



## **Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College**

### **Curriculum Statement of Intent 2019**

Notre Dame is a Catholic Sixth Form College inspired by the Christian tradition and holds at the centre of our ethos the dignity and uniqueness of each person. As a Catholic Sixth Form College, we strive to be a centre of educational excellence for the community built on faith, hope and love. We celebrate diversity amongst all our students and staff, and we seek to nurture the gifts of each individual through high quality teaching, learning and providing extensive individual support to enable each student to achieve their full potential.

At Notre Dame we are committed to ensuring that all of our students have access to experiences that enable them to progress and succeed. We want to challenge and motivate our students to build their skills and level of commitment so that they feel confident and able to compete with the very best in any sector. By providing students with opportunities to develop their skills, increase their confidence and resilience, raise their aspirations and broaden their awareness of careers and employability skills, we are able to motivate and inspire our students to be ambitious and to have an ethos of high aspiration to help each of them reach their potential.

The College will ensure each student develops employability skills, has access to work related experiences and broaden their awareness of careers and the world of work, to ensure they have the skills to compete in an increasingly competitive recruitment market and for students to realise their potential.

The curriculum is reviewed at least annually in response to developments in local environment, government educational strategy, student and industry need. We aim to develop skills relevant to students' learning programme, their everyday lives and their plans for their next steps.

Notre Dame is predominantly a provider of Advanced Level with some Applied General Qualifications at Level 3. Around 95% of students are enrolled onto Level 3 courses of which approx 65% are on an academic pathway, with approx 30% on a mixed programme of A Level and Applied General pathway. The college also offers a small Level 2 Programme of Study with approx 6% of students enrolled. All students who are yet to achieve a grade 4 in GCSE English Language and Maths are required to study GCSE English Language and GCSE Maths until they secure the required grade. The College provides a one-year Level 2 Programme of Study for those students who have not quite met the entry for a level 3 Programme of Study. The focus of this programme is to provide a pathway to Level 3. The College is situated in inner-Leeds recruiting just over 50% of students who reside in disadvantaged postcodes.

At Notre Dame we recognise the importance of supporting students throughout their studies including through times of difficulty. Our fundamental belief in Christian virtues is lived through this support which is both pastoral and academic, to reflect the students' needs throughout their study with us. Students with a learning need or disability have a bespoke learning support programme to support their studies. All students undertake a learning support diagnostic at the beginning of their

programme of study to ensure any learning needs can be quickly identified and support put into place. The learning support department also offers cross college support throughout the academic year which staff can either refer students to or students can self-refer, as and when it is needed. This includes bespoke study skills and subject specific workshops. Student support is also through the pastoral system which supports students on a daily basis from a College Counsellor, Catholic Care Social Worker and a designated pastoral support member of staff. At every stage we work with students to develop their resilience, courage and perseverance to help each student to fully access their education.

**All study programmes** are designed to ensure students develop an awareness of the skills and qualities needed for employment in their specific field. Each student has a coherent Programme of study which includes 3 or sometimes 4 subjects, Philosophy, Theology & Ethics (PTE), Tutorial in which employability skills, Prevent and British Values are embedded and Notre Dame Plus (ND+), in which all subject support and subject enrichment takes place.

Students are offered extensive CIAG from pre-application through to completion of their programme of study to equip students with the skills, knowledge and qualifications needed to progress onto positive destinations. Students can choose from a choice of 28 A Level qualifications and 8 Level 3 Applied General qualifications. We also offer a Level 2 Notre Dame Pathway for students who have not quite achieved the Level 3 entry requirements, where students can choose from four subjects. All students have the opportunity to add EPQ to their timetable. The emphasis is on ensuring the study programme meets the needs and aspirations of each student, therefore there is a great deal of flexibility when putting together a study programme.

Through the classroom students studying an Applied General qualification gain the theory and through dedicated work experience or industry placement of two weeks or more, students will gain the skills employers are looking for. All A Level students are provided with work experience opportunities which they record in their ILP on Cedar. Level 2 students have one week of work experience as part of their programme of study.

