

Belfast Boys' Model School

The Curriculum Policy



Policy Details

Summary of Policy	This policy outlines the curriculum provision and structure in Belfast Boys' Model School.
Purpose	To allow all stakeholders (parents, pupils, staff, pupils) to know the structure of the curriculum in Belfast Boys' Model School.
Operational Date	September 2025
Review Date	November 2025
Date last reviewed & approved by Board of Governors.	

The Curriculum Policy

1. Aim

To provide a curriculum for all of our young people which:

- fulfils statutory requirements
- meets the requirements of relevant KS4 and Post 16 specifications
- is future-proofed, flexible and provides breadth, balance and progression
- is equitable, recognises diversity and the need for inclusion
- is responsive to the needs of the individual , the environment, economy and society by providing a curriculum that allows collaboration and active participation in the decision around the curriculum offer
- promotes health, wellbeing and safety

2. Objectives

The curriculum provided by Belfast Boys' Model School is designed to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of pupils, and to enable them to experience school as a caring supportive community where pupils are happy, supported and feel a sense of belonging.

Curriculum provision should:

- develop as fully as possible pupils' abilities, interests and aptitudes;
- cater to individual needs of SEND pupils
- develop enquiring minds, to experience enjoyment in learning so that they may be encouraged to take advantage of educational opportunities in later life
- develop appropriate skills and capabilities in Communication, Using Mathematics, I.C.T., Managing Information, Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision-Making, Being Creative, Self-Management, Working with Others
- have opportunities across the curriculum to progress digital skills and understand responsible and safe use of new technologies
- have provide access to those major areas of knowledge and experience which will help pupils to know more about themselves and the environment, society and economy in which they live and beyond
- work in ways which will enhance pupils' self-respect and confidence so that they may be encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and their activities
- develop understanding of the wider community and of the ways in which individuals and groups relate
- help pupils to gain the skills necessary to respond effectively to social, economic and political changes, and to changing patterns of work
- develop the social skills necessary to work successfully with other people
- equip pupils in preparation for adulthood in society so that they understand the responsibilities of being parents and citizens
- help pupils appreciate and be concerned for the environment
- develop interests and skills which will continue to develop an individual for life.

All Learning Areas have parity of esteem and are impartially promoted. Every effort is made, within the constraints of finance, personnel, time-table and appropriate demand, to make adequate provision for them.

3. Learner-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

Learning should be experienced as enjoyable, engaging, rewarding and confidence-building process which is personal to the student.

There is whole-school focus on metacognition, retrieval and the promotion of independent learning, designed to promote pedagogy which is relevant to learning and achievement for boys as defined in the school's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy .

Pupils are involved in an individual target setting process with their form teachers and parents and focus on developing academic and personal targets, supported by the Careers department.

All pupils can access Assessment Calendars, Homework and Common Assessment Calendars and Revision guidance, including subject-specific revision lists for each subject to encourage high aspirations in partnership with parents.

The needs of all learners are addressed with differentiated support at all times through this Personalised Learning approach. Appropriate individual support, interventions and mentoring, couple with a focus on relational learning, where pupils are known, supported and individual responsibility and positive relationships are at the centre of the classroom.

The School's Transition process helps with early identification of learning needs and prior attainment, availing of relevant stakeholder's knowledge.

Pupils have opportunities to engage in a wide range of assessment for learning activities, including peer and self-assessment.

Academic progress is monitored through the outcomes of a broad range of learning opportunities and assessments.

Pupil progress is reported to parents at each assessment point. This happens over four class tests, one of which is a formal school exam and the annual written report. Class tests 1, 2 and 4 are communicated via a progress report communicated to parents via Parent App. The formal written report is issued following CT3.

4. Integration of Artificial Intelligence in the Curriculum

Belfast Boys' Model School recognises the growing role of Artificial Intelligence in education and is committed to embedding its ethical and responsible use within the curriculum. In line with our AI Policy, AI technologies will be utilised to enhance teaching, learning and administrative processes without replacing traditional pedagogy or human judgment. Pupils will develop digital literacy and critical

thinking skills through exposure to AI tools in a secure, managed environment, ensuring compliance with data protection and safeguarding requirements.

