

Annual Accountability Agreement

1. Purpose

St Brendan's Catholic Sixth Form College is a diverse, inclusive and aspirational community in which each individual is valued and supported to achieve. We are the only Sixth Form College in the city and the largest provider of academic qualifications. We specialise in sixth form education, primarily A-levels and applied general courses for 16 to 19 year olds. We believe that we can help all students succeed, whatever their starting points or backgrounds, so we also offer courses at level two for students who may need additional time with us before they progress to Level 3 education either at St Brendan's or another educational provider in the City, apprenticeship or employment.

The College has 6 strategic ambitions which are as follows:

- *Strategic Ambition 1:* The College's environment and its ethos reflect Catholic values and gives support to students and staff so that they thrive and flourish;
- *Strategic Ambition 2:* The curriculum meets local and national needs and priorities, is expertly delivered and delivers outstanding outcomes;
- *Strategic Ambition 3:* Students benefit from high quality pastoral support, have a range of opportunities to develop their skills and progression outcomes are outstanding;
- *Strategic Ambition 4:* The College benefits from strong leadership, and fit for purpose staffing structures with innovative professional development opportunities, and where all members of staff are supported and valued;
- *Strategic Ambition 5:* Productive relationships are established with a range of stakeholders, and the college has a good local, regional and national reputation;
- *Strategic Ambition 6:* The College remains financially secure, and the estate meets curriculum and community needs and services are highly efficient.

2. Context and Place: The communities we serve

The profile of the College's student body is distinct from that of many other Sixth Form Colleges: the prior attainment of students is lower than average, whilst levels of disadvantage are considerably higher. Developing our students' skills, so that they may progress successfully to the next stage of their education and career, is therefore key to addressing social disadvantage. For our sixth form students, we focus on progression to HE, apprenticeships and further training. Our sixth form curriculum is geared towards that objective and, as such, emphasises ambitious academic teaching, combined with a strong personal development and support programme that prepares students for both university and for adulthood.

We offer a range of A levels and Applied General Qualifications at level 3. We also offer a bespoke 'Access to Level 3' course which provides students with a second chance to attain a grade 4 in English and Mathematics GCSE before progressing to Level 3. At Level 3, 56.4% of our learners choose to follow a mixed programme of study which is a combination of A levels and Applied General courses; 39.4% follow a purely A level pathway and 4.2% follow a vocational pathway.

The College is inclusive and accessible to local 16-17 year olds. Our subject entry requirements are lower when compared to others locally. As of September 2022 our average GCSE points score for A level was 6.1 and 5.5 for our Applied General pathway. 7.6% of our students were in receipt of free school meals; 19.6% of our students were eligible for pupil premium in year 11 and 12.1% of our

students are receipt of the college bursary. The proportion of our students from black and minority ethnic background was just over 24%. There are a small number of students with Education & Health Care plans (EHCP) and/or High Needs, and a large number of students with Exam Access and/or additional learning support needs.

Our work at St Brendan's focuses on progressing a large proportion of our students to Higher Education and then to employment or Higher level apprenticeships. In doing so we meet both the local and national skills priority to educate beyond NVQ level 4+ and to address graduate employment. The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) have a relentless focus on ensuring that all young people achieve their potential and we make a significant contribution to that objective.

Approach to developing the Plan

Our Curriculum is driven by national and local intelligence about progression routes for 16-18 year olds, this is derived from interaction with the Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA), the Association of Colleges (AOC), the Wessex Group and also our engagement with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). Members of the College Principalship are on the AOC Strategic Policy Group and the SFCA's Governance Group and ASCL National Sixth Form Advisory Group. The Principal is also involved in the creation of the Post 16 strategic plan for Bristol and Co-chairs the Wider Bristol Post-16 network. Our curriculum offer is also informed by our students and the work which we do with universities in the region.

The Local Skills plan has been created by the West of England combined authority(WECA), this covers the three geographical areas of Bath & Northeast Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Our college works with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) in a variety of ways to support meeting skills needs in the region, including;

- Working with an appointed Enterprise Advisor
- Sharing labour market intelligence to inform our curriculum planning and careers guidance education
- Member of the Cornerstone Group which comprises of a group of employers who support and deliver careers outreach into schools
- Sharing resources for example, Green sector LMI, careers information adapted for SEND and EAL students
- STEM Ambassadors Hub
- Training for governors

Moving forward the College is will be working with WECA through different working groups on how it can support emerging skills needs both locally and regionally.

