

NOTRE DAME COLLEGE



CURRICULUM REVIEW 2016/17

- Interim Report
- Structure of the Day and Cycle
- Proposed Curriculum Organisation at Each Year Level

NOTRE DAME COLLEGE

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Members of the Curriculum Review Reference Group:

Kris Walker	Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching
Sarah Baglin	Year 9 staff member
Jen Frisardi	Learning and Teaching Leader (Years 7-10)
Leisa Gill	Learning and Teaching Leader (VCE)
John Malloy	Knight St staff member
Susan Nabbs	Director of Year 9
Hannah Slosarski	Knight St staff member
Damian Smith	Learning and Teaching Facilitator (Year 9)
Liz Monahan	External facilitator

To Seek To See To Respond



Notre Dame College

Curriculum Review

2016 – 2017

Interim Report

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the review is to identify the particular strengths and challenges associated with the curriculum at Notre Dame College from years 7 to 12, with a view to making recommendations to the College Leadership Team for ongoing improvement and maximizing of student learning and wellbeing outcomes. It aims to ensure that Notre Dame students are being offered an excellent contemporary curriculum which allows them to achieve their personal best and access appropriate pathways beyond school.

Context

As part of its process of review of the educational program offered at Notre Dame College, the College has sought a review of its curriculum from year 7 to year 12.

The subjects currently offered at each year level and the number of 'short' periods per subject per cycle can be found at Appendix 1. The current timetable structure is based on a 10-day cycle with six 47-minute periods/day. These are timetabled as either 'longs' (double periods) or 'shorts' (single periods).

Under the overall leadership of the Principal, curriculum leadership is vested in the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching, the Learning and Teaching Leader (years 7-10), Learning and Teaching Facilitator (year 9), the Learning and Teaching Leader (VCE), Learning Area Coaches, leaders in e-learning, numeracy and literacy and the Professional Practice Leader. The leadership structure is detailed in Appendix 2.

AusVELS English, Mathematics, History and Science have been introduced in years 7 to 10 and the process of translation to the Victorian Curriculum in 2017 is currently taking place. Some course documentation is available on Moodle and the College w-drive, with the focus now on moving to shared google documents. Work has been done on documenting the curriculum across each of the Learning Areas and this work continues.

There is evidence of a declining academic standard in both NAPLAN and VCE results and a perception that students are not challenged to excel by moving out of their comfort zone. It has been acknowledged by secondary principals in the Sandhurst Diocese that their schools place significant emphasis on student wellbeing and have achieved great success in this area, but give insufficient weight to academic achievement leading at times to complacency and lack of ambition. There is not an universal understanding that the wellbeing needs of most students are best addressed through provision of a challenging and rigorous curriculum which allows them to reach their potential.

Notre Dame is mindful of the potential impact of a new Catholic P – 12 school in Kialla and improvements in local government schools.

In the whole college context, the following initiatives have been recently introduced or are in process:

- Development of a Learning and Teaching Charter (as recommended by the Review of Years 7 & 8 Curriculum 2015)
- A year 7 – 12 curriculum-mapping audit
- Professional Learning Teams, comprising year level subject-based teams of teachers, to collaboratively plan for curriculum delivery
- Addition of a fourth Deputy Principal for 2016
- Movement from Learning Area Conveners to Learning Area Coaches
- Addition of leaders in e-learning, numeracy and literacy
- A Professional Practice Leader who supports the Learning Area Coaches in teacher coaching roles

This review endorsed and incorporated the following reviews which have taken place in recent years:

- CoSSI Review 2015
- Review of Years 7 & 8 Curriculum 2015
- CoSSI Learning and Teaching Review 2014
- Review of Year 9 program 2014
- VCAL Review 2014

Methodology and Timeline for the Review

Initial planning for the review involving the principal, leadership team and external facilitator, commenced in March 2016. A College Reference Group was formed to oversee the process, in collaboration with the external facilitator.

The members of the Reference Group were as follows:

Kris Walker	Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching
Sarah Baglin	Year 9 staff member
Jen Frisardi	Learning and Teaching Leader (Years 7-10)
Leisa Gill	Learning and Teaching Leader (VCE)
John Malloy	Knight St staff member
Susan Nabbs	Director of Year 9
Hannah Slosarski	Knight St staff member
Damian Smith	Learning and Teaching Facilitator (Year 9)
Liz Monahan	External facilitator

Following initial consultation of the facilitator with staff and key leaders, the reference group met on 18 May to determine the scope, methodology, timeline and reporting for the review. This preliminary report was completed in August 2016, identifying recommendations to be further explored and implementation plans. Data collection and analysis continued throughout 2016 and into 2017, with a view to implementation in 2018. A timeline is attached (Appendix 3).

As significant student surveys had been conducted in 2015, these were not repeated in this review. Senior students and those in leadership roles were consulted via focus groups. Parents were invited to respond to a survey on their perceptions of the strengths and deficiencies of the current curriculum and invited to share their views in a focus group. The Parish Priest who is the Canonical Administrator of the College and the Board Chair were kept informed throughout the process and consulted regularly.

Focus areas for the Review

Following perusal of the previous reviews and consultation with staff and key leaders, the follow focus areas for this review were identified

- The structure of the Notre Dame day and cycle
- Construction of the timetable
- The Learning and Teaching Framework
- Subject Offerings in years 7 to 10
- The organisation of VCE, VET and VCAL
- Content of individual subjects
- Curriculum documentation
- Use of data
- Contemporary pedagogy
- Assessment and feedback
- Protection of scheduled class time
- The appropriate place of Religious Education and Mass attendance in the curriculum
- Professional learning
- Physical settings to optimize learning
- Teacher workload

Evaluation

Targets were set as follows:

VCE median score to increase from 28 in 2015 to 30 in 2020

VCE % scores over 40 to increase from 2.6% to 6.4% in 2020

Over 30% of students to show High growth from year 7 to year 9 in NAPLAN data across all dimensions by 2020

Insight SRC Teaching Climate Aggregate Indicator to increase from 62.15 in 2015 to 78 in 2020 (mean is 78 – note has steadily increased over last three years)

Insight SRC Student Wellbeing Aggregate Indicator to increase from 63.71 in 2015 to 78 in 2020 (mean is 78 – note has fluctuated over last three years)

REVIEW REPORT

1. STRUCTURE

1.1 Composition of the Notre Dame period, day, cycle and year

The consensus of staff is that the current structure of 'long' and 'short' periods is no longer the optimum arrangement for student learning at Notre Dame. It lacks flexibility, reduces the number of student contacts in a cycle in core subjects and suffers more when students are absent from class for other college activities and public holidays. Younger students in theoretical subjects in particular find concentration in a 'long' difficult. There is no formal time allowed for assemblies. Although it was introduced to reduce movement around the campus, this result can be achieved through creative timetabling. The current two week cycle appears effective, although makes it difficult to timetable part time staff at the same times each week under the current timetable.

Recommendation #1.11

That the organization of the Notre Dame day be reviewed to

- create maximum contact time
- facilitate periods of equal length which may be grouped into doubles as required
- retain the two week cycle
- retain the pastoral period
- consider options for common lessons to facilitate assemblies, Masses, etc.
- consider the balance between semesters one and two
- consider whether the Year 9 Program at Emmaus Campus should retain a different timetable structure and organization of day
- make a recommendation regarding morning pastoral time and afternoon locker time

It is noted that bus times and the St Brendan's lunch and recess times are constraints.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #1.11

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of the 2016 school year

Recommendation #1.12

That an audit of activities which result in students missing scheduled class time be conducted to ascertain the educational value of each activity and make recommendations as to whether it should be retained, abandoned or managed differently.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #1.12

Responsibility: The research to implement this recommendation will be conducted by the Deputy Principal – College Operations. A collated summary will be considered by the Leadership Executive and where relevant other groups within the college will be consulted prior to decisions taken on the future of each activity.

Timeframe: The audit will be commenced in term three 2016, taking into consideration activities which have resulted in students missing class time to date in 2016, and conclude at the end of the year. The results will be collated and implementation will be undertaken progressively as they become available.

Recommendation #1.13

That the number of days or part days that part time staff are required on campus under a revised timetable be clarified and documented.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #1.13

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed in 2017, with recommendations considered by the Leadership Executive and implemented in 2018.

1.2 The Place of Mass attendance at Notre Dame

Currently Religious Education classes from years 7 to 10 are timetabled at the beginning of the day for a 'long' period once per cycle to facilitate student attendance at the community Mass in the Parish. Senior Religious Education classes are similarly timetabled, although their Mass attendance is slightly less. These arrangements are the first to be considered in the construction of the timetable and place significant limitations on creative use of the timetable to facilitate other programs. In addition, a significant amount of learning time is used and therefore not available otherwise, an important consideration given the request for greater emphasis on learning and teaching. Mass attendance is supported by the Parish Priest and the Chair of the College Board who see that it allows students to learn about symbol and ritual and gives them insight into Catholicism they don't get in the classroom. It should be seen in the context of 48% of the student population not Catholic. It is suggested that many of the advantages of Mass attendance could be retained through less frequent attendance.

Recommendation #1.21

That timetabled class attendance at the community Mass be discontinued. Exploration of other models of mass attendance such as in Religious Education classes or in House groups or year levels at assembly or other times should be undertaken. Such exploration should be done in the light of the recommendations of the ECSI project and should ensure a continued regular presence at the parish community Mass.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #1.21

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Principal in conjunction with the Parish Priest, the Deputy Principal Catholic Identity and the Religious Education Learning Area Coach.

Timeframe: A proposed schedule will be developed in 2017 for implementation on a trial basis in 2018.

