



# Blue Coat Church of England Academy

## Curriculum Policy

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# Curriculum Policy

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**Philippians 4:9 “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me— put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”**

## **Introduction**

Our aim is to offer a broad and balanced curriculum conducted in accordance with the principles and practices and tenets of the Church of England

At Blue Coat Church of England Academy we strive for excellence in all aspects of our work. We aim to provide an exceptional educational experience through quality first teaching and a curriculum that ensures that every student at Blue Coat develops their individual talents, abilities and interests to their full potential. The curriculum aims to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of all learners, providing clear pathways for progression and ensuring all in the school have equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum.

We are committed to delivering the principles outlined within the Church of England’s *Vision for Education - Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*:

**Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills:** enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and developing talents in all areas of life.

**Educating for hope and aspiration:** enabling healing, repair and renewal, coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.

**Educating for community and living well together:** a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.

**Educating for dignity and respect:** the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

## **Aims**

The curriculum offers a broad and balanced education suited to students of all abilities and across the full age range. The curriculum is accessible, flexible, challenging and inclusive and ensures entitlement for all learners offering continuity and coherence and secures high standards. Students are offered choices which enable them to follow personalised learning pathways within a framework of equality of opportunity, which recognises that the equal worth of all God's children regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity, social background, special educational need or disability.

Principally the curriculum aims:

- To contribute effectively to students' intellectual, physical and personal attainment and development;
- To focus on relationships and commitments, participation in communities and institutions, and the qualities of character that enable students to flourish together;
- To nurture academic habits and skills, emotional intelligence and creativity across the whole range of school subjects, enabling students to develop as effective learners.
- To be appropriate for the age, ability, gender and ethnicity of students;
- To open up horizons of hope and aspiration, and guide pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education, training or employment;
- To provide continuity and progression throughout the key stages;
- To provide a suitable and effective learning environment for those students requiring special provision, including very able students and those with Education, Health and Care plans and for those students who have English as an additional language;
- To provide equality of access and opportunity for all students to learn and progress;
- To provide access to extra-curricular activities for the purpose of enrichment;
- To provide access a co-ordinated Personal Development Curriculum;
- To raise attainment and maximise progress in all subjects;

## **Relationship with other policies and procedures**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Subject Curriculum Maps
- Assessment Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Equality Policy
- Home/School Agreement.
- Sex and Relationship Education Policy
- Church of England Vision for Education – Deeply Christian Serving the Common Good
- Valuing All God's Children

## The Curriculum

The curriculum is broad and balanced in order to empower and prepare students for adult life. The curriculum structure is driven by Blue Coat School's commitment to delivering educational excellence by providing a wide range of subjects and opportunities that will create a thirst for learning. By the end of their school career, students are equipped with the skills, knowledge and qualities required to be lifelong learners.

The school's curriculum follows statutory requirements and guided by the principles of National Curriculum (2014). 50 minute lessons provide pace and challenge across the curriculum areas. Students are taught in a combination of sets (in the core subjects English, Mathematics and Science) and mixed ability teaching groups. From Year 7, students will spend two years in Key Stage 3, year 9 is a foundation year in preparation for years 10 and 11 where students work towards GCSEs and other level two qualifications.

In addition, all students participate in Personal Development Curriculum, which runs throughout the year through form time activities, but is significantly enhanced by the provision of four collapsed timetable sessions where students focus on issues including bullying, assertive behaviour, friendships, exploitation, being a carer, domestic violence, mental wellbeing, sex and relationships, careers guidance and interview practice. The flexible programme allows Blue Coat to adapt and change the provision to address any new and emerging issues, by engaging external providers who lead many of the sessions.

## Key Stage 3

All students follow a curriculum consisting of English, Mathematics, Science, Computer Science, French, Geography, History, Music, Personal Development, Physical Education, Religious Education and Technology (including Art).

The school operates a thirty period week and the fifty minute lessons are allocated as follows:

	English	AR	Maths	Science	R.E.	P.D	Drama	Computing	French	Geography	History	Music	P.E.	Technology
7	4	1	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	2
8	4	1	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	2
9	4	1	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	2

During the first term in Year 7, students are placed in groups in Mathematics and English based on a range of data including Key Stage 2 scores and information exchanged in meetings with Key Stage 2 teachers (all students are visited by a member of SLT during the Summer Term).

Comprehensive monitoring and assessment ensures that sets are reviewed regularly, and changes made where necessary. Learning needs are identified and addressed, including those of the more able student. With a clear focus on literacy and numeracy across the key stage, the curriculum and timetable provides a degree of flexibility to accommodate individual needs.