### **Notre Dame Plus (ND+)**

Personal development, enrichment and employability skills are embedded throughout each subject curriculum area. The college is committed to providing for students' broader development, enabling them to discover their interests and talents. Each student will have at least one block of ND+ on their timetable where they are actively involved or working independently. ND+ includes subject specific support to ensure students are acquiring and developing high-quality skills to produce work of a consistently high standard. ND+ will also offer subject linked enrichment to develop each students' 'love of learning' but to also further develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners need in order to take advantage of the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that prepare them for their next stage in education, training or employment. ND+ will also provide numerous opportunities to enrich learning including: visiting speakers from industry and Higher Education, preparation for entrance exams to Medicine, Veterinary Science, Dentistry and Law, external visits to industry, specialist subject visits including Cern, participation in many subject specific enrichment activities for example Maths Challenge, Royal Society of Biology Olympiad and our Futures programme which is partnered with many local Universities. ND+ will also provide opportunities for students to experience enrichment outside of their subject area including various societies, clubs and both national and international trips.

**Philosophy, Theology & Ethics.** Notre Dame is not just about gaining qualifications and passing exams. We also believe in the importance of encouraging spiritual and moral growth, and developing important core skills and knowledge which add to the breadth of education. In our Catholic college, General RE which we call PTE (Philosophy, Theology and Ethics) is a key part of the core curriculum and all students, in both lower sixth (L6) and upper sixth (U6), are expected to attend a one-hour weekly session.

PTE stands for Philosophy, Theology and Ethics. It is an exploration of faith programme that aims to give post-16 students an opportunity to reflect on the deeper questions of life, such as who we are, why we are here, and how we want to live our lives and conduct our relationships. The emphasis in the lessons is on active participation and learning from each other, and, on occasion, visiting speakers. The importance of PTE lies in two main areas. The first is that it augments and supports the distinctive ethos of the College; that we are a community which puts the human being at the centre of all we do, helping to develop values, attitudes and character separately from the main examination subjects. The second is that PTE is the only lesson where the students can meet people outside their chosen subjects, thus allowing them to develop wider relationships and encouraging inclusivity and understanding among our diverse student population.

To lay the foundation of a good character we believe we need to create an arena in which students gain virtue literacy through both the teaching of virtues such as respect, perseverance and responsibility and also the opportunities to practice and apply these skills in college, at home and in the community. PTE is one way that the college will do this

**The Stella Maris Leadership Award** is based upon the Intellectual, Moral, Civic and Performance virtues, it reflects a Catholic Character Education which 'strives to enable students and all staff to grasp what is important in situations and how to act for the right reasons, such as that, they become more autonomous and reflective in the practice of virtue. Each student through the teachings in PTE will learn about the virtues and how these can be acquired through deliberate acts.' This will be enhanced further through the delivery of the tutorial programme and then even further through a whole college approach.

**Tutorial Programme.** Each student has one hour per week of tutorial where they meet with their Achievement Personal Tutor who will monitor their attendance, punctuality and achievement. The College delivers bespoke tutorial programmes for Level 2, Lower 6, U6 Employability and U6 UCAS students. Each programme is designed to offer our students the best and most appropriate support at the different stages in College. The Tutorial Programme is carefully planned in conjunction with the Assembly Programme to ensure that breath of content in addition to depth of content. A dedicated part of each tutorial is the opportunity for students to spend some time in quiet reflection which is delivered through a Prayer Focus. Additionally, there is time built into each tutorial for students to reflect on their achievements, to set personal goals and to discuss these with their Achievement Tutors. The relationships between the Achievement Tutor and student are a key component of the students' support at College. The College is moving to specialist Achievement Tutors for all students.

