



Backwell School's Approach to the Curriculum

At Backwell School our primary aim is to ensure that all pupils develop the knowledge and skills necessary to play their part in society and live fulfilled and successful lives. We also want them to enjoy their time at school and have opportunities to pursue their interests and ambitions inside and outside of the classroom. We therefore subscribe to the shared strategic aim of the other Lighthouse Schools Partnership (LSP) schools:

LSP Curriculum Aims

1	One which is broad allowing students to acquire a wide body of knowledge across a range of different subjects and extra-curricular activities	All students will be given the opportunity to experience a wide range of different subjects and disciplines.
2	One where students acquire the most powerful knowledge	Each subject will carefully consider and include the most important and challenging content within their discipline.
3	Enabling progress through a carefully sequenced curriculum	This allows key concepts, knowledge and themes to be revisited and built upon with whilst being increasingly challenging. This will need deliberate mapping within each curriculum area.
4	One which builds upon prior learning ensuring that students gain incrementally more complex understanding	With KS2 now being more challenging, our KS3 curriculum needs to reflect this in terms of its demands on students. This requires understanding of what is covered at primary school and how subjects can build upon this.
5	One in which knowledge is remembered long term and which is transferable across differing contexts	Knowing more + remembering more = progress. Subjects have a responsibility to support each other in the delivery of knowledge e.g. maths in science or drama in English.

6	One which is bold and exciting and one in which teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve.	We want students and their teachers to enjoy learning and be ambitious about what they can achieve. This will lead to better outcomes.
7	One which prepares students for life in modern Britain allowing them to make safe, informed and responsible decisions	Ultimately this goal can be seen as acquiring the best qualifications possible however it is also about the wider benefits of a well-constructed curriculum such as effective CIAG, SMSC and PSHE
8	One which develops students into responsible, healthy, kind and ambitious young adults.	We want students to be ready to take an active role as citizens, armed with the resilience, self-respect, tolerance and drive to live a full, successful and positive life.
9	One which enhances the cultural capital of all students.	We want all students to be exposed to some of the key cultural, social and functional knowledge and skills to allow them to fully partake in our modern society.

At Backwell School we intend our curriculum to:

- Help all pupils develop the knowledge and skills necessary to play their part in society and live fulfilled and successful lives.
- Allow all pupils to follow a broad curriculum for as long as possible within a three year Key Stage 3 and two year Key Stage 4 model.
- At the end of Year 11 (and Year 13) pupils to have the qualifications, knowledge and skills to enable progression to the next stage of their education which is appropriate to their needs.
- Be aspirational for all our pupils with the majority following a curriculum with a strong academic core.
- Respect the individuality of different subjects by allowing them to deliver a curriculum of deliberately selected content taught in a sequence which aids understanding and supports progress.
- Provide varied, interesting and engaging opportunities outside of classrooms to enable pupils to secure 'cultural capital' regardless of their background.

This curriculum intent will be implemented in the following ways:

- Each curriculum area will have a clear rationale centered on the type of learner they aspire to produce.
- Curriculum areas are autonomous in producing a curriculum plan for each year group in which they will select the most powerful knowledge for pupils to learn.
- The curriculum will be deliberately sequenced to enable pupils to progress in terms of what they know and what they can do. This will facilitate accurate reporting to parents and carers.
- Meaningful assessment routines are built in to gauge pupil understanding and allow feedback.
- Knowledge retrieval practice is incorporated into plans to ensure that what is learned is also remembered.
- A knowledge rich pedagogical approach delivers the curriculum whereby teachers:
 - Are aware of common misconceptions and ways to help pupils overcome these
 - Emphasise the most powerful knowledge in a bold and exciting way
 - Have the subject knowledge and expertise to make diversions within lessons allowing pupils to understand their learning in a wider context
 - Routinely check for understanding and make adjustments within lessons accordingly
- The extra-curricular offer is made explicit to all pupils whilst ensuring that no group is discriminated against.

The impact of the curriculum is evaluated by:

- Gauging how well pupils are learning the curriculum through:
 - Robust self-evaluation of teaching and learning
 - Analysis of pupil outcomes
 - Pupil perception
 - Analysis of pupil destinations to understand the effectiveness of the curriculum in preparing pupils and students for the next stage of their life

Evaluating the extent to which it positively impacts on the educational experience of different pupil groups particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with SEN

Organisation of the Curriculum

Key Stage 3 is taught from Years 7 - 9 with the exception of science who begin the GCSE syllabus in Year 9. The vast majority of subjects are taught in mixed ability groups with the exception of maths, science and languages.

All pupils at Key Stage 3 study a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish), some study a second foreign language from Year 8 onwards.

The allocation of teaching periods per two week cycle for every subject is shown below:

Subject	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	7	7	7
Maths	7	7	7
Science	7	7	8
One Modern Foreign Language	6	6	6
Two Modern Foreign Languages	n/a	4	3
Art	4	4	4
Design Technology	4	4	4
Performing Arts	3	3	3
Geography	4	5	4
History	5	4	4
ICT	2	1 or 2	1 or 2
Music	3	3	3
Philosophy and Religion (inc PSHE)	4	4	4
PE	4	4	4

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 the following courses are compulsory for all pupils:

- Maths
- English language and English literature
- Combined science or separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- History or Geography
- Core PE (non-examined)
- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural education (non-examined) (SMSCE)

Pupils have as much freedom as possible to choose the courses they want to study, within a process that provides strong and directed information and guidance. Students are encouraged to pursue a 'broad and balanced' curriculum, and the subjects required for the English Baccalaureate are made explicit; pupils are expected to pursue a language at Key Stage 4 unless senior staff specifically guide them otherwise.

At Backwell we are aspirational for all our pupils and believe that GCSE courses are highly suited to the vast majority. Occasionally it is necessary to support pupils with specific needs by designing a more bespoke curriculum which takes into account their starting point and future goals. This is set alongside parents and carers with advice from school leaders.

The Sixth Form

At Key Stage 5, students choose either four or, in most cases, three two-year Level 3 courses. These courses are mainly A Levels but there are also more vocational style courses on offer in Business, Performing Arts, Health and Social Care and Applied Science. Those students taking four subjects will have particularly high prior attainment at GCSE level. Those taking three courses will take an additional qualification at the end of Year 12: for most students this will be the Extended Project Qualification, however is still possible to sit an AS examination in a small number of subjects: Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Music, French, Spanish and German. Students who are yet to reach the required threshold in GCSE Mathematics and English (Language) will join res-sit classes and be re-entered for the examination(s) in November and June until they achieve a standard pass – currently this is a grade 4.

The Wider curriculum

The curriculum taught at Backwell School ensures that all pupils have the time to develop wider knowledge, gain opportunities and skills which will be needed later in life. The academic curriculum is therefore underpinned by the following:

- A tutor and assembly programme which supports the delivery of PSHE
- At KS4 a lesson per fortnight where pupils will be taught about social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues (SMSC)
- A careers offer which allows pupils and students at all stages of their time at Backwell to receive impartial advice and guidance to ensure they are successful at progressing to the next stage
- An enrichment week which offers the opportunity at KS3 for pupils to pursue interests both in an out of school
- A week long work experience for all Year 10 pupils
- A hugely popular and comprehensive extra-curricular programme enabling pupils to take part in:
 - Sports
 - Drama & dance
 - Music
 - Photography
 - Creative writing
 - Debating
 - Computing
 - Outdoor pursuits
 - Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme at bronze, silver and gold level
- The extra-curricular provision is monitored to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils but particularly those with SEN and those who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium

British values in the curriculum

Throughout their time at Backwell School British values will be taught and revisited during many different subjects focusing upon:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

The assembly programme and tutor time reinforces and adds to the issues learned within lessons.