

CURRICULUM POLICY

At the foundation of the college, the curriculum was based on the statutory curriculum for Northern Ireland, and also strongly reflected input from the founding parents.

The curriculum has been revised regularly, in the light of statutory requirements, requirements of examination boards and in the light of our growing understanding of learning experiences appropriate to an Integrated environment.

Our curriculum was designed when the school was very small and growing very fast. Consultation with NISCE before the school opened confirmed the principle of offering students only those experiences we can offer well. This principle stands us in good stead during times of budgetary constraint.

The current curriculum for KS3 continues to reflect the statutory NI curriculum and is designed to give students as broad, challenging, exciting and coherent a learning experience as possible.

The current curriculum for KS4 was designed to meet the requirements of the Entitlement Framework of 24 subjects at GCSE level and 27 at A level. In managing our curriculum offer during the current period of budgetary restraint, we have noted the recommendation of the then Minister of Education, Peter Weir, that we focus on 21 subjects at each level. We very much regret the loss of any subject, and note that the reason for contraction, as in all schools, is a matter of funding. No subject is withdrawn from our curriculum permanently on the basis of not being selected in any one year.

The Entitlement Framework also requires that at least one third of our subjects be offered as applied subjects, and we have balanced this requirement with students' requirements to study the subjects in the versions most likely to serve their purpose in making applications to higher education.

We continue to provide a full academic offer alongside applied and vocational courses, and all subjects are open to all students, subject to their personal choices, career goals and the advice of their teachers.

We continue to be committed to all-ability education.

We acknowledge the value of Shared Education, and remain open to shared classes as appropriate. We have had links with: SERC; RNID; distance learning providers.

We aim to instil in our students a love of autonomous learning, in empathy with other learners. We aim to offer a curriculum that challenges and supports every learner.