



OAKLANDS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

AND

SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

With delegated responsibility from the
Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust

CURRICULUM POLICY

APPROVED BY LOCAL GOVERNING BODY	January 2026
SCRUTINISED BY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE	January 2026
DATE LAST REVIEWED	January 2026
MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE	Deputy Head of School
STATUTORY / NON-STATUTORY	STATUTORY



Community

Unity

Opportunity

Policy Amendments

Version Date	Section / Page	Amendments
January 2026	1.0 / Page 3	New Policy Statement
January 2025	2.4.1-2.4.2 / Page 6	Minor textual amendments
	2.4.3 / Page 6	Addition of RSE
	2.4.4 / Page 6	Addition of 'Love and Service' initiatives and volunteering
	2.4.5 / Page 6	Additional sentence regarding external speakers
	2.5 / Page 6	Additional sentence for Year 12 and Year 13 Careers
	2.7 / Page 6	New paragraph regarding Sixth Form Enrichment Week
	Table 1 / Page 8	General Studies changed to Enrichment (Year 12)
	Table 2 / Page 9	NCFE Level 2 Health and Fitness changed to NCFE Level 2 Sport Studies
January 2024	2.1 / Page 5	Addition of % commitment to RE curriculum
	2.5 / Page 6	Additional sentences re Careers
	Table 1 / Page 8	Updates to Year 10 and Year 11 and Sixth Form
February 2023	Table 2 / Page 9	Addition of Film Studies and Art (Textiles) at KS4 Removal of BTec Applied Science at KS5
January 2022	2.3.2 / Page 5	Updated to reflect change to Modern Languages offer for KS4
	2.3.3 / Page 5	Updated to reflect change to Modern Languages offer for KS4
	Table 1 / Page 8	Updated to reflect changes as above
January 2021	1.12 / Page 4 2.8 / Page 6	Change 'Gifted and Talented' to 'More and Most Able'
	Table 1 / Page 8	Change Year 11 curriculum shape to include PDC
	Table 2 / Page 9	Change from Government & Politics to Politics
January 2020	1.0-3.0	Addition of Intent, Impact and Implementation
	Appendix 1	Removal of Physical Education Appendix
	Appendix 1	Change to the course viability criteria

“The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out.”

Proverbs 18:15 (New International Version)

1.0 Policy Statement

The word Headteacher used in this policy can be taken to refer to either the Executive Headteacher or the Head of School. Deputy Headteacher is equivalent to Deputy Head of School, Assistant Headteacher is equivalent to Assistant Head of School.

2.0 Curriculum Intent

2.1 Our Mission Statement unifies our school community around the salvific mission of Jesus on the cross. We believe that every child has potential to be great. Therefore, our curriculum is characterised by excellence - providing opportunities for students to reach their full potential and prepare them for a world outside of school. Our curriculum is shaped cognisant of the needs of young people and 'illuminated by the Gospel Message'.

2.2 We aim to foster the intellectual, social, creative, physical, moral and spiritual development of all our students. Oaklands students will grow up as determined, courageous and humble individuals who will embody the gospel values throughout their lives with a deep appreciation of the beauty of God's world around them and with an understanding of Catholic social teaching.

2.3 Our curriculum is underpinned by our mission statement so that students will experience:

Community: No one gets left behind.

- be challenged and equipped to live and work in a complex and changing world
- encouraged to respect the values of others and take responsibility for themselves and others in school and the wider community
- be skilled in keeping themselves and others safe

Unity: United by the Cross

- encounter the living God who is Jesus Christ revealing his transforming love and truth
- adopt sound moral and ethical values and can contribute positively to society
- be able to manage relationships and situations in a sensitive and productive manner

Opportunity: Potential for greatness

- aspire to be the best they can be.
- achieve their potential in all areas of school life –spiritual, academic, creative, physical and emotional
- grow in self-esteem and resilience and have a sense of social and environmental responsibility

2.4 To help our young people develop, we believe it is important for them to explore their talents and enable them to experience success and fulfil their potential. To this end, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum with a wide range of subjects where learning is organised so there is a sincere ongoing engagement between faith, learning and culture.

2.5 Through the curriculum, in its widest sense, we plan to instil virtues and values into all the students in our care. These virtues stem from the Beatitudes and have been well researched. As Catholics, we recognise the parallel between British values and Christian values - we therefore actively promote our Christian values as British values. This provides the vehicle to prepare students for life in modern Britain

2.6 Students are encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and cultures with respect, embracing and celebrating 'difference' and understand that while different people may hold different views about what is 'right' and 'wrong', all people living in England are subject to its law.

