

Curriculum Policy



<i>Legal Status</i>	<i>Next Review</i>	<i>Responsible</i>
<i>Statutory</i>	<i>April 2027 (following Options Timeline)</i>	<i>G. Thompson</i>



New-Bridge Integrated College Curriculum Policy

Aims of the Curriculum:

“The curriculum is:

- informed by the learners’ abilities, interest and aspirations;
- offers all learners a holistic and progressive curriculum underpinned with appropriate qualifications and career pathways;
- is well-planned, coherent and connected (meeting any statutory requirements);
- enables learners to experience and build on success;
- is enriched by meaningful learning experiences beyond the classroom.”

From Empowering Improvement: New Framework for Inspection – September 2024

In keeping with College Aims, the resources available and DENI guidelines, New-Bridge Integrated College aims to provide a curriculum that:

- ✓ Is in line with all legal curriculum requirements, including the Education (NI) Order 2006.
- ✓ Is underpinned by the values of justice, tolerance and respect for diversity.
- ✓ Develops young people intellectually, physically, spiritually, morally, socially and emotionally.
- ✓ Responds to students’ curricular needs and interests, is inclusive and supports their individual aptitudes and talents.
- ✓ Enables students to develop the attributes, knowledge and skills they will need if they are to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society.
- ✓ Nurtures in students a life-long interest in learning and provides challenge and enjoyment.
- ✓ Is broad and balanced and promotes coherency, continuity and progression in students’ learning.
- ✓ Engages students with other schools, the local community and the wider community.
- ✓ Leads to improved levels of attainment for all students.

The school’s consistently excellent academic results reflect the high standards of teaching.

Teaching is organised through academic departments led by a Subject Leader. Schemes of work which comply with current statutory regulations are also designed to ensure a breadth of knowledge, an enjoyment of learning and the skills and values necessary for life. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on ‘Thinking Skills’ and ‘Personal Capabilities’. There is a culture of self-evaluation within all departments which ensures that they remain responsive to changes in education and are open to the individual needs of pupils. In addition, departments stimulate individual interests and abilities by regular involvement in a wide variety of competitions.

Key Stage 3:

The school offers a range of subjects over and above the statutory requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and lays particular emphasis on the pastoral dimension in the curriculum. Our aim is to empower our pupils to achieve the very best of which they are capable, by enabling them to develop as individuals and as contributors to society, the economy and the environment. Pupils with identified Special Educational Needs are supported and provided for in school in order that they can fulfil their potential.

AREA OF LEARNING	SUBJECTS
The Arts	Art and Design
	Drama
	Music
Language and Literacy	English
Mathematics and Numeracy	Mathematics with Financial Capability
Modern Language	Spanish
Environment and Society	History
	Geography
Science and Technology	Technology and Design
	Science
Learning for Life and Work	Food and Nutrition
	Personal Development
	Local and Global Citizenship
	Employability
	JOLT (Joy of Learning Together) (Year 8 only)
Physical Education	Physical Education
Religious Education	Religious Education

Although aspects of Learning for Life and Work (LLW) are addressed through the Areas of Study, the school delivers LLW as a discrete subject by form tutors as part of our pastoral programme and within this subject Personal Development, Local and Global Citizenship and Employability lessons are delivered.

Year 8 pupils engage in a project-based subject that is known as JOLT (The Joy of Learning Together). This project is designed to help students with their skills development; with a particular focus on Working Together and Managing Information. The project focuses on social campaigning, with the specific aim of the project changing annually to mirror current social events.

Languages at Key Stage 3: Year 8-10 pupils will study Spanish.

Music at Key Stage 3: A Music Theory course is available to those pupils who receive instrumental lessons. Peripatetic teachers tutor pupils in a wide range of instruments, including brass, woodwind, strings and percussion. Lessons in voice training are also available. The Music Department award certificates each month for 'Musician of the Month'.

Key Stage Three Assessment

The cross-curricular skills of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT are developed across the curriculum. Opportunities to develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities are embedded in the schemes of work of each subject area and remain a key focus in the Pupil's Year Book. Each department

takes ownership of developing a specific skill in each year. Emphasis is placed on transferring, applying and using these skills effectively.

At Key Stage 3, teachers assess each pupil's progress in Cross-Curricular Skills. Pupils work on a continuum of skills that should be able to demonstrate their progression in **Using Mathematics, Communication and ICT, skills** needed to function effectively in life and in the world of work.

Teachers should ensure assessment activities are planned and embedded in learning and teaching. Assessment activities should have a clear purpose, for example for formative or summative use. Assessment tasks should also take into account the Cross-Curricular Skills.

The assessment of Communication and Using Mathematics is done through the use of CCEA Adaptive Assessments, an externally assessed tests that is administered during the winter exam week. Assessment of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities takes place within each subject area and is based on qualitative judgements of pupil progress.

