

Bennett Memorial Diocesan School Curriculum Statement

Curriculum philosophy

At Bennett we enable all of our students to access a broad curriculum of traditional subjects. This is because teaching these subjects means that students can learn the important public knowledge which they will otherwise struggle to access and which underpins their intellectual growth and acquisition of cultural capital. The curriculum must induct children into a level of understanding that allows them to think beyond their own experiences to see them reflected in a new way.

In general, we believe that the knowledge we seek to transmit to our students is best understood and organised in traditional subject disciplines. This is because these disciplines provide a well-constructed and articulated framework for teaching and learning. Teachers are disciplinary experts and by working in this way they are best placed to select and sequence the components of the curriculum to optimize learning.

We believe in the specificity of individual subjects and the importance of teaching to rigorous standards in each. Consequently, our curriculum is designed to be challenging and aspirational and, as such it embodies our high aspirations for all our students and is the most powerful tool we have available in our efforts to help them achieve those aspirations.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy is a term referring to how something should be taught. At Bennett, we understand that subject pedagogy is contingent upon what we are teaching and that the latter should determine the approach taken.

We remember what we think about. Running through the planning of our curriculum and the way in which components are sequenced and combined in each subject is a particular understanding of cognition, how children learn. In particular we seek to take account of the limitations of working memory and the importance of developing strong long-term recall of the most important knowledge.

Personal Development

Alongside the traditional subjects in our curriculum, we also prioritise developing the important knowledge and awareness needed for good and healthy personal development. Critically, this means offering a well-developed and effectively sequenced curriculum in the important area of relationships, sex and health education, as well other components of personal development.

Religious Education

As a Christian school, we give high priority to our curriculum for religious education. Here we take an approach that provides our students with a thoughtful account of Christianity, setting it alongside other world religions and exploring it in depth. Students are taught in a way which balances theology and philosophy, with the study of religions as part of human society and which enables students to engage deeply in what it means to be human. The approach that we take is set out in more detail in our school policy for religious education.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

At Bennett Memorial Diocesan School our teachers work closely with our Learning Support Manager to ensure that all students are fully included in our curriculum and experience academic success. Our Learning Support Manager provides information to teachers that is accurate, relevant, and accessible to support lesson planning and to overcome barriers to learning. Our teachers plan lessons which provide additional scaffolding to support those students that need it most. This means that teachers do not differentiate by giving students with SEND different, less challenging curriculum materials; rather, they provide additional support to ensure these students can access the same curriculum as their peers. More information about how our curriculum meets the needs of students with SEND is available from our Learning Support Manager and from the SEND information report on the school website.

CURRICULUM SUMMARY 2021/22

Years 7-8

hours per fortnight	Year 7*	Year 8†
English	7	7
Mathematics	7	7
Science	5	6
Religious Education	2	2
Physical Education	4	4
History	3	3
Geography	3	3
Art	2	3
Music	2	3
MFL1	5	5
Musical Performance	1	
Design Technology	2	2
Food and Nutrition	2	
Computing	2	2
PACE	1	1
Philosophy	2	2

* - Two groups in year 7 follow a specialised curriculum with the addition of 4 periods of Latin in place of food studies and one period of each of music and philosophy.

† - the same two groups in Year 8 follow a specialised curriculum with the addition of 3 periods of Latin through withdrawal from technology and a period of computing.

Year 9

Core Curriculum

English Language and Literature	7 periods
Mathematics	7 periods
Science	9 periods
Religious Studies	4 periods
Physical Education	3 periods
French or German	4 periods
History	4 periods
Geography	4 periods

In Year 9 students are given the opportunity to specialise in the curriculum by making options.

In addition to their core curriculum students then opt for two additional subjects. The available courses are Computing, Drama, French, German, Latin, Art and Design, Music, Food and Nutrition, Product Design, or Textiles. All of these are for four periods.

Key Stage 4

Core Curriculum

English Language and Literature*	7 periods
Mathematics*	6 periods
Chemistry	5 periods
Two further sciences from Biology, Computing and Physics	10 periods
Religious Studies*	5 periods
Geography or History	5 periods
Physical Education	2 periods

*RS decreases to 3 in Y11 and Maths and English increases to 8. PE decreases to 1 period.

Students then opt for two additional subjects. The majority of students are expected to study at least one modern language. The available courses are French, German, Latin, Biology, Physics, Computing, Art and Design, Food, Textiles, Photography, Music, History, Geography, Media Studies, Physical Education, Product Design, Drama, or the BTEC First in Creative Media (which covers two options).

Post-16 curriculum

The School's policy and practice in relation to the post-16 curriculum is based on the principle of providing courses for the maximum possible number of students, bearing in mind the need to maintain cost effective group sizes.

In doing this the school has regard to the 16-19 study programme requirements which mean that all students in the Bennett sixth form must be enrolled on a study programme which has at very least one core aim leading to a substantial qualification that stretches the student and prepares them for education at the next level or for employment.

Where students have not yet achieved a GCSE grade 4 in either English or maths, then we expect them to continue to study on a programme leading to that qualification in the Bennett Sixth Form.

At Bennett our study programmes are all designed to be full-time with a minimum of 540 planned hours per academic year.

The school offers twenty-five A level courses, as well as Tech Level L3 courses in Digital Media, and Sports and Applied General L3 courses in Health and Social Care and ICT. Students may follow up to five courses in both year 12 and year 13. In Year 12 all students follow a core programme including RE/PACE, PE and supervised study. Most of these students will also complete a Level 3 Extended Project or AS in mathematics. The detail of our students are expected to combine these courses to complete a full study programme are set as follows:

All students starting in the Bennett Sixth Form are required to be enrolled on a full time programme of study consisting of either:

- a. 3 A level courses plus the L3 Extended Project or AS mathematics
- b. 4 A level courses: this option is available to students with an APS of 6.5 or higher at GCSE.
- c. ICT BTEC course combined with 2 A level courses and the L3 Extended Project
- d. Creative media, sport or health and social care course combined with 1 A level course and the L3 Extended Project.

In addition, all students will take part in our compulsory PACE programme, which involves one lesson a week, and our sport programme which involves two periods a week.