Where there are identified barriers to success within the mainstream provision provided by Blue Coat Church of England Academy, the school reserves the right to implement an alternative provision, the nature of which is determined by the barriers identified (see Appendix 1). Alternative provision is educational provision for students who are not accessing mainstream education for a variety of reasons at KS3.

## Key Stage 4

The core curriculum consists of:

GCSE English

GCSE Maths

GCSE Religious Education

GCSE Science

Physical Education (non- exam course)

The provision of subjects at KS4 is reviewed annually in order to meet changing needs and demands from students, parents/carers, employers and legislative obligation. Option subjects on offer for 2019/20 were EBACC subjects - Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geography, History, French and Spanish; Other subjects – Art, Automotive Studies, Business & Enterprise, Creative Media Production, Drama, Fashion & Textiles, Health & Social Care, Hospitality & Catering, Information Technology, Music, Dance and Sport. We also offer Asdan courses for students who are unable to access the full range of GCSE qualifications. While the school is committed to offering as wide a range of subjects as possible, subjects where student numbers are very low may be withdrawn. A two-stage option process is used to assess viability of subjects at the preliminary options stage before the final choice from option blocks which are generated from the preliminary choices.

The options process allows students to choose from a variety of academic and/or vocational subjects based on their individual interests. The provision is regularly reviewed and the curriculum currently enables students to meet the EBacc criteria.

Lessons are currently allocated as follows:

	English	Maths	R.E.	Science	P.E.	Option A	Option B	Option C
Year 10	6	5	2	6	2	3	3	3
Year 11	6	5	2	6	2	3	3	3

Where there are identified barriers to success within the mainstream provision provided by Blue Coat Church of England Academy, the school reserves the right to implement an alternative provision, the nature of which is determined by the barriers identified (see Appendix 1). Alternative provision is educational provision for students who are not accessing mainstream education for a variety of reasons at KS4.

## **Post 16 Provision**

At Blue Coat, we focus on students as individuals and believe that education means more than just a set of qualifications. Our Sixth Form offers a range of post-16 academic and vocational qualifications, ranging from level one to level three, as well as extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities. Personalised learning lies at the core of progression into this route as with Key Stage 4 and is underpinned by a rigorous system of Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) supported by individual learning plans. The curriculum offers breadth of curriculum to ensure that the Post 16 provision offers a wide range of A-level courses together with level 3 vocational qualifications and some level 2 and 1 courses to meet the needs of all learners. The courses currently offered at level 3 include: Academic A levels – Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History, Geography, Computer Science, Mathematics, Psychology and Sociology; Vocational Level 3 courses – Business Studies, BTEC Sport, Health and Social Care, ICT, Law, Media Studies and Science. Level 2 courses include Media Studies, Science, Law, Health and Social Care and English and Mathematics resits. Level 1 courses include English, Mathematics, Life Skills, eg “get Ready for Work”, PE, and vocational courses in Catering and ICT.

The sixth form curriculum provides clear pathways of progression with opportunities for students to progress successfully on to university, apprenticeship training, employment or further education. Re-take English and Maths are available, so that students at all levels may achieve the base-line qualifications needed to progress. Our aim is to continue to develop opportunities for work experience for all post-16 students.

## **Developing Higher Order Thinking Skills**

Students are challenged to use higher order thinking skills to ensure they master their learning and gain a deeper understanding of their subject. We have re-designed our tutor time programme to include specific targeted study skills workshops and the use of universities to help our students develop these much needed academic skills.

## **Enrichment Activities**

Blue Coat Church of England Academy offers a wide and inclusive programme of enrichment activities that takes place outside the formal curriculum.

Students benefit from a wide range of sporting activities throughout the school day. There are clubs before and after school, and during lunchtimes as well. The emphasis is on enjoyment of sport but there are many opportunities to compete against other schools.

Blue Coat School also offers musical instrument lessons at school with teachers from the Walsall Music Service. Lessons may be individual or in groups and are arranged on a ‘rota’ basis so as to minimise disruption to curriculum subjects.

## **Staff Development**

In-house CPD is delivered annually in order to ensure curriculum teams are kept abreast of changes and to improve standards of teaching and learning. Appraisal is used strategically to identify and address training needs.

Initiatives in curriculum development and teaching and learning styles are monitored to ensure teachers are well-equipped to deliver the curriculum effectively.

### **Examination entries**

Students have an entitlement to an examination entry in the subjects they have studied providing they have a good record of attendance and punctuality and have completed any controlled assignment or coursework required by the examination board. When there is a doubt about the likelihood of a student attending all of their exams the school reserves the right to seek a returnable deposit to secure a commitment from the student and their family.