Key Stage 3 pupils' academic performance is tracked throughout each year. There are 4 formal tracking windows – end of October, December exam, mid March and June end of year assessment. Each tracking window will be followed by a performance report that is issued through the Parent App.

Organisaton of Teaching Groups at Key Stage 3

In June the new September pupil intake for Year 8 complete The Cognitive Abilities Tests (CAT4) and the standardised results from these assessments are used to allocate pupils in teaching sets. Generally, in Years 8 – 10, the curriculum is organised into VALUE and THINK teaching sets. With 5 classes in each. VALUE teaching sets group together subjects that have a particular numeracy focus and THINK group together subjects that have a particular literacy focus. For year groups over 120 pupils, they taught in one UNITY teaching group with 5 classes for non-practical subjects and 6 practical mixed ability classes with reduced numbers.

Using CAT4 results, pupils are placed into 2 equal top sets V and A for the numeracy subjects and T and H for the literacy subjects. L, U and E and I, N and K have mixed ability pupils. The VALUE teaching sets use CAT4 Quantitative results and the THINK teaching sets use the Verbal results to set the pupils. For the year groups over 120 pupils the pupils are placed into 2 equal top sets U and N and I, T and Y have mixed ability pupils. The UNITY class sets generally use the Mean CAT4 results to set the classes.

The curriculum is designed in this way to provide stretch and challenge learning opportunities for our students in the top sets. For the remaining three teaching sets, with the mixed ability pupils, the pupils are taught with differentiated materials with the capacity for learning support, so that all pupils can fulfil their potential.

For year groups below 120 pupils -

Typical VALUE subjects:

- Art
- Food and Nutrition
- Geography
- ICT
- Maths
- Music
- Science
- Technology

Typical THINK subjects:

- Drama
- English
- History
- Re
- Spanish
- For timetabling reasons, T and H are grouped for PE into boys' and girls' classes and I, N and K forms the other 2 classes.

For year groups above 120 pupils –

The practical subjects placed into 6 mixed ability classes are:

- Art
- Food and Nutrition
- ICT
- Music
- Technology
- PE – 3 groups from P1 and P2, P3 and P4 and P5 and P6

The remaining subjects are placed into the UNITY teaching sets.

Key Stage 4:

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum caters for a wide range of interests and is designed to give students as much choice as possible while confirming to statutory requirements. Every student is encouraged to aim for breadth and balance in their curriculum so that a wide variety of career opportunities remain open. Careers staff in the College have a key role in addressing this aim.

Key Stage 4 students sit examinations in **compulsory core** and **optional GCSE subjects**.

The subjects available in Key Stage 4 are:

AREA OF LEARNING	SUBJECTS
Core Subjects (Compulsory)	Religious Studies
	English Language
	Mathematics
	Science (Double/Single Award)

Some of our more able students are offered the opportunity to study **English Literature** and **Further Maths** within their English and Maths time. Most students study 8 or 9 GCSE subjects, composed of the requirements listed above and a choice of 3 from the following optional list:

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS	
Art and Design	Home Economics – Food & Nutrition
Business Studies	ICT BTEC
Child Development	King's Trust – Preparation for Adult Life
Childcare BTEC*	Motor Vehicle and Road User Studies

Construction	Music*
Creative Media BTEC	Occupational Studies*
Drama	Physical Education
Digital Technology	Spanish
Engineering BTEC*	Sports Studies BTEC
Geography	Technology and Design
History	Travel and Tourism

NB: Subjects marked with a * are offered within the Banbridge Area Learning Community.

Curriculum Pathways

Three option routes are available to students in Year 10 as they make their Key Stage 4 option choices. Students are given careers support and guidance at this important transition of their education. Based on performance data, advice from their teachers, students will be advised about which of the option routes is most suitable from the more vocational route to a more traditional GCSE pathway.

Route 1 -

To provide for the full ability range within the school, we offer this pathway to approximate 15% of the year group (on average 18 students, whose ability and progression route would indicate a skills based route through SRC).

Subjects:

- English Language
- Maths
- Single Award Science
- OCN Re
- Occupational Studies (equivalent to 2 GCSE C grades)
- King's Trust Level 2 Extended Certificate in Personal Development and Employability (equivalent to 2 GCSE C grades)
- 1 GCSE / BTEC from KS4 Option Block C
- Curriculum PE (non-examination)
- LLW (non-examination) – delivered by form tutor

Occupational Studies students attend SRC one day a week and can specialise in 4 areas over the two years. A selection of these areas is given below.