All AI use will promote fairness, transparency and accountability, avoiding plagiarism, bias and inappropriate content. Teachers will guide pupils in understanding the benefits and limitations of AI, fostering skills that prepare them for future careers while maintaining the integrity of assessment and learning outcomes.

Guidance: AI Integration in Curriculum

- **Purposeful Use:** AI tools should be used to enhance teaching and learning, not replace traditional pedagogy or teacher judgment.
- **Ethical Standards:** Ensure all AI-generated content is free from plagiarism, bias, and inappropriate material.
- **Data Protection:** Do not upload personal or sensitive data to AI tools; comply with GDPR and school safeguarding requirements.
- **Transparency:** Inform pupils when AI tools are being used and explain their purpose and limitations.
- **Curriculum Alignment:** Embed AI use to develop pupils' digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills across subjects.
- **Assessment Integrity:** AI must not be used for coursework, NEAs, or formal assessments unless explicitly permitted and properly referenced (JCQ guidelines apply).
- **Approved Platforms:** Use only school-approved AI tools (e.g., via C2K accounts) to ensure security and compliance.
- **Monitoring & Reporting:** Report any misuse of AI tools immediately; follow school disciplinary procedures for breaches.
- **Professional Responsibility:** Model responsible AI use and provide guidance to pupils on ethical and safe practices.
- **Continuous Development:** Engage in training and stay updated on best practices for AI integration in education.

5. Curriculum offer

Pupils, parents and staff work together to co-construct a curriculum which meets the needs and aspirations of all school stakeholders.

The Curriculum Focus of Key stage 3 is the development of crucial Literacy and Numeracy skills to enhance learning throughout all Areas of Learning. The subjects of English and Mathematics have the largest proportion of Key Stage 3 allocated time and are supported with Literacy and Numeracy intervention where that is required.

The school aims to meet the statutory requirements of the Education Order (2007) NI and meet the statutory obligations of the Entitlement Framework by providing access to a minimum of 27 courses Post-16 and 24 G.C.S.E. or equivalents courses, at least one third of which are Applied, and one third of which are General. Pupil, parents and staff formulate a new curriculum offer each year to provide opportunities for success.

All pupil progress and achievements are recognised, rewarded and recorded where appropriate to assist with successful transition to further and higher education or employment.

6. Structure of Curriculum delivery

The school day is delivered in 40 minute periods (8 periods on Monday and Wednesday, 6 on Tuesday & 7 on Thursday and Friday) with one of two x 20 minute break times and one of 2 x 40minute lunch breaks.

Key Stage 3 (N.I. Curriculum)

Our curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and the school provides learning opportunities in relation to the following:-

- (a) Religious Education is in accordance with the core syllabus drafted by the four main Christian Churches in Northern Ireland and specified by the Department of Education.
- (b) The following Areas of Learning:

Area of Learning	Contributory Elements	YEAR 8 Periods	YEAR 9 Periods	Year 10 periods
Language and Literacy	English	6	6	5
	Drama (within English)			
	Media Education ¹	1 (English)	1	1
Mathematics and Numeracy	Mathematics including Financial Capability Numeracy	5	5	5
The Arts	Art and Design	2	2	2
	Music	1	1	1
Environment & Society	Geography	3	3	3
	History	3	3	3
Modern Languages	Spanish	1	1	1
Science and Technology	Science	3	3	3
	Technology and Design	2	2	2
Learning for Life and Work	Employability Local & Global Citizenship Personal Development Home Economics ⁶	1	1	3
		1	1	1
Physical Education	Physical Education and Games	4	4	4
Religious Education	Religious Education	1	1	2

Additional Studies	I.C.T.	2	2	2
	Wellbeing ⁷	1		
	Pastoral/CEIAG	1	1	1

1. In Y8 Media Education is provided within the English Curriculum. In Y9 and 10 it is in a 13-week carousel along with HE and Music.
3. In Y8-10, Music is in a 13-week carousel along with HE/Media and Wellbeing Y8.
6. HE is provided as a 13-week carousel in Y8-10.
7. Wellbeing is provided as a 13-week carousel in Y8.