2.7 The Key Values are:

- democracy
- rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- respect of those of different faiths and beliefs

2.8 The Key Virtues are:

- faith
- hope
- love and charity
- temperance
- justice
- solidarity
- wonder
- courage

2.9 We aim to map our values and virtues across the curriculum. To support this, each department has a clear statement of its curriculum intent, implementation and impact. Additionally each department has its own curriculum map.

2.10 Whilst examination outcomes are important, we recognise that there is more to school than just this, it is also a rich and varied 'pool' of extra-curricular activities through the informal curriculum. The extra-curricular offer provides a space to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth in a unique way.

2.11 Our extra-curricular offer will provide students with an opportunity to explore interests and create broader perspectives. This offer will unlock passions in students they never knew they had, diversify their interests and subsequently broaden their view of the world. Our activities will provide opportunities to expand a student's social network working alongside others whilst improving self-esteem and self-confidence. These opportunities will promote fun and provide something else to complement schoolwork. Additionally, the range of opportunities we offer will expose students to 'real world' skills. These skills include (but are not limited to) teamwork, prioritisation, problem solving and leadership

2.12 We recognise that young people have differing needs, gifts and talents and we aim to meet these through a variety of curriculum support and intervention strategies across all year groups, including More and Most Able activities, learning mentors and study support as well as literacy or numeracy intervention programmes.

3.0 Curriculum Implementation

3.1 **Religious Education** is at the foundation of the entire educational process. For this reason, significant time is devoted to its delivery through all Key Stages. At Oaklands, we recognise that young people will be at different places in the spectrum of their faith and spiritual development. Some will belong to the Catholic tradition; others will be of other Christian denominations or other world faiths. Many may have no faith at all. Religious Education implemented through the RE curriculum and all subjects will support all young people in their personal journey. To this end, it offers opportunities for both evangelisation, proclaiming the Gospel message to all and catechesis, the deepening of existing faith commitments among believers, so it is central to all subjects.

Commitment to RE as a percentage of the taught curriculum:

Key Stage 3 (all year groups)	10%
Key Stage 4 (all year groups)	15%
Key Stage 5 (all year groups)	5%

3.2 **Key Stage 3**

- 3.2.1 We believe that Years 7 – 9 are very important building blocks to ensure success in later life. Students will build upon KS2 mastery and acquire skills and knowledge at this stage, which will support their success at Key Stage 4, and beyond irrespective of the pathways they choose
- 3.2.2 Students develop the main key skills of literacy, communication, numeracy, team building as an integral part of the curriculum, together with learning and thinking skills, which allow them to flourish as independent learners. These skills and others are mapped across the curriculum
- 3.2.3 All students follow a core curriculum in Year 7 to 9, which is delivered through a variety of mixed ability and ability grouped teaching with additional literacy and numeracy support for those who need it. All students study a full range of academic and creative subjects, which can be furthered at GCSE if chosen.
- 3.2.4 In the summer term of Year 9 students move to their GCSE options to maintain momentum for learning

3.3 **Key Stage 4**

- 3.3.1 We offer a wide choice of subjects at KS4 so that students can choose from a range of accredited qualifications to suit a range of abilities, interests and learning styles. We recognise that for some students we may have to work closely with other providers to develop a curriculum offer so they achieve their potential - this may be at a cost for some of the key performance indicators, but is in the best interest of the student.
- 3.3.2 At KS4, all students study nine GCSEs. Modern languages continue to be available to all but in September 2021 were moved from a requirement for more able linguists and option for all to an option for all students. This curriculum structure is intended to meet the needs and aspirations of all students and provide choice and progression to post-16 education or training and beyond.
- 3.3.3 We ensure that students follow a balanced curriculum, which will equip them to compete in a rapidly changing world. All students follow courses in English, Maths, Science, RE, History or Geography. Students may opt to study triple science, depending on their aptitude for the subject.
- 3.3.4 Students are allocated additional time for English and Maths as these two subjects provide a foundation for all others (see Table 1 for a full description of the allocation of curriculum time in Years 7 -13).
- 3.3.5 KS4 option blocks are designed around student choice with popular subjects in more than one option block. See Table 2 for the current option offer. Some options with smaller student numbers may be protected to safeguard curriculum balance and support the school ethos, for example Music. See Appendix 1 for the school policy on determining the viability of a group.
- 3.3.6 Subjects studied at KS4 all lead to accredited qualifications and support progression post-16.

3.3.7 Independent careers advice at key points helps to ensure that students are guided to towards the options and pathway which best suits their plans and aspirations. Students in KS4 are set according to academic ability across two bands with flexibility to move within the bands in core subjects. Options subjects are largely mixed ability.

3.4 Key Stage 5

3.4.1 At Key Stage Five, we provide students with the opportunity to follow programmes comprising of mostly A Level and some accredited Level 3 options (see Table 2 for current option offer). Our focus is for our students to develop a greater sense of independence as part of a high challenge, high support community with student voice at its heart.

3.4.2 Students that have demonstrated at Key Stage 4 that they have the potential for further study, are able to choose from a wide range of subjects including both A levels and some vocational courses (subject to demand, viability, staffing, timetabling and individual GCSE grades).

3.4.3 As part of the enrichment and tutorial programme in Years 12 and 13, students follow a curriculum based on careers advice and RSE that provides help, support and independent guidance. This supports every student in their post 18 pathway choice. This includes the selection of Higher Education courses and other alternatives such as high quality apprenticeships.

3.4.4 We consider that wider opportunities in the Sixth Form are essential to the holistic development of our all of our students. Examples of wider opportunities on offer include the various Sixth Form 'Love and Service' initiatives such as: leading as role models and volunteering in the community both inside and outside school, being part of an active academic and pastoral mentoring programme that supports students in Key Stages 3 and 4 as well as being members of the Student Leadership Team representing student opinion and wishes across the school.

3.4.5 We pride ourselves on the level of academic and pastoral support given to our students. The Sixth Form leadership team and specialist form tutors work together to support, encourage and oversee the personal development and academic progress of all of our students in preparation for their individual futures, whether that is entry into the world of work, following an apprenticeship or preparing for university. This also includes bringing in external agencies and speakers.

3.5 Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

The Careers curriculum aims to prepare pupils for the world of work, providing students with the knowledge and understanding, creativity and confidence to be able to make a difference in their own lives and those of others. The Careers programme is delivered as an overlay to the normal curriculum. This includes preparation for work experience which takes place in Year 10. Year 12 and Year 13 also benefit from external careers advisors and opportunities to undertake university visits, industry visits and work placements throughout the year and during Enrichment Week.

3.6 **Challenge Week** takes place each year in June and is an opportunity for pupils in Years 7 to 9 to experience, and benefit from, deep learning events. Each year group has a theme for the week and will explore this from a diverse range of curriculum angles. No child will be excluded from taking part in such activities as a result of financial hardship. Applications for financial assistance are treated individually in line with the school's charging and remissions policy.

3.7 **Enrichment Week** takes place for Year 12 and Year 13 in June (alongside Challenge Week) and provides an opportunity to undertake work related learning and a range of other programmes designed to help equip our students for life beyond Sixth Form.

3.8 **Special Educational Needs**

The School has a Special Educational Needs Policy for those with special educational needs.

3.9 **More and Most Able**

The School has a More and Most Able Policy for more and most able pupils.

3.10 **Looked After Children Policy**

The School has a Looked After Children Policy for those in care.

4.0 Curriculum Impact

4.1 We are ambitious for high achievement and high standards across the school. Success is often described in terms of academic - high outcomes are for everyone. At Oaklands we award and reward students in many ways. As a diverse school community, we believe our students possess unique talents, skills and qualities. As such, they have the right to succeed, the right to recognise their own greatness and the right to develop who they are in a respectful and nurturing environment

4.2 The impact of the curriculum is measured in standards achieved, based against age related expectation, progress made and personal qualities acquired. The impact of our curriculum is seen in:

- High standards: consistently performing at above national.
- Students who are able to promote a Catholic world view
- Progress which builds incrementally year-on-year at a pace and momentum appropriate to the student
- Low levels of NEETs and good throughput to employment, apprenticeships and university
- Quality extra-curricular experiences, which are memorable, worthwhile and challenging.
- Teaching which is rigorous, personalised, innovative and student-centered.
- Students that are resilient, questioning, resourceful, and self-sufficient.
- Self-aware students, with well-formed characters, who have a thirst for learning and see it as a route to maximizing their life chances.

5.0 Means of Measuring Impact

5.1 The curriculum is regularly reviewed, developed, monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher, School Leadership and Management Team, external advisers and Governors, leading to improvements and innovation.

5.2 Heads of Department and subject leaders take responsibility for ensuring coverage, progression and standards through long and medium-term planning, promoting the subject and developing the teaching methodology and securing high quality resources. They regularly monitor and evaluate learning, teaching and the curriculum.

5.3 Planning is detailed, regular and collaborative and prepares teachers so they provide a coherent, personalised learning experience.

5.4 Assessment is both formative and summative and progress and attainment are regularly tracked and reported to parents

Table 1 Curriculum Breakdown by Year Group

Figures relate to number of teaching periods per fortnight

YEAR		RE	English	Maths	Science	Design	MFL	History	Geography	Drama	Music	IT	PDC	PE	Games
7	5	7	6	5	6	4	4	4	4	1	2	1	1	2	2
8	5	7	6	5	5	5	3	4	1	2	2	2	1	2	2
9	5	6	7	6	4	5	4	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	2
		RE	English	Maths	Science	PE	Option X	Option Y	Option Z	PDC					
10	6	8	8	10	2	5	5	5	5	1					
11	6	8	8	10	2	5	5	5	5	1					
12*	8/9	8/9	8/9	8/9	8/9	8/9	2	2	1						
13**	8/9	8/9	8/9	8/9	8/9	8/9	0	2	1						

* Year 12 - Students typically study 3 A Levels in 3 of the 5 option blocks. They all take General Studies, RE and Tutorial.

** Year 13 – Students typically study in 3 of the option blocks. They all take Tutorial and RE

Table 2 Possible Options may include:

KS4	KS5
Business Studies	Religious Studies
Child Development	Business Studies
Design and Technology: Resistant Materials	Biology
Design and Technology: Food and Nutrition	Chemistry
Design and Technology: Electronics	Design and Technology : Product Design
French	Physics
History	History
Geography	Geography
Drama	Theatre Studies
Music	Music
Media Studies	Spanish
Art (Fine Art or Photography)	French
Art (Textiles)	English Language
PE	English Language and Literature
Spanish	English Literature
Computer Science	Media Studies
Separate Sciences	Art (Fine Art or Photography)
NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Sport Studies	PE
Film Studies	Psychology
	Sociology
	Law
	Health and Social Care
	Mathematics
	Further Mathematics
	Economics
	Film Studies
	Politics
	Computer Science

Appendix 1 The Viability of a Course

A1.0 Criteria for Ensuring the Viability of an Option Choice

- A1.1 The possibility that a course may be withdrawn if insufficient numbers is stated in the Options Booklet.
- A1.2 The school is aware that it is not always possible to deliver all of the courses that have been offered. This is due to economic considerations in the main, but also the availability of appropriately skilled staff at the point of entry for students onto the course.
- A1.3 The Headteacher must decide whether the staffing in place at the point of entry for courses is likely to be sustainable through the lifetime of the course. If the staffing is not likely to be sustained then the Headteacher may decide to withdraw a course from the curriculum offer.

A2.0 Guidelines for Evaluating the Viability of a Course

- A2.1 There should be at least ten students enrolled on the course.
- A2.2 In instances where there are fewer than ten, then the following will need to be considered before withdrawing a course:
 - i) Is there a sufficient surplus of staff in this curriculum area to deliver the under-allocated course anyway (without compromising the quality of other curriculum areas)?
 - ii) Would the withdrawal of the under-allocated course at KS4 or KS5 have an impact on the extra-curricular or wider life of the school?
- A2.3 In a situation where i) or ii) apply, the Headteacher may decide to allow the under- allocated course to run.

A3.0 Guidelines for Managing Over-Allocated Courses

- A3.1 Sometimes a course may be over-allocated, ie, it is not possible to accommodate all of the students who have selected a course. This may happen if a particular course has a significantly higher demand than usual and there is insufficient staffing capacity to respond to this. In such instances, the following will need to be actioned.
 - i) Pupil Premium students will be allocated to the course as a priority.
 - ii) The remaining students, who handed their Option Choices Form in on time, will be entered into a ballot and names will be drawn until the full allocation to the course is made. Names will then continue to be drawn to produce a reserve list for the course.
 - iii) Any students who are on the reserve list for the over-allocated course will then be asked to choose another option.
 - iv) Students who did not meet the deadline for returning the Option Choices Form will be asked to choose another option.

- v) However, if there are places still available on the over-allocated course **after the first ballot** has been drawn, then a second ballot will take place formed from students who did not meet the option form deadline. Names will be drawn until the full allocation to the course is made. Names will then continue to be drawn to produce a reserve list for the course. In this scenario, this second reserve list would comprise of those students who did not meet the option form deadline.
- vi) Any students in the second ballot who are on the second ballot reserve list will then be asked to choose another option.