Business and Services	Construction	Design and Creativity	Engineering and Engineering Services	Environment and Society	Technology and Innovation
Childcare and the Play Environment	Brick and Block Work	Contemporary Cuisine	Computer Aided Design	Animal Care	Bench Joinery
Communication within an Office or Business Environment	Bench Joinery Carpentry and Joinery	Creative Hair Styling on Long Hair	Manufacturing Techniques – Sheet Metal	Horticulture: Caring for Plants and Flowers	Carpentry and Joinery Computer Aided Design
Contemporary Cuisine	Painting and Decorating	Creative Styling Using Blow-Drying	Maintenance of Land-Based Machinery	Horticulture: Growing Plants in a Sustainable	Digital Imaging Digital Music

Facial Skincare Manicure and Nail Art	Plastering Plumbing	Techniques	Vehicle Servicing and Valeting	Way	Sound Production TV and Film Production
Shampooing and Conditioning Treatments	Wall and Floor Tiling	Graphic Design	Plumbing	Running a Leisure Event	
Patisserie and Baking		Patisserie and Baking		Sports Leadership	
The Physical Care of Babies		Total Beauty		Tour Guiding	
		Website Development		Working in a Care Environment	
		Creative Crafts - Photography		Working in Tourism	

Within this pathway a small number of pupils may be withdrawn from the subjects listed above and undertake Training for Business in conjunction with the SRC. In addition to the Occupational Studies subjects the pupils already take, they will take further Occupational Studies subjects along with relevant qualification in Numeracy, Literacy and ICT.

Route 2 -

This pathway is offered to approximately 40% of the year group. Pupils receive advice through the pastoral structure along with the Science, ICT and Careers departments when choosing this pathway.

Subjects:

- English Language (in addition some pupils take English Literature)
- Maths (in addition some pupils take Further Maths)
- Single Award Science
- OCN Re or GCSE RE (recommendations are provided within the RE department)
- 3 GCSE / BTEC subjects from KS4 Option Blocks A – C (Digital Technology is not available for pupils following this pathway)
- Curriculum PE (non-examination)
- LLW (non-examination) – delivered by form tutor

Route 3 -

This pathway is offered to approximately 45% of the year group. Pupils receive advice through the pastoral structure along with the Science and Careers departments when choosing this pathway.

Subjects:

- English Language (in addition some pupils take English Literature)
- Maths (in addition some pupils take Further Maths)
- Double Award Science
- GCSE RE or OCN RE (recommendations are provided within the RE department)
- 3 GCSE / BTEC subjects from KS4 Option Blocks A – C
- Curriculum PE (non-examination)
- LLW (non-examination) – delivered by form tutor

Key Stage 4 pupils' academic performance is tracked throughout each year. There are 4 formal tracking windows – end of October, December exam, mid February and mid April. Each tracking window will be followed by a performance report that is issued through the Parent App.

Post 16 Study:

Pupils enter Sixth Form after successful completion of GCSE. An extensive range of 27 subjects (including both academic and applied) is available and pupils choose 3 or 4 of these to AS and A2 level. The Sixth Form curriculum is designed to give students the maximum academic opportunities in subject choice and careers options. While there is a strong emphasis on the academic side of the student's life, we also aim to develop the skills and personal competencies necessary for the vocational dimension. Over and above these, we look for the emergence of a mature, well balanced and happy person.

The subjects available in our Sixth Form are:

Art and Design
BTEC Level 3 Applied Science
Biology
CTEC Level 3 Business Studies
Chemistry
BTEC Level 3 Construction*
BTEC Level 3 Creative Media Production
Drama and Theatre Studies
BTEC Level 3 Engineering*
English Literature
Geography
Health and Social Care
History
CTEC Level 3 ICT (Digital Technology)
Life and Health Science*
Mathematics
Moving Image Art*
Physics
Psychology
Religious Studies
Software Systems*
Spanish
BTEC Level 3 Sports Studies Single, Double Award and Triple Award* (through our Sports Academy in association with Glenavon Football Club)
Technology and Design
BTEC Level 3 Uniformed Protective Services

NB: Subjects marked with a * are offered within the Banbridge Area Learning Community

Sixth Form Enrichment Programme

Our Enrichment Programme encourages pupils to maintain a broad range of interests beyond their academic studies. It provides opportunities to develop personal qualities, explore individual talents, and gain valuable experiences through well-established initiatives. These programmes help pupils build links with industry while fostering leadership and transferable skills and include:

SistersIN;
Mock Trials;
Young Enterprise;
Volunteer Now;
Intergenerational Project;
Prefect Training;
Training in Academic, Peer and Ausome (working with pupils with ASD) Mentoring;
Charity Fundraising (Internal and External)
Student Council;
Lessons on Life (pupil-led question and answer sessions with access to professionals from industry)
Survival Cookery;
Deaf Awareness and Sign Language;
Language Lessons;
SOAR Accreditation;
Presentation and Interview Skills Development;
Leisure Activities which include Aerobics, Yoga, Fitness Training, Dance;
Study Skills Programme;

Pupils are well prepared for progression to universities and colleges of further education. A full and impressive overview of our leavers' destinations can be found on the College website.