KEY STAGE 3 ORGANISATION

KEY STAGE 3	Eng./Maths/Geog./Hist./Lang./LF LW/R.E./Pastoral	Sc./Tech./P.E./Art/ Music/I.C.T./H.E.
YEARS 8/9/10	<p>Yr 8 <i>(Based on 194 pupils)</i> 6 x streamed ranging from 26-29 2 x Supported pupil group of 15</p> <p>Yr 9 <i>(Based on 190 pupils)</i> 6 x streamed groups ranging from 25-30 2 x Supported pupil group of 15</p> <p>Yr 10 <i>(Based on 210 pupils)</i> 7 x streamed groups ranging from 21-28 2 x Supported pupil group of 16</p>	<p>9 groups of 16-20 + 2 groups of 15</p> <p>11 groups of 16-20 + 2 groups of 15</p> <p>11 groups of 16-20 + 2 groups of 15</p>

Use of data to inform class placement

GL PTE, PTM and CAT tests are used to place pupils in form class groupings. Pupils are placed in classes using a formula of ranking on PTE, M and CAT SAS. Pupils are then placed in a class depending on their range within the rank. Pastoral information and data may also be used to determine class placement.

Class movement

After school assessments, and/or standardised tests, pupils may move class. These decisions will be made by Senior Leadership in consultation with Pastoral Leaders and parents.

CEIAG provision

Year group	Careers Delivery
Year 8	8 sessions as part of Pastoral Programme Meet the Employer event in June

Year 9	8 sessions as part of Pastoral Programme
Year 10	8 sessions as part of Pastoral Programme Series of Assemblies and events in lead-up to GCSE subject choices Careers Convention
Year 11	8 sessions as part of Pastoral Programme Meet the Employer event in June
Year 12	8 sessions as part of Pastoral Programme. Series of Assemblies and events in lead-up to Post16 subject choices. Careers Convention <i>Additional experiences include</i> – virtual work experience (where appropriate)
Year 13	1 discreet period weekly <i>Additional experiences include</i> – 3-days' work experience; Mock Interviews; Careers Convention; UCAS Convention; Talks from HE & FE providers.
Year 14	2 discreet periods weekly <i>Additional experiences include</i> – Talks from HE & FE providers and employers; UCAS Discovery event; UCAS Roadshow; Careers Convention; virtual work experience, (where appropriate).

Learner Participation in Curriculum Offer KS4 and Post 16

Learner participation is central to the curriculum offer at KS4 and Post 16. CEIAG provision allow pupils to interact with employers, FE and HE and informs pupils about Labour Market trends. Curriculum Leaders are encouraged to future-proof their curriculum offer and ensure the qualifications on offer meet the needs of the Labour market and the interests and strength of our pupils.

The subject-choice process is communicated with pupils and parents in Y10 and 12 and is as follows:

1. Subject presentations
2. Subject choice fairs
3. Open vote
4. Final vote and individual careers interviews
5. Parental support and meetings

The subject choice process is data informed and tracking, diagnostic and predictive data is used to support and guide decision making for the best combination of subjects for individual career aspiration and success.

At each stage of the votes, subjects may not run due to unviable numbers/timetable/staff constraints. Pupils and parents are informed of this at all stages. BBMS will work with the ALC to ensure pupils' subject requests are met.