Contribution to National, Regional and Local Priorities

At St Brendan's we constantly keep our curriculum under review. Over the years, we have adopted and designed new curricula to better meet the identified skills in the region. In addition to the teaching of exam-board specifications, we incorporate skills-based teaching, both in an academic sense and in terms of wider skill development

Contribution to Meeting Skills Needs Through Our Curriculum Offer and Intent

The following is a list of skills challenges identified through the West of England Annual Skills Report (January 2022) and inform our curriculum planning and intent;

- Employers struggling to recruit and facing skills gaps
- Educational attainment in schools, particularly for disadvantaged children
- NEET levels in parts of the areas and for SEND and Children in Care/Care Leavers
- Lower than average progression to higher level learning
- Low awareness of apprenticeships
- Geographical inequalities and deprivation

Education Programmes for Young People

Through the curriculum intent and implementation of our education programmes for young people, we make a very positive contribution to the following identified local and regional skills sector priorities:

- Software, IT and Digital
- Health Care and Social Care
- Finance, Public Service Professionals and Business
- Engineering, and Aerospace
- Green Skills

How does our curriculum meet national, regional and local economies?

- Introduction of Criminology Diploma and two pathways for Law, Applied General and A level.: *(Priority: Professional and legal services)*
- Introduction of BTEC Human Biology *(Priority: Healthcare)*
- Wide breadth of business courses that we offer. This includes Level 2 BTEC Business, Level 2 BTEC Business First Extended Certificate and Level 3 BTEC Business Diploma and A level Business and A level Accountancy *(Priority: Financial Sector)*
- BTEC Health and Social Care *(Priority Health Care and Social Work)*
- STEM based courses in Biology, Physics and Chemistry, Maths and Further Maths *(Priority STEM; Engineering)*
- Computing A level and BTEC IT *(Software development)*

The National Employer Skills Survey shows that employers in the West of England are finding it hard to recruit to higher skilled occupations. The skills needs/gaps included basic skills, digital skills, operational skills as well as complex analytical skills. Local employer survey data found the top 5 most important skills needed with a business were: communication, team working, customer service, problem solving, numeracy and analytical.

Leaders are clear about how they are contributing to these skills needs through both the curriculum intent, wider curriculum and its implementation. The curriculum is planned effectively so that students learn the skills they need for university, work and for later life.

Aim/Target Outcome for 2022/23	Impact and Contribution to Strategic Aims, Skills and Priorities for improvement
To continue to build and develop an employability and skills programme, especially for our Applied General courses	To ensure that our students have experience of work and have developed key employability skills that specific sectors require.
<p>To maintain and update our curriculum offer, especially in the light of applied general reform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review alternative qualifications the Extended Certificate in Applied Human Biology • Review our alternative qualifications for our Cambridge Technical Diploma in Health and Social Care (VRQ) • Review alternative qualifications for our BTEC National Extended Certificate in Applied Law • Review alternative qualification for our WJEC Criminology • Review alternative qualifications for BTEC National Diploma in Business 	The Applied General qualifications that are being defunded in 2025, directly impact on skills needed for WECA and West of England LEP priorities. We are committed to providing a route into these employment and university routes by providing alternative high quality vocational qualifications. This will ensure that our students can take a mixed programme of study, one that consists of A levels and Applied General Qualifications.
To further develop our employer engagement programme across curriculum areas and key identified skills areas in the West of England.	Further develop our employer engagement to ensure a stable programme of high quality interactions, including a minimum 2 encounters with employers and work experience opportunities. This is essential to meet all of the Gatsby Benchmarks
Develop opportunities for work experience for our students with High Needs and EHCPs	EHCP and High Needs students have individualized progression action plans and appropriate CEIAG. The impact of this will be that all EHCP and High

	needs students' progress into education or employment with improved employability skills and an understanding of the local labour market
To ensure that St Brendan's works with WECA working group through the FE College Principals meeting	This will shape curriculum planning which will can be achieved collectively so that our 16-19 offer meets West of England priority needs and WECA priorities and to develop areas of collaboration.
To further develop opportunities for students whose aim is not higher education.	This will ensure that our students who are not aiming for higher education and have meaningful engagement with the world of work before they leave College.

3. Co-operation Statement

On behalf of St Brendan's Sixth Form College corporation, it is hereby confirmed that the college plan as set out above reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the cooperation on the meeting of 30th March 2023.

The plan will be published on the College website within three months of the start of the new academic year.