The academic progress of Post-16 pupils is carefully monitored throughout the year. There are four formal tracking points: the end of October, the December examinations, mid-February, and mid-April. Following each tracking point, a performance report is issued to parents via the Parent App.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Impact of the Curriculum for Learning:

Monitoring and evaluation are key components of the College's aim to raise student achievement. Within the curriculum, this involves focusing on teaching and learning, the performance of students, the effectiveness of teachers and hence the standard of achievement across the whole College. The work of the SLT is central to the effective monitoring and evaluation of the College curriculum. To review schemes of work, analyse reports on curricular projects, meet with the Head of Link Departments and review Department action plans, analyse examination results and promotes curricular innovation.

Some of the **broad issues** examined include:

- Are all statutory curricular requirements being met?
- Are the needs of all students being addressed, including the gifted and talented and those with Special Educational Needs or Free School Meals?
- Are lessons sufficiently challenging for pupils?
- Is there a performance gap between boys and girls?
- Is there continuity and progression in the curriculum between one year group and the next?
- Is an AFL approach consistently used across the curriculum?
- Are the cross-curricular skills, along with thinking skills and personal capabilities, infused into the taught curriculum?

- How do the curricular areas relate to each other; e.g. is there evidence of planning for connected learning and skills development?
- Are there adequate opportunities for practical and oral work?
- Are students achieving their potential in all areas of the curriculum?
- Are Adaptive Teaching strategies embedded within lessons?
- Are subject departments achieving the targets they have set for themselves?
- How does student performance, across different subjects and whole school, compare with the benchmark figures for NI Non-selective schools?
- What are the curricular issues that concern students and parents?
- What has been the impact of a particular curricular initiative?

The **main methods** used in the College to monitor and evaluate the curriculum are:

- SLT meetings, which focus on progress made towards achieving curricular targets.
- Student, parent and staff feedback through questionnaires and focus groups.
- End of year progress reports on curricular goals and targets, submitted by Heads of Department to the Principal during review meetings at the start of each academic year.
- Subject Leader meetings which often focus on a particular aspect of the Curriculum and can be used to obtain evaluative feedback.
- Subject Leader meetings where teachers are able to give their views on the progress being made with a particular target, including student achievement.
- Subject teachers self-monitoring and evaluating learning in their classroom, identifying areas of strength and areas that require further development.
- The College's PRSD programme, which has been particularly useful in encouraging innovation within the curriculum, followed by monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes achieved.
- Induction and EPD classroom observations.
- SLT Learning Walks which provide feedback to teachers on the learning in their classrooms.

Differentiation and Adaptive Teaching:

Differentiation and Adaptive Teaching are a central aspect of success in a mixed ability College. This is the process by which curriculum objectives, teaching methods, assessment methods, resources and learning activities are planned to cater for the needs of individual students. **It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that work is adapted and teaching methods are flexible to meet the needs of the individual students in the class.** Reference to a student's PLP and CAT profile may give some guidance on strategies as well as the difficulties which are present. Different **learning styles** should be considered as well as different levels of ability.

The following are among the strategies that may be employed:

Differentiation by task:

This means that the same learning intention is used but different tasks are provided. The tasks may be easy at the beginning and progress to a greater level of difficulty; in this way, the work is matched to the ability of the students, and everyone is likely to experience success.

Differentiation by outcome:

The same content, materials, stimulus or task is used for all students: this works best with open ended activities and can be successful for individual or group task. More capable students are enabled to extend their thinking and develop their responses more fully.

Differentiation by support:

It is important to remember that all students need support at times, however, the nature and extent of the support differs according to the individual's needs. In some cases, the support required is to encourage the student to attempt a task while at other times it is to ask pertinent questions which will extend the student or help them to explore an alternative way of approaching a task. This requires the teacher to adapt teaching wisely to address individual need and this may result in an increased level of interaction between pupils and staff which will have positive outcomes for students.

Differentiation by resource materials:

These can be graduated according to the ability range within the class.

Differentiation by pace:

Students may be given a different stimulus (same task), however more able students can often deduce next steps and proceed independently with tasks.

Differentiation by dialogue:

The teacher gives a basic outline of the task from which some students will be able to begin the work. This is then followed by further explanation, exemplification or illustration and targeted questioning to support less able students. It is essential that appropriate language is used.

Differentiation by choice:

A choice of activities is made available to match the abilities, interests and enthusiasm of the students. A range of starting points may be provided and varied materials or processes may be employed. This can also facilitate extension activities for the more able student.

Any issue regarding the school's policy on curriculum, may be referred to the Board of Governors.