KEY STAGE 4 - CURRICULUM AND ORGANISATION

A.		Number of GCSE's or equivalents	Periods
	PE & Games	0	4
	Pastoral Periods	0	1
B.	GCSEs in		
	English (& English Literature)	2 or 1	5
	Mathematics (& Statistics)	2 or 1	5
	Learning for Life and Work (& Public services)	1	4
C .Choice of four more subjects	GCSEs in		
GCSE	Art & Design	1	4
L2	Engineering	1	4
GCSE	Food & Nutrition	1	4
GCSE	Further Maths	1	4
GCSE	Geography	1	4
GCSE	Government & Politics	1	4
GCSE	History	1	4
Level 2	Hospitality & Catering	1	4
Level 2	ICT (Vocational)	1	4
GCSE	ICT Digital Technologies – Multimedia and Computing Pathways	1	4
GCSE	Media Studies	1	4
Level 2	Music/Performance Skills	1	4
GCSE	Occupational Studies (Carpentry & Joinery)	1	4
GCSE	Occupational Studies (Hospitality & Catering)	1	4
GCSE	Occupational Studies (Sport & Leisure)	1	4
GCSE	Occupational Studies (Digital Imaging/Media)	1	4
GCSE	Occupational Studies (Engineering)		
Level 2	Kings Trust Achieve- Personal Development and Employability (PDE) - Diploma	2	6
GCSE	Religious Studies	1	4
GCSE	Religious Studies (Short Course)	½	2
GCSE	Science (Single Award)	1	4
GCSE	Science (Additional for Double Award)	2	8
L2	Applied Science	1	4
L2	Skills for Business	1	4
L2	Spanish	1	4

Level 2	Sports Studies	1	4
GCSE	Technology & Design – Product Design	1	4
Level 2	Travel and Tourism – Single & Double Award	1	4 or 6

Level 3 Post-16 Advanced Studies Programme

Advanced Level 3 courses

A Level or Equivalent BTEC/National

Advanced Subsidiary (AS) Level

in Year 13
8 periods per week.
graded on an A*-E scale or
Distinction*/Distinction/Merit/Pass

CEIAG classes - 1 period

+

A2 level

in Year 14
7 periods per week
graded on an A*-E scale or
Distinction*/Distinction/Merit/Pass.

CEIAG classes - 2 periods
Pastoral class - 1 period

The Year 13 Programme is composed of Advanced Subsidiary ('AS' Levels) in the main and a minority time enrichment programme and CEIAG, as part of their Careers programme. It is designed to provide interest, depth and breadth of study.

Pupils will take three subjects and an Enrichment programme in Year 13 along with CEIAG classes.

Pupils will progress with these subjects as A2 subjects in Year 14 - thus completing three full 'A' level programmes. Pupils will also complete an Application to UCAS , Work Shadowing and Mock Interview Programmes within CEIAG provision.

Belfast Boys' Model Post 16 Curriculum Offer is as follows (ALC schools/subjects indicated).

	Art & Design
?	Business Studies (BTEC L3)
	Biology
?	Environmental Technology
	English Literature
	Engineering (BTEC L3)
	Geography
?	Gov. and Politics
?	Health & Social Care
	History
?	Hospitality (BTEC L3)
	Information Technology (BTEC L3)
	Information Technology (BTEC L3) (Double Award)

	Life & Health Sciences
	Mathematics
?	Media Studies
?	Public Services (BTEC L3)
?	Public Services (BTEC L3) (Double Award)
	Religious Studies
?	Sociology
?	Sports Studies
	Technology & Design – Product Design
?	Travel and Tourism (BTEC L3)
?	Travel and Tourism (BTEC L3) (Double Award)

? Subjects marked in this way may be taken without previous GCSE study. See subject information for entry requirements.

NBALC Collaboration and Shared Education

Belfast Boys' Model partners with other schools in the North Belfast Area Learning Partnership to bring a shared option block of subjects which are available to all Level 3 pupils who have strong GCSE results and an excellent attendance record.

Belfast Boys' Model School and Mercy College, Belfast, our Shared Education Partner align all blocks.

Subjects offered within the ALC block Include:

- English Literature
- Geography
- Performing Arts
- Health & Social Care
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Biology

At KS3 Belfast Boys' Model School and St. Malachy's College Belfast work in collaboration through the St. Malachy's College Digital Hub to offer Y10 pupils access to state-of-the-art digital equipment and progress AI, coding and graphics skills.

Shared Education, with Mercy College Belfast deliver programmes at KS3, running out of the LLW and HE Departments.

