

St Alban's Catholic High School

Curriculum Policy *including Alternative Curriculum*



Approved by Student Committee on 07 June 2021

Recommission Date: June 2022

Section 1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1 St Alban's Catholic High School's curriculum offer ensures that a broad and balanced curriculum is available to all students, incorporating English, Maths and Science qualifications along with Religious Education teaching and a large variety of GCSEs and other qualifications. Religious Education teaching is at the heart of the school to ensure the Catholic ethos of the school to remain a central and constant theme throughout a student's school life.
- 1.2 The school aims to continue to provide this broad and balanced approach at Key Stage 5. The introduction of additional subjects enables the school to create an attractive offer to both students who have studied in Year 11 at St Alban's, and to external students. The aim is focussed on allowing students, where possible, to study the A Level courses they choose within the Catholic education system. In addition to this, they will study a programme of additional lessons that will focus on our core Catholic ethos to encourage young people to consider their faith in Christ and to a mature understanding of the Catholic Faith whilst preparing them for the challenges and demands of further education and the world of work in the 21st century?
- 1.3 Curriculum delivery at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 largely follows the National Curriculum. In addition, at Key Stage 4 students are encouraged to study a broad and balanced curriculum that will benefit them in their adult lives and keep their options for further education open. The school will respond to government directives regarding the need to cover EBacc requirements as necessary, but our key aim is to provide the curriculum most appropriate to the needs of each individual student through our revised Pathways programme. Further information is available on the school website:

[St Alban's Catholic High School - Pathways 2021 \(st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk\)](http://st-albans.suffolk.sch.uk)

Section 2 Curriculum Objectives

- 2.1 Objectives relating to the curriculum aims of St Alban's Catholic High School are:
 - That students should become aware of their abilities and in so doing develop to their maximum potential;
 - That students should be aware of the needs of the community and be prepared to contribute fully to the life of the our Catholic community;
 - That all students should be offered a curriculum that has both breadth and depth. It should be tailored to each student's needs based on their requirements and provide an individual Pathway through KS3 and KS4;
 - That we recognise every member of the school as of equal worth and importance in the eyes of God, irrespective of his/her faith, culture, class, race, gender, sexuality and/or disability. Our curriculum aims to provide every student with the opportunity to study the range of subjects that will best prepare them for their future and be as flexible as possible so that students may change Pathway where necessary/appropriate;
 - That when students leave St Alban's they should be articulate, literate and numerate, and have lively, enquiring, independent minds and are aware of how faith guides their decision making.

2.2 In addition students who leave St Alban's should:

- be confident in their dealings with adults and peers;
- be able to develop good working relationships with others;
- have knowledge of a wide range of cultures and through this come to respect the rights and needs of others;
- be able to make good moral judgements;
- have developed a love of learning that will last for the rest of their lives;
- be adaptable enough to react to the needs of a fast changing world;
- have an understanding of British society and values;
- have well developed skills to show empathy for others.

2.3 The school aims to deliver all this in, and through, the classroom structures of lesson delivery and through extracurricular activities. Teaching will aim to ensure that students leave with the best set of qualifications that can be achieved. This will mean different things for different students. However, irrespective of the type and number of grades attained, progression and development remain the key themes to measuring success.

2.4 In addition to the curriculum plan outlined below all students across the Key Stages experience the Preparing for your future (PYF) programme, our equivalent of PSHEE, this is delivered in a programme of off-timetable lessons and off-timetable days throughout the academic year.

Section 3 Curriculum Plan

3.1 Years 7 & 8

The curriculum for Years 7 & 8 are as follows. This is based on a 40 lessons per fortnight.

Subject	Year 7		Year 8	
RE	3		3	
English	5		5	
Mathematics	5		5	
Science	6		6	
French	2	4	2	4
Spanish	2	-	2	-
Geography	2		2	
History	2		2	
Computing	2		2	
Art	2		2	
Drama	2		2	
Music	2		2	
PE	2		2	
Design Technology	3		3	

3.2 Years 9 to 11

Subject	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
RE	4	4	4
English	6	7	7
Mathematics	6	6	6
Science	6	9	9
PE	2	2	2
Pathway Block A	4	4	4
Pathway Block B	4	4	4
Pathway Block C	4	4	4
Pathway Block D	4	-	-

Notes:

- Science GCSE entries may be 2 or 3 GCSEs; either combined science or three separate sciences;
- Pathway Subjects currently offered are: Art, Business Studies, Computing, Creative iMedia, Design and Technology, Drama, Food Preparation and Nutrition, French, German, Geography, History, Music, BTEC Sport, Spanish, Textile Design;
- An Alternative Curriculum option is now available in two blocks. This varies year on year depending on the needs of the students in Years 8 and 9. See section 4 for details