### **Curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Assistant Principal (Pupil Progression), Assistant Principal (SEND), Vice Principal (Curriculum) and the Principal have overall responsibility for the day to day organisation of the curriculum and reporting to the governing body. The curriculum middle leaders' work with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to provide a strategic lead and direction on the curriculum to ensure Blue Coat Church of England Academy delivers the policy's aims.

The role of middle leaders is to:

- Have a clear vision for the delivery of their subject area, which is shared and understood by staff, pupils and parents/carers.
- Keep up to date and review developments in their subject, at both national and local level ensuring development planning links to whole-school objectives.
- Regularly monitor and review implementation including the plans for all teachers, ensuring that all classes are taught the full requirements of the curriculum.
- Examine long-term and medium-term planning, and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used and that planning leads to a broad and balanced curriculum taking into account the needs of different learners.
- Monitor the way in which resources are stored and managed.
- Ensure that both formative and summative assessments are used to promote learning.
- Regularly evaluate the impact of the curriculum to assess whether implementation is effective in terms of maximising outcomes for students.

The role of the curriculum team and specialist teacher is to:

- Keep up to date with developments in their subject, at both national and local level ensuring development planning links to whole-school objectives.
- Plan and deliver lessons that meet the full requirements of the curriculum.
- Use appropriate teaching strategies that take into account the needs of different learners.
- Use resources effectively in order to deliver the aims of the curriculum.
- Plan for and use both formative and summative assessments to monitor and track student progress.
- Ensure that clear learning outcomes are identified in plans and that students receive consistent and developmental feedback on their work.



## **Appendix 1 : Alternative Provision**

Alternative provision is educational provision for students who are not accessing mainstream education for a variety of reasons at KS3 and KS4. Where there are identified barriers to success within the mainstream provision provided by Blue Coat Church of England Academy, the school reserves the right to implement an alternative provision, the nature of which is determined by the barriers identified.

Blue Coat School's Alternative Provision seeks to:

- Set out the rationale for securing a personalised curriculum for students at KS4;
- Ensure that alternative provision is offered to suitable students in a consistent way;
- Ensure that budgets for such provision are established in due time and managed effectively;
- Guide and support staff with the administration of alternative curriculum provision.

A number of students at KS3 and KS4 are offered a variety of alternative curriculum provisions as a way of supporting their wider development and equipping them with skills and experience for the world of work.

Important acknowledgements underpinning this policy are:

- The school recognises the need to personalise the curriculum for some students;
- Some students at KS3 and KS4 need medical support, placements at the Orchard Centre would be considered in this instance;
- A minority of students at KS3 struggle to meet the academic and social demands of mainstream education expectations;
- A minority of students at KS4 struggle to meet the academic demands of their core GCSE subjects:

These students may be damaged by their experiences in subject areas that they cannot access, or may negatively impact on the learning of their peers;

These students need additional provision to enhance their experiences and qualifications at the end of KS3 and KS4;

These students need to develop skills and experience of the world of work to reduce the chances of them being NEET post-16.

### **Objectives**

The principal objectives of alternative provision are:

- To ensure that alternative provision is offered to suitable students in a consistent way;
- To provide guidance on the identification of students requiring alternative provision and of suitable provision for different aptitudes and aspirations;
- To ensure that budgets for such provision are established in due time, approved by SLT and Governors and managed effectively;
- To guide and support staff with the monitoring and support of alternative curriculum provision.

These are the main reasons for choosing Alternative Provision:

- Students' educational needs are not being met through the national curriculum. Alternative Provision recognises that we are all individuals with different strengths and weaknesses and that mainstream education is not for everyone;
- The student has had one or more fixed term exclusion and is considered to be at risk of permanent exclusion from Blue Coat Church of England Academy. Alternative Provision is a strategy to avoid permanent exclusion for students and to encourage inclusion in education.
- The student has not been attending school regularly for whatever reason, and is therefore unlikely to achieve GCSEs.
- Alternative Provision offers a different setting with a broader choice of subjects for students which may encourage attendance.

### **What are the advantages of the Alternative Provision?**

- Students can access a variety of educational options, including core GCSEs, vocational training & qualifications, and practical skills that lead to jobs.
- Students are given a great degree of flexibility in what and how they learn.
- Students are given some independence and are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves. Students who are doing what they enjoy often find they are more motivated to attend class and achieve good results in their chosen subject area.
- Doing well promotes higher self-esteem.
- Students who are referred to provision outside the school remain on roll with school and the school funds their place in alternative provision.
- The school remains ultimately responsible for the student and the offer of alternative provision shows a commitment by the school to an inclusive approach to the students' education. Where necessary we use a range of providers for Alternative Education including Walsall College and other approved providers. In addition, provision is made using medical education establishments (Shepwell) or Student Referral Units (New Leaf) where necessary.