BBMS Enrichment Programme

Our Enrichment programme runs for our Yr12 – 14 pupils on a Wednesday afternoon. They choose 1 option per year and choose a different option each year. The Enrichment programme develops a range of skills to make them more rounded, employable individuals. Employers demand candidates who have fully-developed work-ready skills, such as leadership,

communication and resilience. Therefore, we focus on developing these to make Boys' Model pupils more successful in their pathway when they leave us. The list grows each year, but pupils take part in options such as:

General
Hospitality
Music
Duke of Edinburgh
Drama
Digital Skills
First Aid
Art
Barista Training
Photography
Continental Connections
Sporting Options
IFA Sports Coaching
Football Academy
Health & Fitness
General Indoor Sports
Outside Providers
Streetbeat – Peer Mentoring
R-City

The Crusaders Academy

We have established a partnership with Crusaders FC to offer a Post 16 pathway that involves academic study at BBMS and the Crusaders Football Academy. This partnership offers up to 12 hours contact time with the Academy weekly, providing insight and opportunities to train like young professional footballers.

The aim of the partnership is to educate pupils both on and off the pitch and in the gym (strength and conditioning). It provides a pathway for the students to best fulfill their potential at whatever level of football is best for them. Pupils are also offered engaging employment and work experience opportunities.

Level 2 Post-16 'Work Ready' 2025-26

Level 2 courses

GCSE Level or Equivalent BTEC/National

2 x GCSE or Equivalent Level Courses

14 periods per week.
graded on an A-E scale or
Distinction/Merit/Pass

Additional classes

CEIAG classes - 2 periods
Work Ready – 5 periods
Pastoral class - 1 period

+

GCSE English and Maths for all pupils who have yet to obtain a grade 'A*-C'

4 periods GCSE Mathematics
4 periods GCSE English

The Year 13 Bridging Programme 2025 to 2026 is composed of study of two GCSE or Equivalent subjects - ASDAN Employability L2 and OCN Certificate in Vocational Skills L2 (Hospitality and IT).

CEIAG is an important part of Post-16 Curriculum and as part of the curriculum is designed to provide interest, depth and breadth of study. Pupils will also participate in Work shadowing and Mock Interview Programmes through the CEIAG and Work Ready Programme of industrial visits and employer engagement, as well as sessions with Business in the Community for 7 periods.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is responsible for ensuring BBMS provides a good quality of education for its pupils. They must ensure that all statutory guidance is adhered to and that the curriculum is delivered in a manner to allow pupils to achieve success at school.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible, through the Board of Governors, for curriculum provision at BBMS. The Principal must ensure that all statutory guidance is adhered to and that the curriculum is delivered in a manner that allows pupils to achieve success at school.

Vice Principal and SLT

The Vice-Principal (Curriculum) and SLT are responsible, through the Principal to the Board of Governors for the curriculum provision at BBMS.

Curriculum Leaders & Teachers in Charge

Curriculum Leaders & Teachers in Charge follow the curriculum planning and Teaching, Learning and Assessment guidance provided in relevant policies, at Curriculum Leaders monthly meetings and in self-evaluation and departmental policy documentation. They are also responsible for monitoring the progress of learners within their departments, ensuring relevant interventions are in place if required.

Subject Teachers

Under the direction of their Curriculum Leaders / Teachers in Charge, subject teachers deliver the appropriate Schemes of Work and timelines, ensuring pupils are given the opportunity to gain their best possible experience, progress and outcomes.

Heads of Year & Form Teachers

Heads of Year & Form Teachers monitor their students' academic progress, behaviour and well-being and support achievement through pastoral guidance.

Liaison with External Agencies

The school avails itself of opportunities provided for In-service Training and Curriculum Support provided by DE, CCEA (and other relevant examination boards), Education Authority and a range of other curriculum providers.

Review of the Curriculum Policy

This policy is reviewed by the Vice-Principal in consultation with the SLT, Strategic Impact Team, Curriculum Leaders and Teachers in Charge and is updated in line with external guidance and the changing needs of the School. The Board of Governors will annually approve the policy.

Related Documents

- 1: Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
2. Literacy and Numeracy Policy
3. Controlled Assessment Policy
4. Examinations Policy
5. Reasonable Adjustments Policy
6. Access Arrangements Policy
7. SEN Policy
8. ESafety Policy
9. Staff AUP Policy