage and monitor the continued use of ICT to further improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The College delivers a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the requirements outlined by DE. Each area of the curriculum is allotted a reasonable amount of time that is consistent with the overall balance (Appendix 1) and the importance attached to it for assessment purposes.

**Spiritual Guidance**

Central to the work of the College is the desire that each pupil will freely grow in the love of God and service of his neighbour. Religious Education and community prayer and worship are central to the life of the school. The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is promoted particularly through Religious Education classes, group retreats, the Pastoral Care programme and social awareness and environmental awareness programmes.

Particular attention is paid to promoting good cross-community relations and to responding to areas of need in the local community and in developing countries. All pupils are given ample opportunity to express generosity through various charities. Classes in Religious Education, including those which follow courses for public examinations, lay a foundation of clear thinking on religious issues. Practical opportunities for devotion are provided, including daily Mass in the morning before school; seasonal and class prayer services, assemblies and retreats.

A Chaplain is ready to guide each pupil in his spiritual life, and in times of personal or family crisis. Having strong historical links with the diocese of Down and Connor, the College provides encouragement and guidance to boys who are considering the priesthood.

**Physical Education**

Through the work of the Physical Education Department and extra-curricular sporting activities the College endeavours to provide a context for, and a process of personal development through culturally valued physical activities. The prime objective of the PE department is to ensure successful pupil participation in a broad range of skill-based and health-related activities.

The goal of such sporting involvement is to contribute to the promotion of physical well-being, the constructive use of leisure time and a healthy lifestyle.

The College provides a very comprehensive programme of Physical Education to all students in KS3 and KS4. Each pupil has 4 periods timetabled for PE within the two week timetable. Students in Years 13 and 14 can use the fitness suite in their non-teaching time.

 **Sports available in St. Malachy's College;**

 Athletics Badminton Basketball Cross-country

 Gaelic Football Golf Gymnastics Hurling

Rugby Swimming Skiing Soccer

Volleyball Water-polo

**Key Stage 3**

The College KS3 Curriculum has been reviewed over the last three-year cycle of the SDP. This review has ensured that all schemes of work have been refreshed and the strands of the NI Curriculum are being address across all departments within the Key Stage. Areas of focus will continue to include Assessment for Learning (AFL), Thematic Units & Connected Learning, Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities as well as an infusion of the Cross Curricular Skills of Numeracy, Literacy and the effective use of ICT.

In 2018-19, Further Music has been introduced into the Year 9 Curriculum, with a selected group of talented Musicians receiving extra Music classes, further preparing them for GCSE study and beyond. It is planned to continue this model into Year 10 (2019-20).

**Key Stage 4 & 5**

At Key Stages 4 & 5 the curriculum satisfies the Entitlement Framework. This is to ensure that all our pupils have access to a broad range of courses, bothgeneral and applied. The College in partnership with other schools from the North Belfast Area Learning Community (NBALC) fulfills the requirement of the Entitlement Framework. (minimum requirement: 21 courses on offer at GCSE and A-Level, at least one third of courses to be applied.)

The College curriculum is audited annually to ensure the EF requirements are satisfied.

In 2018-19 KS5 Collaboration takes place among the NBALC within Post 16 provision.

The following subject areas are included within collaboration:

BTEC Business, CTEC Applied ICT, Digital Technology, French, Music, Mathematics, Economics, Moving Image Arts, Sociology, Politics and Travel & Tourism.

**Positions of Responsibility**

The role of each Head of Key Stage, along with the Curriculum Vice Principal is to ensure that teaching, learning, assessment and reporting arrangements continue to adapt to the changing NI Curriculum and legislative requirements.

In September 2018 a new Senior Curriculum Leader post was made permanent continuing to focus on the area of curriculum review, development, assessment and timetable.

**SUMMARY OF CURRICULUM PROVISION (2018-19)**

The College currently operates a two-week timetable, consisting of six 50 minute periods each day. Each subject area is allocated an appropriate proportion of timetabled time which is balanced over the two-week period. This provides a more settled working environment which is beneficial for boys. The structure of timetable and curriculum model within this structure is reviewed annually by the VP Curriculum, Principal and Senior Teacher Curriculum. Consultation begins in the first term and extends into the second term.

**KEY STAGE 3**

In year 8, all pupils follow the same curriculum, which includes a total of fifteen subjects as well as discrete provision for Learning for Life and Work (LLW). Elements of LLW are also infused across the learning areas, along with opportunities for the development and assessment of the cross-curricular skills (Communication, Using ICT, and Using Maths). In Year 8 a new Enrichment programme has been established on Friday afternoons; this infuses various opportunities which include; workshops on pertinent pastoral matters, health and well-being, study skills and a range of sports. This programme was reviewed and audited at the end of the academic year and has enabled an informed decision to be made about extending the concept into Year 9.

In Years 8 & 9 students are allocated a library period fortnightly within English class time during which a focus is placed on reading for enjoyment and enables further promotion of the Accelerated Reader programme which has been introduced into Years 9 and 10 in September 2018.

The Students study the following courses:

Art & Design Science

Physical Education Technology

Drama Home Economics

Music Mathematics

English Geography

French History

Irish /Spanish Religious Studies

LLW Computing

LLW coupled with the tutorial programme includes the delivery of;

* Personal Development (Pd)
* Citizenship (Cz)
* Employability (Em)

In 2017- 18 students in Year 9 had been given the opportunity to begin a GCSE in Business and Communication Systems (BACS). This has now continued into Year 10 (2018-19) with majority of students entering the final GCSE examination in June 2019.

Language choices have changed for the current Year 8 students, with each new student having the opportunity to choose any two languages from the three on offer. This change will cascade across the Key Stage over the incoming years.

**KEY STAGE 4**

**CHOICE OF SUBJECTS FOR GCSE**- All students study 9 or 10 GCSE subjects.

Core subjects (studied by all students)

**Religious Studies**

**English Language**

**English Literature**

**Mathematics**

All students also choose **five** other subjects from the groups below.

**GROUP A Science** (Pupils must select from the three options)

**Triple Award Science** (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

**Double Award Science** (equal to two subject passes – incorporating Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

**Single Award Science**

**GROUP B Languages** (all students select at least one language)

**French**

**Spanish**

**Irish**

**Gaeilge**

In exceptional circumstances, based on baseline and diagnostic tests, as well as school performance data, a small number of pupils may be exempted from the requirement to study a language at GCSE. This decision must be made after consultation with the Careers Department/ Learning Support Co-ordinator/ Heads of Languages/ Vice Principal Curriculum.

**GROUP C**

Art and Design

Business and Communication Systems (BACS)

Business Studies

Moving Image Arts

Computer Studies

Drama

Engineering

Geography

Home Economics

History

Journalism

Leisure & Tourism

Music

Physical Education

Technology and Design

Pupils of proven ability may be selected for Further Mathematics. These students will complete GCSE Maths in Year 11 and GCSE Further Maths in Year 12.

**KEY STAGE 5**

The Sixth Form Curriculum aims to build upon the foundations laid in KS4.

The College tries to accommodate any combination of subjects. Students normally study three subjects for AS. Pupils with a strong GCSE performance (20 points and above) are encouraged to study a fourth subject at GCE AS-level. Most students take three subjects through to A2 level but some who attain top grades at AS may continue to study four.

The following subjects are currently being offered at A-level: (2018-19)

Art & Design Biology Geography French

Moving Image Arts Chemistry History Irish

Physics Religious Studies Spanish

Music\* Mathematics Sociology\*

Drama Further Mathematics BTEC Business\*

English Literature Design & Technology Business Studies

CTEC Applied ICT\* Home Economics\* Economics\*

Journalism Computer Studies Politics \*

Health & Social Care Sport Studies in an Active Leisure Industry

Digital Technology\* BTEC Travel & Tourism\*

 \*indicates subjects which may be offered through collaboration in another school

All pupils are required to supplement their A-level studies by taking additional courses in Religious Education (except for students taking A-level Religious Studies), Tutorial and Careers Education. Students are encouraged to include time for Physical Education (personal fitness training) as well as partaking in a choice of enrichment opportunities.

The aim of the enrichment programme is to broaden each pupil’s learning experience and develop valuable skills. A sample of the courses/opportunities on offer includes:

* Sport leadership qualification
* Aspire leadership & Management Course
* Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)
* First Aid (Level 2)
* St. Mary's University College Belfast – KS2 Teaching Games Programme
* Survival Cookery
* Mind Your Head
* Personal Finance Qualification
* Book Conservation Workshop
* Involvement in leadership roles within the Student Council; Pope John Paul II Award, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, or charities such as St Vincent de Paul, Trocaire or Saphara

These additional courses are offered to broaden the educational experience of the pupils by providing access to knowledge, understanding and skills in a greater range of curricular areas. All students also have a weekly tutorial period.

There is a strong focus on the Preventative Curriculum and the following areas are covered by specialist speakers:

* Alcohol & Drugs Education
* Relationship and Sexuality
* Charities – SVP/Trocaire
* Mental Health Workshops
* Life Skills
* Road/Driver Safety
* Keeping Safe (Social Skills)
* Physical Health Seminar
* eSafety

The majority of subjects at GCSE and A level are delivered using CCEA specifications. Department Heads should make a written application to the Principal, if they wish to change exam board.

**SIXTH FORM ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS- see sixth form prospectus which is available on the College website.**

## Information and Complaints Relating to the Curriculum

It is hoped to provide each student with his choice of subjects. However, with timetabling constraints, some further consultation with individuals may be necessary.

## If parents have a query or concern regarding curricular provision, they should contact the Vice Principal Curriculum who will look into the matter. If the issue is not resolved, they may contact the Principal. If necessary, the matter may be referred to the Standards and Achievements Committee of the Board of Governors.

