Curriculum Policy

Policy title:	Curriculum Policy
Function:	For information and guidance about the Curriculum. This document forms part of the portfolio of policies designed to inform students and parents.
Status:	Approved
Statutory guidance:	The national curriculum (July 2014) The SEN Code of practice (January 2015) Sex and relationship education (September 2021) Religious education in English schools (February 2010) Personal, social, health and economic education (September 2021) Collective worship in schools (January 1994) Teaching Online Safety in Schools (June 2019)
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1. Our Vision

At The Blue Coat School Liverpool, every student belongs, is valued, and is empowered to thrive. Guided by Non Sibi Sed Omnibus — not for oneself but for all — we honour our story with honesty while forging a modern, inclusive future.

We celebrate individuality and champion diversity, inspiring students to flourish in their own way with confidence, curiosity, resilience, and kindness.

Our vision is to ignite ambition and nurture integrity and compassion, preparing young people to shape a fairer, brighter world — in Liverpool and beyond.

2. Aims and Objectives

This policy explains how The Blue Coat School Liverpool has built its curriculum across all key stages, and how each stage allows students to build on their prior learning, achieve to the very highest level, and prepare confidently for the next stage of their education, training or career.

Curriculum Statement

At Blue Coat School, our curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and designed to ensure that every student belongs, flourishes and thrives. Guided by our school motto, Non Sibi Sed Omnibus ("Not for oneself, but for all"), we provide a broad, knowledge-rich education that enables students to achieve academic excellence while developing the confidence, resilience and character to make a positive contribution to society.

Curriculum Overview

At Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, the curriculum reflects the National Curriculum programmes of study and all other statutory requirements, while reflecting the school's status as Liverpool's only grammar school and its commitment to stretching highly able learners.

3. Key Stage 3

Students joining The Blue Coat School in Year 7 follow an academically rigorous, knowledge-centred curriculum across Years 7, 8 and 9, which gives them the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects in depth, including Latin and two modern foreign languages. It allows them to build a rich and coherent body of knowledge, sequenced deliberately over time, and lays firm foundations for success at GCSE, A Level and beyond. More specifically, the features of the curriculum include:

- Ambitious, knowledge-rich content, carefully sequenced in line with the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum and informed by subject expertise and educational research
- A strong emphasis on the acquisition and skilful application of systematic subject knowledge
- Clear identification of the key concepts, vocabulary and processes that allow students to think critically and work independently

- Strong connections between classroom learning, homework and independent study habits
- Regular formative and summative assessment, moderated by Heads of Department, to monitor depth of understanding and inform planning
- Frequent reporting and feedback, including progress reports and progress evenings

Curriculum overviews for each subject area can be found on the Curriculum pages of the school website.

Key Stage 3 covers Years 7, 8 and 9, during which students study the full breadth of the National Curriculum subjects together with Latin. In addition to the taught curriculum, students are strongly encouraged to take part in the wide range of co-curricular and enrichment opportunities that build cultural capital and enhance personal development.

Students study the following subjects in Years 7, 8 and 9.

KEY STAGE 3 SUBJECTS			
ART	BIOLOGY	CHEMISTRY	COMPUTING
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY	ENGLISH	FRENCH	GEOGRAPHY
HISTORY	LATIN	MATHEMATICS	MUSIC
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	PHYSICS	RELIGIOUS STUDIES	SPANISH
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT			

At KS3, students have 50 taught lessons per fortnight, each one hour in length and the curriculum is organised as set out in the diagram below.

Year 7 *(Total: 50 lessons per cycle)*

English	Maths	PE	Biology	Chem.	Physics	Geog.	History	French	Latin	Spanish	Art	Comp.	RS	Tech	Music	PD
6	6	5	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1

Year 8 *(Total: 50 lessons per cycle)*

English	Maths	PE	Biology	Chem.	Physics	Geog.	History	French	Latin	Spanish	Art	Comp.	RS	Tech	Music	PD
6	6	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1

Year 9 *(Total: 50 lessons per cycle)*

English	Maths	PE	Biology	Chem.	Physics	Geog.	History	French	Latin	Spanish	Art	Comp.	RS	Tech	Music	PD
6	6	3	4	4	4	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1

KS3 Teaching Groups

All students in Year 7 and 8 are taught in their form groups and these are 6 mixed ability groups. This is done for to encourage collaboration and high aspiration for all and to promote equity inclusion. This is also the case in year 9 with the one exception being in Mathematics. In year 9, Mathematics has two bands of 4 groups (8 classes in total) and these classes are set based on academic ability and performance demonstrated in summative assessments across KS3.

4. Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, students are guided towards a more personalised curriculum which reflects their individual strengths, interests and aspirations. Students select from a broad range of GCSE courses to study alongside a substantial core curriculum.

Key Stage 4 covers Years 10 and 11*, The curriculum offered ensures that, regardless of starting point, there are clear progression routes into Key Stage 5 at Blue Coat or into alternative further academic study.

** As of September 2026, year 10 and 11 students will still be on the 3 year KS4 model that they started in September 2025 as the school transitions to a 2 year KS4.*

Key Stage 4 Core Curriculum

GCSE English Language & GCSE English Literature	GCSE Mathematics
GCSE Biology, Chemistry, Physics	Personal Development (compulsory, non-examined)
Physical Education (compulsory, non-examined)	Core Religious Studies (compulsory, non-examined)

In addition to the core curriculum, year 10 and year 11 currently study 5 other option choices but must have chosen one Modern foreign language and one Humanity as part of their 5 choices.

Key Stage 4 Option Courses

Students may undertake up to 11 GCSEs in total, selected from the following list, alongside their compulsory core subjects:

KEY STAGE FOUR OPTION COURSES			
ART	BUSINESS STUDIES	COMPUTER SCIENCE	DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY
FOOD AND NUTRITION	FRENCH	GEOGRAPHY	HISTORY
LATIN	MUSIC	PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GCSE)	RELIGIOUS STUDIES
SPANISH			

During Year 9, students receive information, advice and guidance to support them in making well-informed choices about their option subjects ahead of starting their GCSE courses in Year 10. The options on offer provide a good balance between traditional academic disciplines and practical, skills-based study, allowing students to pursue subjects suited to their strengths and ambitions.

Our formal curriculum offer at Key Stage 4 is supplemented by a wide range of additional opportunities designed to stimulate, challenge and broaden our students' experience. These include careers enterprise activities, curriculum enrichment days, field trips, educational visits and cultural events.

At KS4, students have 50 taught lessons per fortnight, each one hour in length and the curriculum is organised as set out in the diagram below.

Year 10 *(Total: 50 lessons per cycle)*

English	Maths	Biology	Chem.	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	PE	Physics	PD	RS
6	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	1

Year 11 *(Total: 50 lessons per cycle)*

English	Maths	Biology	Chem.	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	PE	Physics	PD	RS
6	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	1

KS4 Teaching Groups

All option choices are taught in mixed ability groups in both year 10 and year 11. The following subjects are grouped differently though as outlined below:

Maths: Year 10 - The year group is split into 2 bands, with 4 groups in each band (8 in total) to allow for smaller class sizes. Each band is set based on academic performance in summative assessments.

Maths: Year 11 - There are currently 7 groups which are set based on academic performance.

Sciences: Year 10 – The year group is split into 2 bands, with 4 groups in each band (8 in total) to allow for smaller class sizes. Only the top set in each band will be set based on academic performance in summative assessment, the other 3 classes in each band will have smaller classes and be mixed ability.

Sciences: Year 11 - There are currently 7 groups which mirror the Maths groups.

English Year 10 and 11: English is taught in 8 smaller groups of mixed ability in KS4.

5. Key Stage 5

At Key Stage 5, students may undertake up to four A Level courses, selected from a wide range of academic disciplines, together with the Extended Project Qualification. Entry to Key Stage 5 study is determined by attainment at Key Stage 4. The curriculum offered ensures that students are well prepared for progression into higher education, further training or employment.

Key Stage 5 Courses

A LEVEL AND LEVEL 3 COURSES			
ART	BIOLOGY	CHEMISTRY	COMPUTER SCIENCE
ECONOMICS	ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE	ENGLISH LITERATURE	FRENCH
FURTHER MATHEMATICS	GEOGRAPHY	HISTORY	LATIN
MATHEMATICS	MUSIC	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	PHYSICS
POLITICS	PSYCHOLOGY	SPANISH	

All Key Stage 5 students undertake compulsory form tutor time and Personal Development lessons, including Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), PSHE and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE).

