



Governors' Policy Statement on the Curriculum

Issue No	Author/ Owner	Date Written/Revised	Approved by Governors on	Comments
1	EY	November 2011	30 November 2011	
2	BJH	January 2017	11 January 2017	
3	BJH	November 2019	11 December 2019	Policy overhauled
	BJH	May 2021	19 May 2021	Reviewed. No change
	CM	July 2024		Policy updated

At Backwell School our primary aim is to ensure that all students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to play their part in society and live fulfilling and successful lives. We want students to enjoy their time at school and have opportunities to pursue their interests and ambitions inside and outside of the classroom. We therefore subscribe to the shared strategic aim of the other Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) schools:

LSP Curriculum Aims

1	One which is broad allowing students to acquire a wide body of knowledge across a range of different subjects and extra-curricular activities	All students will be given the opportunity to experience a wide range of different subjects and disciplines.
2	One where students acquire the most powerful knowledge	Each subject will carefully consider and include the most important and challenging content within their discipline.
3	Enabling progress through a carefully sequenced curriculum	This allows key concepts, knowledge and themes to be revisited and built upon with whilst being increasingly challenging. This will need deliberate mapping within each curriculum area.
4	One which builds upon prior learning ensuring that students gain incrementally more complex understanding	With KS2 now being more challenging, our KS3 curriculum needs to reflect this in terms of its demands on students. This requires understanding of what is covered at primary school and how subjects can build upon this.

5	One in which knowledge is remembered long term and which is transferable across differing contexts	Knowing more + remembering more = progress. Subjects have a responsibility to support each other in the delivery of knowledge e.g. maths in science or drama in English.
6	One which is bold and exciting and one in which teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve	We want students and their teachers to enjoy learning and be ambitious about what they can achieve. This will lead to better outcomes.
7	One which prepares students for life in modern Britain allowing them to make safe, informed and responsible decisions	Ultimately this goal and can be seen as acquiring the best qualifications possible however it is also about the wider benefits of a well-constructed curriculum such as effective CIAG, SMSC and PSHE.
8	One which develops students into responsible, healthy, kind and ambitious young adults.	We want students to be ready to take an active role as citizens, armed with the resilience, self-respect, tolerance and drive to live a full, successful and positive life.
9	One which enhances the cultural capital of all students.	We want all students to be exposed to some of the key cultural, social and functional knowledge and skills to allow them to fully partake in our modern society.

At Backwell School we intend our curriculum to:

- Enable all students develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to play their part in society and live fulfilling and successful lives.
- Enable all students to follow a broad curriculum for as long as possible within a three year KS3 and two year KS4 model.
- Be aspirational for all our students, with the majority following a curriculum with a strong academic core.
- Provide students at the end of Year 11 (and Year 13) with the qualifications, knowledge and skills for progression to the next stage of their education at an appropriate level.
- Be aspirational for all our students, with the majority following a curriculum with a strong academic core.
- Respect the differences between different subjects by allowing them to deliver a curriculum of deliberately selected content taught in a sequence which aids understanding and supports progress.
- Provide varied, interesting and engaging opportunities outside of the classroom to enable students to secure 'cultural capital' regardless of their background.

This curriculum intent will be implemented in the following ways:

- Curriculum areas are autonomous in producing a curriculum map and schemes of learning for each year group in which they will identify the most powerful knowledge for students to learn.
- The curriculum will be deliberately sequenced to enable students to progress in terms of what they know, understand and what they can do.
- Meaningful assessment routines are built measure students' knowledge, understanding and skills and to give meaningful and actionable feedback. This will facilitate accurate reporting to parents and carers.
- Knowledge retrieval practice is incorporated into lessons to ensure that what is learned is also remembered.
- A knowledge rich pedagogical approach (the Backwell teaching and learning toolkit) ensures that teachers:
 - Are aware of common misconceptions and ways to help students overcome these.
 - Emphasise the most powerful knowledge in a clear and accessible way.
 - Have the subject knowledge and expertise to adapt their teaching to the needs of all students and to link their learning to the world around them.
 - Routinely check for understanding and make adaptations within lessons as required.
- The extra-curricular offer is made explicit to all students and processes are in place to remove barriers to accessing the offer.

