



The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) was introduced as a performance measure for schools in England in the 2010 performance tables. It is not a qualification. The measure recognises where students have achieved a grade 5 (or grade 4) or better at GCSE in English, Mathematics, History or Geography, two sciences (including Computer Science) and a modern or ancient language. The Ebacc includes academic subjects highly valued by universities, but it is not currently required for entry to any university. It is, however, made up of subjects which are considered essential to many degrees and open up lots of doors.

Research shows that a pupil's socio-economic background impacts the subjects they choose at GCSE, and that this determines their opportunities beyond school. A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and maths.

The current curriculum offer at St Mary's is designed to enable students to achieve academic excellence and to challenge all to achieve their full potential. It is balanced, broadly based, richly academic and designed to meet our students' needs. The consistently excellent progress and attainment achieved by our students are testament to the success of our current curriculum offer.

We offer a robust suite of GCSE and vocational subjects that are appropriate for our students and all students study the following subjects:

Religious Education	Physics
English Language	Chemistry
English Literature	Biology
Mathematics	Physical Education

In addition, students can choose up to three options with guidance from the following courses:

Art	Health & Social Care
Business	History
Computer Science	ICT
Drama	Music
Design & Technology	Physical Education
French	Spanish
Geography	Sports Studies

We actively encourage our students to study a combination of EBacc subjects, through the use of pathways, as well as other academic, creative and vocational courses to ensure that their studies are balanced and that they reflect the students' interests, talents and aspirations for the future. We firmly believe that an outstanding curriculum builds cultural capital and we will realise this through all aspects of the curriculum.

In July 2017, the Government published their aims that 75% of students starting their GCSEs in 2022 should be studying the EBacc suite of subjects by 2020, increasing to 90% by 2025. The Government believes that schools should offer students a broad range of academic subjects to the age of 16 and the EBacc promotes that aspiration.

Since 2017 we have increased our entry to the EBacc subjects for all students from 46% to 81% (on average across the last three years (2018 – 2021)). This is significantly higher than the Local Authority Average and the average for England which were both approximately 40%. This ambitious curriculum is irrespective of a student's background and is offered regardless of SEND or any disadvantage. At St Mary's the proportion of disadvantaged students entered for the EBacc is much higher than the national average for all students. In 2018/19 this was 70% for St Mary's disadvantaged

students compared with 45% nationally. We are uncompromising in our ambition for our SEND students who are fully involved in all aspects of school life and are offered a full curriculum at every stage.

We review our curriculum offer at Key Stage 4 annually during the Autumn Term. A significant aspect of this work is the focus on the different pathways for Year 9 moving into Year 10. We will identify a cohort for whom we will strongly recommend studying the EBacc. Via this model, we will increase, if appropriate, our uptake of EBacc by 2025.

At St Mary's, we are in complete agreement that the EBacc combination of subjects is highly beneficial for many students; however, we also recognize that this pathway is not always appropriate for all students. Again, this notion is acknowledged by the DfE who have stated that "schools should still be able to determine the small minority of students for whom taking all of the EBacc subjects is not appropriate". It is important to make clear that student needs are paramount in determining our curriculum offer and learning pathways. As a school, we are determined to maintain the quality of our curriculum and an element of choice at KS4, so valued by students and parents alike, for the foreseeable future.