In addition to the academic curriculum, our Sixth Form offer includes a programme of enrichment activities including the Extended Project Qualification, the Arts Award, Duke of Edinburgh Award, and opportunities for community service, work experience and independent study.

At KS5 students choose either 3 or 4 options (this is based on entry requirement published in the year 11 options booklet). Each option choice is allocated 10 x 1 hour lessons in both year 12 and 13.

Year 12 *(Total: 43 lessons per cycle)*

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	EPQ	PD
10	10	10	10	1	2

Year 13 *(Total: 43 lessons per cycle)*

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	EPQ	PD
10	10	10	10	2	1

6. Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

Students receive a comprehensive programme of careers education throughout their time at Blue Coat, designed and delivered with reference to the Gatsby Benchmarks. Through this programme, students engage in work-related learning, work experience, and opportunities to meet professionals and learn about different career pathways, enabling them to make well-informed decisions about their futures. Careers education is delivered through Personal Development lessons, as well as through curriculum enrichment, careers events, visiting speakers and off-site activities.

7. Citizenship

The teaching of citizenship sits within the school's broader approach to developing students' knowledge, skills and confidence to participate positively in school, community and wider society. It is taught and explored through Personal Development, History, Geography and Mathematics, alongside the wider curriculum. Planning and teaching in this area aims to develop students' understanding of democracy, government, Parliament, the rule of law, individual liberty, human rights, equality, diversity and social responsibility. Students are supported to understand their rights and responsibilities, consider different perspectives, recognise bias and misinformation, evaluate evidence, debate respectfully and make informed decisions. The programme is progressive across Key Stages 3,4 and 5 with students exploring the development of democracy and voting rights, social and political change, law and justice, equality and contemporary issues.

8. Curriculum Personalisation, Support and Inclusion

The curriculum is designed to be accessible to all students. Teachers set high expectations that take account of the needs of all learners, plan work that stretches and challenges every

student, and adapt their teaching to address the needs of students from any background, including those with English as an additional language.

Teachers use the curriculum to support students with special educational needs or disabilities by planning lessons that remove barriers to progress, ensuring access to the full curriculum, taking account of individual needs, and providing access to specialist equipment or approaches where required. The SENDCo reviews Student Support Plans for students who require additional support, and works with Heads of Department to ensure suitable, personalised curriculum arrangements are in place for students with more complex needs.

Through the curriculum, staff promote equal opportunity in line with relevant legislation in relation to race, disability, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.

9. Numeracy and Literacy

All subject areas provide opportunities to develop mathematical fluency, problem-solving and reasoning, applied to both routine and non-routine problems. Staff across all subjects take every opportunity to develop students' spoken language, reading, writing and subject-specific vocabulary.

10. Relationships, Sex and Health Education

The teaching of relationships, sex and health education sits within the school's broader approach to keeping students safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. It is taught and explored through Personal Development, Computing, Physical Education, Food Technology and Biology.

Planning and teaching in this area is accessible to all students, age-appropriate, mindful of the SEND Code of Practice, considerate of students' religious backgrounds, and compliant with the Equality Act 2010. The programme aims to promote healthy and nurturing relationships, build understanding and respect, support safe and informed choices, and help students recognise and manage online risk. Parents retain the right to withdraw their child from the Sex Education programme, in line with current legislation; there is no parental right of withdrawal from Relationships Education or Health Education. Further detail is available in the school's RSHE Policy.

11. Principles of Teaching

At The Blue Coat School, all teachers are expected to follow a shared set of evidence-informed principles of effective teaching to ensure consistency and high expectations across the curriculum. These principles provide a common approach to lesson design, classroom practice, assessment and feedback, enabling all students to experience high-quality teaching regardless of subject or year group. Whilst these principles remain consistent, teachers exercise their professional judgement to adapt their teaching to the needs of the students they teach. This includes responding to prior knowledge, misconceptions, individual needs, SEND, and varying levels of challenge, ensuring that all learners are supported and stretched

to achieve their full potential. Through this balance of consistency and responsive practice, we aim to secure excellent outcomes for all students.

12. Assessment, marking and feedback

Teachers follow the school's Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy, ensuring that assessment is purposeful, feedback is timely and meaningful, and students are provided with regular opportunities to reflect on and act upon feedback to improve their learning. The policy can be found here: https://www.bluecoatschoolliverpool.org.uk/page/?title=Assessment+and+Reporting&pid=99

13. Teaching and Learning CPD

High-quality teaching is central to achieving the best outcomes for all students and is a key priority within the School Improvement Plan. The school is committed to providing a comprehensive programme of continuing professional development (CPD) to ensure that all teachers continually develop their pedagogical knowledge, subject expertise and classroom practice. The Great Teaching Toolkit (GTT) provides the framework for our approach to professional learning, supporting staff to engage with evidence-informed strategies that have the greatest impact on student learning. Through a combination of whole-school training, instructional coaching, collaborative professional learning and subject-specific development, teachers are supported to refine their practice while responding to the needs of the students they teach. This sustained focus on teaching and learning promotes consistency, continuous improvement and excellence across the curriculum.

14. Quality Assurance

The school implements a structured approach to quality assurance to monitor and improve the quality of teaching, learning and curriculum delivery. This includes lesson visits, book checks, student voice and student experience reviews, which together provide a clear picture of the quality of education across the school. These activities enable leaders to evaluate consistency, identify strengths and areas for development, and inform targeted professional development. Quality assurance also supports the regular review of student grouping and ensures that students are placed in appropriate teaching sets to best meet their needs and maximise progress. The purpose of quality assurance is to ensure that all students receive a high-quality, consistent and ambitious educational experience, and that continuous improvement remains central to school development.

15. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trustees ensure that this policy meets current statutory requirements and is reviewed accordingly, and determine the arrangements for the school's curriculum in line with relevant legislation.

The Headteacher ensures that the procedures, practices and arrangements set out in this policy are subject to consultation at appropriate points and holds overall responsibility for the organisation and implementation of the curriculum.

The role of Senior Leadership is to:

- Lead the strategic implementation and ongoing development of the Curriculum Policy, ensuring the curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and accessible to all students.

  - Develop and maintain an effective whole-school curriculum model across all key stages, ensuring curriculum planning supports high-quality timetabling and the efficient use of resources.

  - Work with the Headteacher to review curriculum provision, staffing structures and qualification pathways to ensure they are sustainable, cost-effective and meet the needs of students.

  - Ensure curriculum information is accurate, up to date and effectively communicated to students, parents, staff and other stakeholders, including through the school website.

  - Keep staff informed of national developments in curriculum, assessment and educational policy, ensuring statutory requirements are met.

  - Promote and provide high-quality continuing professional development (CPD) that strengthens teaching and learning, subject expertise and curriculum design across the school.

- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum implementation, using quality assurance, assessment information and stakeholder feedback to drive continuous improvement.

The role of Heads of Department is to:

- Design their curriculum area with reference to its Intent, Implementation and Impact, to meet the needs of all students and stretch and challenge their attainment
- Monitor and moderate the assessment judgements of staff within their department, ensuring consistency and accuracy
- Provide strategic leadership and direction for their curriculum area, reviewing it as part of departmental self-evaluation and linking this to improvement priorities
- Coordinate accurate assessment, recording and reporting processes that allow the tracking of student performance and under-performance, triggering timely intervention.

The role of Subject Teachers is to:

- Keep up to date with developments in their subject, ensuring lesson planning links to whole-school objectives
- Plan and deliver lessons that meet the full requirements of the curriculum and stretch all students

- Use a range of teaching strategies that take account of the needs of different learners
- Plan for and use formative and summative assessment to monitor and track student progress
- Ensure students receive consistent, developmental feedback aligned to departmental assessment frameworks

The role of the SENDCo is to:

- Support teachers in adapting the curriculum so that students with SEND receive their full entitlement
- Ensure appropriate, personalised curriculum plans are in place for students with complex needs
- Engage with external agencies, where necessary, to supplement provision delivered in school
- Review and adapt curriculum plans as needed to ensure students make progress and are prepared for life beyond school

The role of Heads of Year is to:

- Track student performance and identify under-performance, providing intervention where appropriate

Implementation of this policy is monitored through whole-school, departmental and pastoral self-review, through SLT Link Meetings and Reviews, and by the Trustees.