**Level 2 Tutorial Programme** is designed to enable our students to progress to either a Level 3 programme, apprenticeships or employment. Works skills are delivered through bespoke sessions devised by our Careers Department, which are embedded into the Tutorial Programme. Each student is offered a work placement reinforcing the works skills programme. Students also have a specialist

revision programme to provide as much supportive preparation for their Level 2 examinations as possible, enabling successful progression on to Level 3 programmes and other progression destination. This runs alongside the core tutorial programme which includes British Values, celebrating Diversity and Prevent. A key focus on literacy is embedded throughout the programme to give extra support to access the overall curriculum and there is regular delivery from visiting Inspirational speakers who provide another source of aspiration.

**The Lower 6 Tutorial Programme** has the common core themes of the Tutorial Programme described for Level 2 with a key focus on areas essential for this stage of student's education. The Tutorial Programme starts with an induction programme where the key features are revisited throughout the year. From this there is a focus on growth mindset, positive mental health for resilience and healthy relationships. The final term focuses on HE and positive progression The Careers Department have devised a specialist programme called CANDI – Careers after Notre Dame. This is co-ordinated with key College Events such as Higher Education Days and the Careers Fair.

**Enhancing Excellence Tutorial Programme** has the common core themes of the Tutorial Programme described above with a key focus on areas essential for students intending to study at Oxbridge, Medicine, veterinary science or dental schools. The programme is delivered via designated, subject area-specific tutor groups which meet weekly from when students start in lower 6<sup>th</sup>. In a similar way to other tutor groups, EE groups will offer pastoral support, celebrate equality and diversity, get involved in charitable work, set and monitor targets, introduce students to a range of careers and other opportunities post-Notre Dame and explore issues such as mental and physical health and personal safety; but about three-quarters of tutorial time will be allotted to EE-related activities. Students will be given the chance to research and deliver their own presentations, discuss topics relevant to the degrees for which they wish to apply in depth, keep up a learning log and talk about it with a mentor, attend relevant and stretching trips and conferences, be helped in their eventual applications to university and be encouraged and supported in their efforts to gain the high grades demanded at Russell Group universities.

**The Upper 6 Tutorial Programme** continues to deliver the core features of the Tutorial Programme. Its initial focus is progression and supporting students with their application to UCAS. This is followed by practical financial education and planning to prepare for life after Notre Dame. The Tutorial Programme also has a uniquely designed programme by the Careers Department. The final stage of the Tutorial Programme is study skills which are delivered alongside a complimentary programme looking at coping with stress and mindfulness.

**The Upper 6 Employment Tutorial Programme** follow a similar programme to the U6 UCAS Tutor Groups. However, a key theme is preparing for the work place. Throughout the year these groups will meet with employers, prepare applications and go through a mock recruitment process ending with a mock interview with employers. Additionally, each student is actively encouraged to take up one of the numerous work placement offers from the careers department, with an expectation they will complete one week during their U6.

**The Assembly Programme** is a 30-minute weekly part of each students programme of study and is in addition to the Tutorial Programme and PTE. It is cross-curricular in design with SLT, the College Leadership Team (HoFS and Head of Students), individual departments, students and the Chaplaincy each writing and delivering the weekly assemblies. There is a rolling 2-year Assembly Programme and core aspects are covered throughout this time. The Programme is evaluated every year and hence updated to ensure it continually meet the needs of our students.

Key dates throughout the year are remembered including, Holocaust Memorial, Black History Month as well as key Christian Feasts including Easter and Corpus Christi. It is through the Assembly Programme that religious services are delivered. Speakers from the community are invited to talk to students to further enrich the programme, these include The Anthony Nolan Trust, NCS and Local Charities. We focus on current events and themes have included voting and climate change. At the centre of each assembly is Christ and there is a separate period of time where students are given reflective time to think about their faith and or their own needs, these moments are guided by the College Chaplain.

**Cedar Individual Learning Plan.** Each student will record all of their personal development onto their Cedar ILP. Each student is required to regularly update their ILP and this will be a regularly discussed with their Achievement Tutor, who will also make suggestions for further development using the opportunities in and out of college.

For further information please see the College website: <https://www.notredamecoll.ac.uk/>