The impact of the curriculum is evaluated by:

- Gauging how well pupils are learning the curriculum through:
 - Robust quality assurance and self-evaluation of teaching and learning, including student voice
 - Analysis of student progress data and outcomes.
 - Analysis of destinations to understand the effectiveness of the curriculum in preparing students for the next stage of their life.
 - Evaluating the extent to which it positively impacts on the educational experience of different students groups, particularly disadvantaged students and those with SEND.

Organisation of the Curriculum

Key Stage 3 is taught from Years 7 - 9 with the exception of science who begin the GCSE syllabus in Year 9. The vast majority of subjects are taught in mixed ability groups with the exception of maths, science and languages.

All pupils at KS3 study a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish), some study a second foreign language from Year 8 onwards.

The allocation of teaching periods per two week cycle for every subject is shown below:

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	7	7	7
Maths	7	7	7
Science	7	7	8
1 Modern Foreign Language	6	6	6
2 Modern Foreign Languages	n/a	5 (if taking two languages) 7 (if taking one language)	5 (if taking two languages) 6 (if taking one language)
Art	4	4	4
Design Technology	4	4	4
Performing Arts	3	3	3
Geography	4	4	4
History	4	4	4
IT	3	0 (if taking 2 languages) 2 (if taking one language)	0 (if taking 2 languages) 2 (if taking one language)
Music	3	3	3
Philosophy & Religion (inc PSHE)	4	4	4
PE	4	4	4

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 the following courses are compulsory for all pupils:

- Maths
- English Language and English Literature
- Combined Science or separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- History or Geography
- Core PE (non-examined)
- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education (non-examined)

Students make their options choices with clear support and guidance about the courses available. Students are encouraged to pursue a 'broad and balanced' curriculum, and the subjects required for the English Baccalaureate are made explicit; students are expected to pursue a language at Key Stage 4 unless senior staff specifically guide them otherwise.

At Backwell we are aspirational for all our students and believe that GCSE courses are highly suited to the vast majority. Occasionally, it is necessary to support students with specific needs by designing a more bespoke curriculum which takes into account their starting point and future goals. This is set alongside parents and carers with advice from the Education Support department.

Key stage 5

At Key Stage 5, students choose either four or, in most cases, three two-year Level 3 courses. These courses are mainly A Levels but there are also more vocational style courses on offer in Business, Performing Arts, Health and Social Care and Applied Science. Those students taking

four subjects will have particularly high prior attainment at GCSE level. Those taking three courses will take an additional qualification at the end of Year 12: for most students this will be the Extended Project Qualification, however it is possible, depending on numbers, to sit an AS examination in a small number of subjects: Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Music, French, Spanish and German. Students who are yet to reach the required threshold in GCSE Mathematics and English (Language) will join re-sit classes and be re-entered for the examination(s) in November and June until they reach they achieve a standard pass of a grade 4.

The wider curriculum

The curriculum taught at Backwell School ensures that all students develop wider knowledge and gain opportunities and skills which will be needed later in life. The academic curriculum is therefore underpinned by the following:

- Our tutor and assembly programme which supports the delivery of PSHE.
- Elements of the RSE curriculum delivered in key stage 3 as discrete topics taught in Philosophy and Religion lessons
- At KS4 a lesson per fortnight where pupils will be taught about social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues including aspects of citizenship and British values (SMSC).
- Our Backwell careers offer which allows pupils and students at all stages of their education to receive impartial advice and guidance to ensure they are successful at progressing to the next stage.
- Our enrichment week which offers the opportunity at KS3 for pupils to pursue interests both in and out of school.
- A week long work experience for all Year 10 pupils.
- A hugely popular and comprehensive extra-curricular programme enabling students to take part in many activities including:
 - Sports
 - Drama and dance
 - Music
 - Photography
 - Creative writing
 - Debating
 - Computing
 - Fishing
 - Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme at bronze, silver and gold level
- The extra-curricular provision is monitored to ensure that it meets the needs of all students but particularly those with SEN and those who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium.