



This Policy is an overarching document setting the context within which specific and detailed policies in relation to the curriculum in both Junior and Senior Schools are implemented.

This should be read in conjunction with:

- Junior School policies on English Language, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Expressive Arts, Science, Technology, PSD [PSHE], RME, Active Learning and Forward Planning
- Senior School subject-specific curriculum detail contained within each Departmental Handbook
- Whole School Policies on Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Language and Health & Wellbeing to be developed in the context of ACfE.

All curriculum-related policies are effectively under review in the context of ACfE and the National Consultation on the Next Generation of National Qualifications.

## **Senior School**

### **Rationale**

This section establishes the current nature of the Senior School Curriculum at Belmont House within the context of the School's Aims and the Rationale for the Secondary School Curriculum set out in Section 2 of the document *Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages: Guidelines for Schools* published by SCCC in 1999.

The current curricular frameworks for Transitus & Senior 1, Senior 2 & 3 and Senior 4-6 are detailed in the context of the current Timetable and the breadth, balance, coherence, continuity and progression that we offer. Aspects of our curricular framework that require audit, and thus may prove to require further development, are highlighted and the processes by which monitoring and evaluation take place are also outlined.

### **Current Curriculum**

The School operates on the basis of a 30 Period teaching week, with each period being of 55 minutes duration. It is School Policy that the Timetable at Transitus & Senior 1 allows the facility for setting. The basis of that setting is determined by discussion between the Principal Teachers concerned.

- **Transitus – S1**

Transitus are considered to be part of the Senior School and are taught by subject specialists for virtually all of their subjects. Although the percentage allocation of time to Environmental Studies is 5% less than the recommended minimum it is felt that the additional allocation of time to Language, Mathematics & Expressive Arts is justified.

The period & percentage time allocation currently given to each of the 5-14 Curricular areas within the Transitus-Senior 1 Curriculum have been calculated and are available from the Senior Vice-Principal



The Transitus & S1 timetable allows for setting in English, Mathematics and French, with rotation arrangements employed for other subjects vary from year to year. Some paired rotations are set

according to ability and some with respect to social groupings. Full details are available from the Senior Vice-Principal.

Rotation arrangements help to address the number of subjects and teacher contacts pupils at these levels experience. The introduction of Certificate classes (Standard Grade or Higher Still) at S2 level was commenced in session 0506 but has been discontinued with effect from August 2009 in the light of the anticipated outcome of the Consultation on the Next Generation of National Qualifications in Scotland [June-October 2008]. Senior 2 pupils in August 2009 will NOT have made subject choice and will commence study of Standard Grade work in all of their subjects prior to making subject choice during 0910 in preparation for Senior 3 in August 2010.

- **Senior 2 & 3**

The Senior 2 & 3 Curriculum builds upon the learning experiences of Transitus & Senior 1, giving our pupils opportunities to study at greater depth while still providing breadth and balance to the curriculum. It is School Policy that wherever possible the timetable is constructed to meet the wishes of the pupils and their parents in relation to subject choice rather than the pupils fitting a pre-determined timetable. The curriculum offered offers our pupils the opportunity for greater depth of study in seven of the eight curricular modes within the modal framework detailed in Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages: Guidelines for Schools. All pupils at this level have classes in Personal & Social Development as detailed in the School Policy Document for PSD and School Assembly is also considered to be important. There is a formal allocation of time within the Curriculum to facilitate delivery of PSD, which will be referred to as PSHE from August 2009.

All pupils in Senior 2 usually study eight Standard Grade or Intermediate 1 / 2 subjects, with English, Mathematics, and French & Computing being compulsory. Pupils have a free choice of subjects that ultimately determines the composition of the other four columns of the Senior 2 Timetable.

All pupils in Senior 2 & 3 have compulsory Physical Education as part of their Curriculum and it is normal for all pupils to study at least one Science subject and one Social Science. Therefore, all pupils will engage in activities which meet the requirements of the Language & Communication, Mathematical Studies & Applications, Scientific Studies & Applications, Social & Environmental Studies, Technological Activities & Applications and Physical Education Modes. However, it is not compulsory for a pupil to study either Art or Music at this level, although many pupils may opt to do either or both.

- **Senior 4-6**

Our Senior 4-6 Curriculum builds upon the learning experiences of the preceding years, giving our pupils opportunities to study at greater depths associated with increasing specialisation while still providing breadth and balance to the curriculum. In keeping with the School Aim of providing an individualised and flexible educational experience it remains School Policy at this level that wherever possible the timetable is constructed to meet the wishes of the pupils and their parents in relation to subject choice rather than the pupils fitting a pre-determined timetable. The eight



curricular modes within the modal framework detailed in Curriculum Design for the Secondary Stages: Guidelines for Schools cannot be represented in our Senior 4-6 Timetable but wherever possible our pupils are encouraged to select their courses of study to reflect a broad and balanced curriculum. All pupils are

encouraged to pursue their study of English beyond Standard Grade and the vast majority undertake the study of Intermediate 2 or Higher Mathematics. All Senior 4-6 pupils have compulsory Physical Education as part of their Curriculum.

Pupils in Senior 4 & 5 currently have the opportunity to study a maximum of six subjects within the normal timetable, with presentation for higher at the conclusion of Senior 5 after two years of study. Some students are presented for Intermediate 2 examinations at the end of Senior 4 after one year of study, followed by a one year programme of study towards higher presentation in Senior 5 and, in very exceptional and individual circumstances, a few students may be presented for a Higher at the conclusion of Senior 4. Students in Senior 6 study a mixture of AH and Higher subjects.

The philosophy throughout the School, but particularly at Senior 4-6 level, is to offer a curriculum that has as its priority meeting the needs of each individual student.

### **Junior School**

The full Junior School Curriculum can be found in separate policy documents as outlined above, which detail the content and operation of each curricular area. This allows any interested party to see the content of the curriculum as well as the progression and continuity.

The Junior School follows, in the main, the same 30 period week as the Senior School as there are a number of Senior School departments who have input to the Junior School curriculum.

The curriculum currently follows the broad framework of the 5-14 programme but the principles underpinning A Curriculum for Excellence are firmly established. The Curriculum is broad and brings the pupils into contact with the five current curricular areas - Language, Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Expressive Arts, and Religious, Moral and Health Education. The various curricular areas reinforce one another and secondary subject specialists teach some of the subjects.

In the Nursery and Junior School the class teacher, through cross-curricular topics, covers most of the curriculum. In addition specialist Senior School staff also have an input to the overall curriculum as follows:

<p><u>Nursery level</u> 1 period of PE 1 period of Music</p>	<p><u>Junior 1 &amp; 2</u> 2 periods of PE 1 period of Computing 1 period of Music 1 period of French</p>
<p><u>Junior 3 &amp; 4</u> 2 periods of PE 1 period of Computing 1 period of Music</p>	<p><u>Junior 5 &amp; 6</u> 2 periods of PE 1 period of Computing [2 periods in Junior 6] 1 period of Music</p>



1 period of Art 1 period of French	1 period of Art 1 period of French
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In reality the periods specified are the minimum that would be taught at each stage and only reflects the formal input of specialist teachers. Most of the curriculum i.e. English, Mathematics and Environmental Studies are taught by the class teacher and aspects of the full curriculum spread are often visited in cross-curricular activities.

### **Overall Review**

It is the responsibility of the Principal and Senior Vice-Principal to review on an on-going basis the breadth & balance of the Curriculum within the Senior School and, in conjunction with the Vice-Principal [Head of Junior School], the Junior School Curriculum. This must encompass, amongst other issues, the overall period allocations at Junior School, Transitus & Senior 1 levels, Senior 2 & 3 levels and Senior 5 & 6 levels, and, in addition, an overview of the breadth and balance of individual pupil choices in Senior 2-6.

A Curriculum Sub-Committee of the SMT, comprising the Principal, Senior Vice-Principal, Vice-Principal [Head of Junior School] & Vice-Principal [Director of Studies & Pastoral Care] will be re-constituted for Session 0910 to review the structure, development and administration of the Timetable in the context of ACfE and the changes to National Qualifications. The Vice-Principal [Director of Studies & Pastoral Care] is primarily responsible for all routine administration of curricular matters in relation to the SQA whilst the Principal and Senior Vice-Principal are responsible for the development of the Curriculum and the quality of Departmental Handbooks and Improvement Plans. The Senior Vice-Principal is responsible for the construction and operation of the Timetable.