**APPENDIX 1**

SUBJECT PERIOD ALLOCATION KS3 (2018-19)

(Periods allocated over a two week timetable)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Year 8** | **Year 9** | **Year 10** |
| English & Library | 6 | 6 | 5 |
| Drama | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Art & Design | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Music | 2 +1 | 2 | 2 |
| Physical Education | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Mathematics | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Science | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Technology | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Computing & ICT | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| French | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Religious Studies | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| History | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Geography | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| HE | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Tutorial | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Irish /Spanish | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| BACS ( GCSE)  |  | - | 5 |
| LLW/ Employability | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Enrichment | 4 | 1 | - |
| Totals | 60 | 60 | 60 |

SUBJECT PERIOD ALLOCATION KS4 (2018-19)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Year 11** | **Year 12** |
| English Language & Literature | 9 | 9 |
| Religious Studies | 6 | 6 |
| Mathematics & Further Mathematics | 9 | 8 |
| GCSE Options  | 6 | 6 |
| Tutorial (LLW) | 1 | 2 |
| Double Award Science ( 3 strands) | 12 | 12 |
| P.E. | 4 | 4 |
| Careers | 1 | 1 |

SUBJECT PERIOD ALLOCATION KS5 (2018-19)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yr. 13** | **Yr. 14** |
| Religious Studies | 2 | 2 |
| Careers Education | 1 | 1 |
| Tutorial | 1 | 1 |
| A level Options  | 11/10 | 11/10 |
| Enrichment | 4 | 1 |

**APPENDIX 2**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

***"St Malachy's College, as a Catholic school, is dedicated to providing academic excellence in the context of a Christian community ethos. It seeks to preserve its traditions of spirituality and learning, so that all pupils, staff and parents can experience continuity in achievement and further their own spiritual, educational and personal growth in a pleasant, interesting and stimulating environment."***

**GENERAL AIMS OF THE COLLEGE**

The Governors of the College aim

* to offer an experience of a learning community marked by a distinctive Christian identity which will enrich the lives of all who are involved there, and which will help pupils prepare for the changing world of work, leisure and responsibility, including duties and obligations to family and society
* to constantly review and respond to the changing curricular needs of pupils, and to the expectations of parents and of society, while retaining a constant commitment to provide excellence in learning and teaching
* to provide a system of pastoral care, which will exemplify justice, fairness, compassion, tolerance and forgiveness, while at the same time, set high standards of respect, self- discipline, commitment and generosity
* to develop a healthy partnership between the College and parents in the education of the pupils
* to operate a just and equitable policy in the appointment and treatment of staff, and in the admissions procedures for pupils
* to encourage all staff to further their professional development within the parameters of

 their responsibilities in the College

* to ensure the provision of appropriate facilities for the fulfillment of the school's functions
* to establish relationships and to maintain links with the local community, with other schools, institutes, the world of work and organisations across the community and outside Northern Ireland
* to build upon already existing relationships with past pupils of the College to the benefit of all concerned.

**APPENDIX 3**

**NORTHERN IRELAND CURRICULUM**

**Aim**: The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible choices and decisions throughout their lives.

**Objectives:** The Northern Ireland Curriculum should provide relevant learning opportunities to

help each young person develop as:

* an individual;
* a contributor to society; and
* a contributor to the economy and the environment.

**Underpinning Values:**

The current Northern Ireland Curriculum does not set out an explicit set of values to underpin

the curriculum. Rather, values are implied within the Educational (Cross-curricular) Themes and

the Programmes of Study. It is recommended that the following non-statutory values which were

consulted upon in the 2000 consultation and strongly endorsed, should underpin the Northern

Ireland Curriculum

* We value each individual’s unique capacity for spiritual, moral, emotional, physical and intellectual growth.
* We value equality, justice and human rights within our society and our capacity as citizens to resolve conflict by democratic means.
* We value the environment as the basis of life and the need to sustain it for future generations.
* We value each individual’s right to work and to earn a living in accordance with personal preferences and attributes.

**Curriculum Areas**

**The subject strands of the statutory Curriculum at Key Stage 3 are set out within the following Learning Areas and contributory subject strands:**

**Learning for Life and Work** containing the contributory strands of:

* Education for Employability
* Local and Global Citizenship
* Personal Development, including PSHE and Home Economics

**General Learning Areas**

* The Arts, including subject strands of Art and Design and Music
* English and Irish, including Media Education and the subject strand of Drama
* Environment and Society, including subject strands of Geography and History
* Modern Languages
* Mathematics, including Financial Capability
* Science and Technology, including subject strands of Science and Technology and Design
* Physical Education;
* Religious Education which is defined separately by the Department of Education and the four main Christian Churches in Northern Ireland.

**The following skills and capabilities should infuse every Learning Area and subject strand of the curriculum:**

* Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities;
* Communication;
* Numeracy;
* Information and Communication Technology (ICT).