Alternative Provision will always provide basic skills in Maths and English. Other courses are developed or sourced to meet the needs of individuals while fitting around any school-based provision. Any externally sourced courses must provide the best value possible for any additional expenditure which may be incurred. Courses may include trade subjects (mechanics, constructions, hairdressing) or specialist areas (ESOL, business, catering, childcare, art). The qualifications students receive are nationally recognised and enable progression to further education.

All procedures have been developed on the basis of the following principles:

- Students referred to off-site alternative provision should be referred on the basis that this provision is more appropriate for them than what Blue Coat Church of England Academy can provide.
- If an alternative placement breaks down the situation will be discussed and meeting convened and if it is unable to be resolved the students will be expected to return to Blue Coat School.
- Service Level Agreements are in place for all provision.

- Once committed to off-site alternative provision, students must attend and failure to do so should carry the same consequences as non-attendance at Blue Coat School.
- The school will monitor attendance through close links with the alternative provision provider. Attendance at off-site alternative provision will be monitored closely and every step should be taken to ensure that accurate attendance data is kept by Blue Coat Church of England Academy.
- All professionals have a statutory responsibility to safe guard and promote the welfare of children and young people and tracking and reporting attendance at alternative provision is an essential component in achieving this.
- There is an expectation that any safeguarding concerns are raised Designated Safeguarding Lead at Blue Coat Church of England Academy and that all alternative providers adhere to the safeguarding policy held by the school.

### **Process**

In Key Stage 3 parents will be notified of any short term provision which usually takes the form of withdrawal from a small number of lessons, on a rotation basis, for additional support/intervention under the direction of the SENCO. In addition, a small number of students may be dis-applied from the study of modern languages and will instead attend a timetabled programme of functional skills which is usually based around reading, literacy and numeracy skills.

In Key Stage 4, the school will set up a meeting involving all relevant parties, including parents/carers and others as appropriate.

- A representative from the school will clearly explain to families the reason why the alternative provision is being offered. If parents refuse to accept the offer of alternative provision as an appropriate alternative to education at Blue Coat School this will be documented but there is no right to veto the use of an alternative provision.
- Students must attend the on-site or off-site alternative provision as required and parents/carers must support this
- It is the responsibility of Blue Coat School to arrange for a health and safety check of the premises to be undertaken unless it is a local authority education or other Ofsted registered establishment.
- Alternative learning providers will contact Blue Coat School whenever the student is absent liaise with the school's Key Worker or Attendance Mentor for support and advice. If necessary this should then be referred to the school's Education Welfare Office.
- Blue Coat School will formally monitor attendance and update records and maintain contract with the alternative learning provide on a weekly basis.
- If the placement does not appear to be working or if the student is not attending – parent/carer will be contacted to discuss the situation, external providers reserve the right to withdraw placements at any time for breaches of their own code of conduct or where the actions of an individual are deemed to be a potential risk to the welfare of other students placed with them.
- Any agreement around alternative provision for a student must be regularly reviewed.

- Timescales and responsibilities for reviewing the agreement must be clear to professionals, parents and student and occur every term.
- Impact / success will be measured against the targets the students are set in a meeting once per term. Examples of these could include: attendance, behaviour, qualifications.

### **Power of schools to direct a student off-site for education**

Governing bodies of academies have the power to direct a student off-site for education to improve his or her behaviour under the Academy Trust's Articles of Association (Alternative Provision Statutory guidance for local authorities – January 2013)

The Secretary of State has made regulations, as is required by the related primary legislation, concerning schools' use of power:

- Under the current regulations, parents will be notified in person or in writing of any requirement that their child attend off-site provision.
- Notice must be sent as soon as practical and no later than two days before the off-site placement is due to begin.
- The notice letter or face to face meeting must explain:
  - The reasons for the referral to alternative provision;
  - The aims of the placement;
  - The period for which the student will be required to attend the placement;
  - The date and time the placement will start;
  - The address the student will need to attend and the name of the person to whom they must report on the first day;
  - Details of the session times i.e. the time the morning and afternoon sessions start and end.

## Appendix 2 – References

### **Church of England Vision for Education Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/2016%20Church%20of%20England%20Vision%20for%20Education%20WEB%20FINAL.pdf>

### **Valuing All God's Children**

[https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Valuing%20All%20God%27s%20Children%20July%202019\\_0.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/Valuing%20All%20God%27s%20Children%20July%202019_0.pdf)