Key Stage 5

Subject	Year 12	Year 13
Sixth Form Studies	4	2
Mathematical studies	4	-
Option Block A	7	7
Option Block B	7	7
Option Block C	7	7
Option Block D	7	7
GCSE Maths Resit	2	-
GCSE English Resit	2	-
EPQ	-	1

Notes:

- The standard starting point in Year 12 is to begin three subjects at A level, although many start with four subjects and reduce to three in year 13;
- A small number of students will also study for the resit Maths and / or English GCSE;
- Sixth Form Studies contains elements of Religious Education teaching for the Sixth Form and includes the Cambridge Pre-U qualification in Year 12;
- The Extended Project Qualification is introduced at the end of Year 12 and taught elements are covered in Year 13 as part of our extended studies offer;
- In addition the majority of students, who do not study A level mathematics, will also study Level 3 Mathematical Studies (Core Maths) to support the application of mathematical skills in other A Level subjects. This will be studied over two years and will lead to a qualification equivalent to an AS Level;

- Sixth Form option subjects currently offered are: Art, Biology, Business & Economics, Chemistry, Computing, Drama, English Language, English Literature, Further Maths, French, German, Geography, Government & Politics, Graphics, Health & Social Care, History, Law (BTEC), Maths, Music, Photography, Physics, Psychology, Philosophy and Ethics, Sociology, Sport & Physical Education, Textiles;
- Subjects offered are reviewed annually;
- Some subjects are taught jointly with year 12 & 13 due to lower numbers of students. Currently this includes Computing, Graphics, Music and Philosophy and Ethics;
- Not all subjects will necessarily run, depending on student demand.

Section 4 Alternative Curriculum

4.1 Overview

At St Alban's Catholic High School, we want all our students to maximize their human potential and to both be good, and do good, in authentic freedom. In order to do this, some of our students need to be able to access the best courses to support their academic journey through our school.

We recognise the uniqueness of the individual and therefore for some of our students, for instance those with a diagnosed Special Educational Need, sitting a full range of GCSE subjects is not appropriate and that with the right support, all students can achieve positive outcomes for their future. As a Catholic school, we are committed to shaping our students and preparing them for a world beyond the realms of St Alban's but ready to meet the challenges in the world of work.

".....a privileged means of promoting the formation of the whole person, since the school is the centre in which a specific concept of the world, of the human person, and of history is developed and conveyed."

(The Catholic School, Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977/8)

4.2 Alternative Curriculum Provision within the Pathways process

- The majority of students will undertake English Language & Literature, Mathematics, RE (please note that in a Catholic school RE is an essential element of a student's education, under directive of the Bishop), and Science GCSEs plus three option subjects of their choice. For students who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or diagnosed SEND, this may not be the best provision for them if sustained and substantial evidence shows that they are very unlikely to achieve a GCSE grade for these subjects.
- Students will choose their Pathways to GCSE subjects during Year 8, and during Year 9 will begin these subjects. Students who are advised by the SENCO to follow the alternative curriculum route will have the opportunity to study 2 GCSE options plus 2 alternative provisions in Year 9 which may include Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN), short course qualifications or BTECs. This will be reviewed, involving the student and parent/carer at the end of Year 9 on a student by student basis to determine the best next steps for the student, including which subjects to continue into Year 10. Where a student has an EHCP or has a need identified by professionals, the student may (where appropriate) be offered the opportunity to work with external alternative providers such as the Suffolk New Skills Centre to cater their curriculum appropriately for the individual, the Deputy Head teacher will oversee this provision.

- Students who are studying a number of option subjects and present sustained and substantial evidence from their subject teachers that they are not making the relative progress expected, may be advised to remain in the subject lessons for enrichment purposes (for example, learning life skills in technology subjects) and not be entered for the GCSE examination in Year 11. Where appropriate, such students may undertake an alternative qualification such as a short course or foundation paper where such qualifications exist and are appropriate to deliver. The withdrawal of any student from a GCSE examination is at the discretion of the Head teacher/Deputy Headteacher and will only be done in exceptional circumstances.

Section 5 Future Curriculum Planning

5.1 Our Pathways programme was introduced a few years ago and has already developed further in subsequent years. This development will continue over the next few years with the possible inclusion of a Triple Science option in a block containing only EBacc subjects. We are also broadening our Alternative Curriculum provision. We are also hoping to further broaden the subjects on offer at KS5.

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Signed by J McCall, Chair of Governors:

Date: