



CURRICULUM POLICY

REVIEW DATE: SPRING 2025

Policy approved by Shadow Governing Committee
on 4th April 2022

Signed by the Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Curley', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Dr Sean Curley

SPRING 2022

THE BRIAN CLARKE CE ACADEMY

c/o The Blue Coat School, Egerton Street, Oldham, OL1 3SQ

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1. Policy Statement

We want all our students to be everything they can be and everything they are meant to be – to be able to live life in all its fullness (John 10.10).

At Brian Clarke all our students enjoy a rich and ambitious curriculum that provides a platform for progression, aspiration and social mobility. There is no ceiling on students' experiences or aspirations. Expectations are the same for all and all routes will lead to recognised qualifications.

Social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development (SMSC) is the golden thread running through all aspects of provision, designed to foster resilience, self-worth, cultural capital, social cohesion and integration.

The breadth of curriculum provision in Years 7-9 enables a large majority of students to take and enjoy the full EBacc at GCSE (Maths, English, Science, History, Geography and a Modern Foreign Language). Religious Studies is also studied to GCSE exposing our students to the rich tapestry of faith and belief.

At Key Stage 4 this will be supported by an Open Pot of subjects and qualifications that enable every student to succeed and progress, with an expectation that all students will take an 'Enterprise' subject option.

Our curriculum extends the school day to create time for enrichment and enhancement to further build social and cultural capital.

The academic, co-curricular and pastoral curriculum ensures pupils leave Brian Clarke as well rounded, informed and resilient young people ready to take their place in the world.

2. Principles that underpin our curriculum design years 7-11

- **Broad** – so that young people gain knowledge and understanding of the **range** of ways in which human beings have understood and found meaning in our world - the best that has been thought, said and created.
- **Deep** – so that as they develop and gain experience, young people understand the concepts which provide structure to human beings' search for meaning and its complexity.
- **Rich** – so that all children and young people can widen their horizons, develop creativity, life experiences, and increase cultural capital.
- **Interconnected** – so that our pupils are able to see links and connections within and across learning, can synthesise new information, tackle complex questions from a range of perspectives and understand that knowledge itself evolves, changes and is contested and dynamic.
- **Progressive** – learning builds on prior experience, gradually deepening understanding and mastery.
- **Relevant** – so that our young people are prepared for the next stage of their education, and for life in modern Britain as good neighbours and citizens: ethically and morally grounded; respectful of others and excited by diversity, compassionate and generous of spirit, and able to lead, build community and do good as they go.

3. Principles for Learning

1. A rigorous and academic curriculum requires **high levels of literacy**. A whole school cross curricular pedagogy to supporting literacy and reading underpins both curriculum design and teaching and learning.
2. **High quality learning time**, where young people are given time to master and apply key disciplinary concepts.
3. An understanding of the **cognitive science** of how students learn – ensuring they can remember and do more, grow in self-motivation and self-management; aiming for fluency and automaticity in key concepts which feature in our curriculum.
4. **Social development and fellowship** - so that our young people look forward to coming to school because there are so many things to be involved in and so many new things to experience.

4. Curriculum Structures

- We run a two week timetable (B and C Week).

- The school day consists of four one-hour lessons and one 50 minute lesson Monday to Thursday. Friday comprises five 50-minute lessons.
- The co-curricular offer runs Monday to Thursday. All students will take one compulsory period 6 per week. The overwhelming majority will take two.

4.1 Times of the school day – Monday to Thursday

| Time of Day | School Activity |
|--------------------|--|
| 07.45am – 08.15am | Breakfast Club Literacy and Numeracy Intervention |
| 08.15am – 08.25am | Registration |
| 08.25am – 09.25am | Lesson 1 |
| 09.25am – 10.25am | Lesson 2 |
| 10.25am – 10.40am | Break |
| 10.40am – 11.40am | Lesson 3 |
| 11.40am – 12.30pm | Lesson 4 |
| 12.30pm – 13.10pm | Lunch |
| 13.10pm – 13.30pm | Registration – Pastoral Curriculum |
| 13.30pm – 14.30pm | Lesson 5 |
| 14.30pm – 15.30pm | Lesson 6 Co-Curricular offer / Homework Club |

4.2 Times of the school day – Friday

| Time of Day | School Activity |
|--------------------|--|
| 07.45am – 08.15am | Breakfast Club Literacy and Numeracy Intervention |
| 08.15am – 08.25am | Registration |
| 08.25am – 09.15am | Lesson 1 |
| 09.15am – 10.05am | Lesson 2 |
| 10.05am – 10.20am | Break |
| 10.20am – 11.10am | Lesson 3 |
| 11.10am – 12.00pm | Lesson 4 |
| 12.00pm – 12.40pm | Lunch |
| 12.40pm – 13.00pm | Registration – Pastoral Curriculum |
| 13.00pm – 13.50pm | Lesson 5 |
| 14.00pm – 16.00pm | Staff Professional Development |

5. Key Stage 3 Curriculum

During Key Stage 3, pupils follow a common curriculum which builds on learning in Key Stage 2 and introduces pupils to new subject disciplines and new levels of understanding.

| | Year 7 Learning sessions per fortnight | Year 8 Learning sessions per fortnight | Year 9 Learning sessions per fortnight |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| English | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| Maths | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Science | 6 | 6 | 9 |
| Religious Studies | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| German | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Geography | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| History | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| PE | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Art | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Drama | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Music | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Design Technology | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Food | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Computing | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Wellbeing/PSHRE | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Citizenship | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Academic Transition Skills | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Duke of Edinburgh | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 50 | 50 | 50 |

5.1 Central aspects of the Key Stage 3 curriculum

5.2 Reading and literacy

A rigorous and academic curriculum requires **high levels of literacy**. A whole school cross curricular pedagogy to supporting literacy and reading underpins both curriculum design and teaching and learning.

The strategies we use draw extensively on those outlined in:

- Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning (2018), EEF.
- Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools (2018), EEF.
- Closing the Vocabulary Gap (2018). Alex Quigley.

All teachers and teaching assistants are trained in the literacy strategy and the components of **reading, oracy** and **writing**, enabling all students to make maximum progress whatever their start point.

Reading: There is a deliberate approach to developing a reading culture at Brian Clarke. This starts at transition. As part of the transition process all year 6 students joining the school are given a copy of Homer's *Odyssey*. This book has been chosen to engage students and has explicit links to the English curriculum they will be meeting in year 7. There is also a structured package of support to ensure all pupils can engage over the summer with the text and tasks associated for example key role models in the school reading aloud a chapter per week which can be accessed through the school's transition section on the website.

Each form in every year group has two 20 minute structured, pre-planned reading activities, led by their form tutor. This reading pathway supports and builds on learning in English lessons.

Disciplinary literacy is embedded across every curriculum area. Subject leads choose texts which both challenge and extend students' reading, modelling how to read and how to deconstruct complex and subject-specific vocabulary.

A well-stocked and resourced library is our focal point to promote reading for pleasure, and age-appropriate scholarly reference materials to contextualise on-line information. A skilled librarian and literacy lead organise competitions that reward, promote and celebrate all aspects of literacy.

Oracy: Staff model for and support students to speak clearly and convey ideas confidently using standard English, enabling students to clarify their thinking as well as organise their ideas for writing.

Writing: Powerwrite is the consistent cross-curricular pedagogy to develop students' fluency in writing and their ability to write for extended periods of time.

5.3 Academic Transition Skills (ATS)

Students have ATS once a week in year 7 and once a fortnight in year 8.

Students come to Brian Clarke from a variety of primary schools. They have been taught a variety of ways and to different levels of depth and confidence to structure extended pieces of writing, learn new vocabulary and analyse texts. It is vital that a consistent approach to these skills is developed so all students understand the language and techniques they will encounter across the secondary curriculum. Lessons in Academic Transition Skills in years 7 and 8 support students with this transition to successfully access the secondary curriculum. Through the topic of History of Medicine in year 7 and History of the Media in year 8 students are taught metacognitive strategies including how to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning; how to effectively summarise information; how to understand and deconstruct new vocabulary, and how to produce extended pieces of writing through the Powerwrite.

The principles of Accelerated Reader (AR) are embedded in the ATS curriculum as part of the rigorous and robust reading strategy where reading is embedded into lessons, form time, and targeted interventions for those who enter year 7 with reading ages below their chronological reading age. A recent (June 2019) study by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) found that students who were offered Accelerated Reader were able to make 3 months' additional progress in reading compared to other similar students. For students eligible for free school meals the figure was 5 months' additional progress.

Each time period across the History of Medicine and History of Media topics includes at least one extract (typically fiction and where possible linked to the AR list of books). Key comprehension tasks are selected in line with the identified learning principles to access these texts and these will be drawn from the AR curriculum and the English department. It also incorporates the 'uninterrupted reading' strategy where the class teacher reads to the pupils. Students have the opportunity to read the whole book through the AR programme and 'quiz', as well as completing reading homework on short stories which they can 'quiz' on.

The internet-based AR software assesses reading age and suggests books that match students' needs and interests. Students then take computerised quizzes on the books and earn AR points as they progress.

5.4 Targeted Literacy and Numeracy Support

As well as the comprehensive universal offer to support students' literacy, The Brian Clarke CE Academy also provides a graduated response for pupils who might require extra support. Students' literacy levels on entry are evaluated through appropriate diagnostics and identified cohorts include:

- Students who have not achieved Age Related Expectations at Key Stage 2 in Reading and Writing.
- Students who score below their chronological age on reading diagnostic tests.
- Students who have not engaged appropriately with the transition task.
- Students identified by teachers as appearing to struggle with accessing texts, articulating ideas, writing.
- EAL students at proficiency levels C and D where there are gaps in inferring, comprehension of more complex curriculum material, structural accuracy, abstract vocabulary and refining English usage.

Interventions are evidenced-based for the relevant diagnostic. They will be bespoke, group based and where necessary, individual student based, dependent upon the child's needs. Interventions will be delivered by a trained member of staff. The structure of the school day and early start 7.45 – 8.15 allows for targeted interventions for low readers. All interventions are age-appropriate, short, frequent and evaluated for impact.

Teachers are advised about appropriate in-class strategies to support the student in class through provision maps. All staff have access to Key Stage 2 student data and are trained in specific pedagogy to support reading and literacy.

For those below age related expectations in Maths we use Hegarty Maths to support students inside the classroom. The learning platform is set up with videos and practice tasks as well as online tasks. Hegarty Maths has content from the primary and secondary curriculums, allowing it to be used at all levels of catch up for students. A parents support evening for catch up students invites parents of targeted students to discuss the curriculum and the support in place.

5.5 Wellbeing (PSHRE)

The Wellbeing curriculum is taught fortnightly by the form tutor. It incorporates all aspects of the DfE statutory framework for [Relationships and Sex Education \(2020\)](#) which outlines what students should know by the end of secondary school to keep them happy, healthy and safe. The curriculum also delivers elements of the [Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance provision \(2021\)](#). Good careers guidance is critical if young people are to raise their aspirations and capitalise on the opportunities available to them and make informed decisions about their future. Statutory areas of learning include:

- different types of relationships including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers and, at secondary school, intimate relationships.
- how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others; commitment, tolerance.
- boundaries and consent; how to manage conflict; and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships.
- how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health.
- healthy relationships and safety online.
- factual knowledge around sex, sexual health and sexuality.
- healthy bodies and lifestyles including keeping safe, puberty, drugs and alcohol education.
- healthy minds including emotional wellbeing, resilience, mental health.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them, for example looked after children or young carers. Staff are also mindful that a particular need may leave a young person more vulnerable to exploitation and therefore preparation for adult life will be particularly important.

The intent of the wellbeing curriculum is to prepare our young people for happy and healthy lives in which they will make a positive contribution to the 21st Century community through:

- Helping students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Equipping students who are members of distinct faith communities to take their place in a rapidly changing and challenging world.
- Providing a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place; preparing students for puberty and giving them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Creating a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teaching students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

The curriculum is pro-active in teaching our students the core values that support healthy lifestyles and allow them to nurture respectful relationships. The nature of the subject content means that the subject is constantly evolving to ensure that we meet the specific needs of the individuals and groups of students within a given year group. Each

scheme of work equips our young people with the skills, knowledge and personal resilience to make safe and informed choices.

Our Wellbeing curriculum is also informed by [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2021\)](#) and [Ofsted's Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children in Schools and Colleges \(2021\)](#)

5.6 Citizenship

Students have one hour per week of Citizenship in years 7 and 8.

The Citizenship curriculum promotes British Values and provides students with the knowledge and skills to play a full and active part in society. Students learn about human rights, democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld; the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities.

Through the curriculum teachers ensure students have the skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments.

Through units on Active Citizenship students are provided with meaningful opportunities to understand how to be responsible, active citizens who contribute positively to society. When exploring contemporary issues students learn how to contribute to informed debate and the importance of respect and tolerance when others might hold different views to themselves.

6. Religious Studies (RS)

The Brian Clarke Church of England Academy is a Church of England school with a distinctive Christian ethos that welcomes young people of all faiths and none. Part of our ethos, the way that we do things, is that all students study Religious Studies in every year up to GCSE.

This is not religious instruction in any faith. It involves learning about religions and world perspectives on the big moral and ethical challenges that human beings face – human rights, discrimination, persecution, war, our relationship with the natural world and the rights of animals. All faiths are equally respected and represented. Through a developing understanding of faith and non-faith perspectives RS encourages students to explore and develop their own spirituality and search for meaning and direction in life.

The subject is taught by specialists, and the curriculum enhanced by the contributions of representatives of different faith communities, and particularly the 5 main faiths in the Greater Manchester area – Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. The curriculum in years 7-9 is the [Manchester Diocesan-approved syllabus](#) which also includes the non-religious world views of humanism, secularism, and agnosticism, so that students understand the range of thinking and philosophies by which different human beings seek to make meaning of the world. All students take GCSE.

The science curriculum teaches evolution in full. Sometimes students will ask about creationism in Religious Studies. All discussion is encouraged. What we teach students is that this creationism is not a valid scientific theory and is not held by mainstream churches/faiths.

Students' work in Religious Studies will be exhibited prominently and we are very happy to discuss the curriculum and the materials we use with parents.

7. The Co-Curricular Offer (Period 6)

Enrichment and the co-curriculum are integral to Brian Clarke. We want our students to enjoy the opportunities provided by the very best schools, so that our young people grow in learning, skills, experience and confidence, and develop their whole self in a fully multi-cultural environment where they interact authentically with a wide range of students, and experts/coaches from the wider community.

The enrichment curriculum is delivered through an extended school day with a Period 6 timetabled for every Monday-Thursday. All students take part in at least one activity through the Home-School Agreement and the majority take part in two. Where children already take part in extra-curricular activities (sporting teams, bands, church and faith activities) in the evening, we discuss with parents whether one Period 6 is more appropriate.

All students take at least one nationally accredited co-curricular qualification during their five years at the school, e.g. the Duke of Edinburgh Award; a CREST Award; national Maths or Computing Challenges, or Young Engineers; National Enterprise Project or National Citizen Scheme/#iwill; or a grade in a musical instrument/voice; or compete at a high level in a school team for sport/debating/public speaking/chess.

8. Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Development (SMSC)

Character education and SMSC are the golden thread running through all aspects of curriculum provision. Grouping arrangements, seating plans and learning strategies ensure that students from all backgrounds work together authentically. The school curriculum and ethos will directly address faith and shared values to build mutual understanding and respect. An extended school day, which builds in rich co-curricular provision, ensures structured opportunities outside of the classroom to work in wider groupings of students and to foster social cohesion and integration, alongside the personal qualities of creativity, resilience and leadership.

Spiritual development is at the heart of Religious Studies and worship/assembly. Our aim is to develop a mature spirituality which sees the commonalities in values across all the great faiths - loving your neighbour and becoming a responsible steward of the world given to us. The taught curriculum aims to build a love of learning, and develop awe and wonder in learning about the world and how humanity has sought to understand and make meaning.

Students' moral education is developed through the practices and behaviours of the school – the emphasis on personal responsibility, kindness and generosity of spirit, mutual respect and active citizenship, all modelled by staff, by the ethos of the school and by the emphasis we place on community at a local, national and international level. We commit to charitable endeavour and doing good as we go.

Students' social education comes through the emphasis on active and collaborative learning; the centrality of oracy and communication; the investment in a wide co-curricular provision and ensuring that students take part, try new things, meet new people; student representation through a Student Leadership Team drawn from each year group with formal termly meetings with senior staff and consultations on school policy development, and our commitment to active citizenship in school and in the wider community. All these behaviours embed British values of democracy, mutual respect and the rule of law.

Students' cultural education comes through the breadth and richness of the curriculum and co-curricular provision; the exposure to resources in school, both in the library and on-line; living and learning in a well ordered, light, vibrant environment, which celebrates the arts and creativity; the diversity of the school population and how that is celebrated in school; the opportunities and encouragement and (where necessary) the financial support provided by the school to enable all students to visit museums, galleries, cities, the theatre, universities, different places including a residential.

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

An ambitious curriculum is supported by an effective and responsive CEIAG curriculum to ensure that all young people have the knowledge they need to make informed choices about their future. The Brian Clarke Church of England Academy is committed to providing a well-planned and resourced programme of CEIAG that endeavours to reflect the [Department for Education \(2017\) 'Careers strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents'](#) which placed the eight Gatsby Career Benchmarks at its heart.

A progressive CEIAG is mapped throughout the five years students are with us and embedded across all curriculum areas. When sequencing curriculums, subjects will plan for and signpost opportunities that link to careers. We use tutor time and the Unifrog platform which has access to videos and resources to showcase all elements of CEIAG to enable students and staff to record their 'encounters' and 'experiences' to build career profiles. Tutor time, Wellbeing lessons and assemblies will support CEIAG provision at key points in the academic year.

Our intention is to normalise the language of university and advanced apprenticeships from year 7, building links with local universities and companies in the Greater Manchester region to ensure our young people are inspired and encouraged to make aspirational choices which are right for them. Our enterprise offer in Key Stage 4 will build on students' broad and deep learning in Key Stage 3 and enable our young people to start to prepare for progression

routes at Technical/Applied/Apprentice level, as well as traditional A-Levels. The enrichment provision delivered in Period 6 will involve adults from the wider community who will reinforce aspiration and provide positive role models.

All students in years 10-11 will have 1:1 discussions and bespoke careers advice on progression through 16-18 and beyond.

An independent careers adviser will be contracted through Positive Steps to support the school's careers strategy and guidance interviews. Links with external agencies such as the Careers and Enterprise Company will be utilised to provide targeted opportunities (particularly SEN) for our students.

10. Duke of Edinburgh

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is one of the main ways in which we help young people to develop skills for life and work, fulfil their potential, and become a good and responsible citizen, and leader in our society. It involves developing a skill, which builds commitment and confidence; volunteering, and making a positive difference to the lives of others; and planning for and undertaking an expedition, which requires teamwork, listening and consideration, self-reliance, and some stoicism. On the way students also learn a range of very practical skills, including map skills, basic first aid, cooking and outdoor risk management.

In year 9 all students will work towards achieving the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. Large numbers of students then go on to complete their Silver Award (year 10) as an extra-curricular activity.

The course is fully inclusive; appropriate adjustments are made so that all students can participate. The award is highly regarded by both employers and universities.

11. Worship and Reflection

Assembly, worship and reflection brings us together as a community to reflect on what is important and how we treat one another as members of a shared moral community where people are all valued as individuals. All students attend two acts of collective worship per week one is led by the Trust Chaplain/ School Senior Leaders. The other takes place during Form Time.

Assemblies are therefore a key vehicle for pastoral care, as much as spirituality, reinforcing the messages which are central to young peoples' development as kind and respectful people who can care for themselves and one another, and whose lives are enriched by a spiritual dimension.

Assemblies reflect on:

- Doing the right thing for the right reasons.
- The importance of intention – why it is wrong to use others.
- Developing character – integrity, honesty, courage, generosity and fairness.
- Understanding that people of faith believe that God loves us all, and for Christians the sacrifice made by Jesus shows that this love has no limits.

Assemblies address these issues through real-life examples using stories, multi-media, and the Gospels. Each assembly has a period for quiet reflection, which may involve listening to a prayer, or a piece of music, or simply a period of silence and stillness. At key points in the year, leaders of other faiths take assembly, supported by the Trust's Chaplain, e.g. the Mufti takes assemblies for Ramadan.

The collective assemblies of year groups are complemented by form reflection which follows the same themes and is supported by materials prepared by the chaplaincy team so that students are all included and involved.

Appendix 1: Curriculum Maps

| |
|----------------------------|
| English |
| Maths |
| Science |
| Religious Studies |
| MFL |
| Geography |
| History |
| PE |
| Art |
| Drama |
| Music |
| Design Technology |
| Food |
| Computing |
| Wellbeing/PSHRE |
| Citizenship |
| Academic Transition Skills |
| Duke of Edinburgh |