2. CURRICULUM STRUCTURE, CONTENT AND DOCUMENTATION

2.1 Years 7 – 10

Student experience in the classroom at Notre Dame College is generally positive. However, although students are compliant, their levels of engagement in the curriculum are not high. This may be addressed by changes to both curriculum content and pedagogy. Staff expressed significant concerns about the balance of subject offerings and time allocations in the curriculum at years 7 to 10. The content and balance does not reflect the Australian Curriculum or new Victorian Curriculum in that it does not include a number of subject areas such as commerce, civics, health and digital technologies. It has minimal performing arts inclusions and does not reflect the government priority for learning a language other than English. A unique program is currently offered on the Emmaus Campus for year 9 students. A broad range of electives is offered at years 9 and 10.

In addition to the generally administrative time at the beginning of each day, each class has a timetabled pastoral lesson once per cycle. Currently the use of this time is determined by the relevant Head of House and there is no school wide pastoral curriculum.

Recommendation #2.11

The structure of the curriculum from years 7 to 10 be reviewed in the light of the developing Notre Dame Learning and Teaching Charter and practice at other schools to

- recommend which subjects should be studied and
 - at which year level
 - whether core or elective
 - how much time should be allocated
 - whether year long or semester length or term length
- investigate the options for integrated studies
- incorporate a focus on literacy and numeracy
- address the imperatives of the Victorian Curriculum
- review the access of year 10 students to VCE units

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.11

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of April 2017

Recommendation #2.12

That the recommendations from the Year 9 Review 2014 which refer to the Outward Bound Program (Section 3.2) be revisited and a formal response made to each.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.12

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Director of Year 9 with the support of the Learning and Teaching Facilitator (Year 9)

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2016

Recommendation #2.13

That the pastoral program which is delivered once per cycle across the college be reviewed to reflect an articulated, documented pastoral curriculum which is consistent across the college and addresses the emotional and social needs of students and clarifies the expectations of the pastoral group leader.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.13

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented collaboratively by the Heads of House, led by the Deputy Principal Wellbeing

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2017 for implementation in 2018

2.2 Years 11 – 12

The curriculum offerings of VCE, VET and VCAL were generally seen to be comprehensive and targeted, although possible modifications would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery. Of particular concern to some staff was the absence from scheduled classes of students undertaking external VET units. There is concern that VCE subjects do not meet VCAA recommendations with respect to time owing to interruptions.

Recommendation #2.21

That the senior years curriculum structure be examined to:

- review the blocking arrangements at each level
- review the number of classes allocated to each unit

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.21

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2017

Recommendation #2.22

That the organization of senior years curriculum be examined to:

- explore timetabling options to limit the impact of external VETs on other subjects
- review the criteria for subjects to run at VCE level
- review the early commencement program
- consider the options for supervision of students in study time at VCE

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.21

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching) in conjunction with the Learning and Teaching Leader (VCE).

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2017 for implementation in 2018.

Recommendation #2.23

That the recommendations from the VCAL Review 2014 be revisited and a formal response made to each.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.23

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the VCAL Leader with the support of the Learning and Teaching Leader (VCE) and the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2016

2.3 The Place of Religious Education in the curriculum

In years 7 & 8, Religious Education is allocated the equivalent of 8 lessons per cycle, the same as English and one less than Mathematics. In year 9, the time allocation is slightly less than for English and Mathematics, in year 10 the same for one semester and less for the other. Comparisons with other schools suggest this is a significantly greater share of the curriculum time than in other places. Under the current structure, one lesson per cycle is allocated to Mass attendance. At this point in time, the Religious Education curriculum has not been fully mapped against the Australian or Victorian Curriculum or the Sandhurst Diocese *Source of Life* framework. Observations in classes indicate a variety of approaches to Religious Education, some of which were authentic and rigorous but others not appearing to best utilize the time.

Recommendation #2.31

That the time allocation for Religious Education at each level be reviewed along with that of other subjects in the curriculum and in the light of the learning and teaching charter and practice at other schools, to achieve a balance between the development of the skills and knowledge inherent within the Catholic faith and the demands of the secular curriculum.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.31

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of April 2017

Recommendation #2.32

That the Religious Education curriculum be reviewed to identify essential skills and knowledge and content which is relevant and appropriate, a commitment to common curriculum in this area be affirmed and this curriculum be mapped as appropriate against the Victorian Curriculum and the Sandhurst Diocese *Source of Life* framework.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.32

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching in conjunction with the Deputy Principal Faith and Mission and the Religious Education Learning Area Leader.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of April 2017 for implementation in 2018.

2.4 Assessment and Reporting

As reported in the review of Years 7 & 8 curriculum, there is significant difference in the development and use of rubrics for the assessment of work. There also seems to be significant differences in the extent to which rubrics assess the skills described in the AusVELS standards. This seems to be connected to some subject areas focusing on content rather than skills. Most, if not all assessments appeared to be summative. There was little evidence of mastery learning or re-visiting a topic after testing. In addition, many of the assessments seemed to focus on recall, explanation, comprehension and 'testing', rather the development of higher order skills such as evaluation, drawing of conclusions or application of learning.

While online progressive feedback has been introduced at the College, concern has been expressed about its effectiveness and efficiency and the quality of the feedback received. It is seen as summative rather than formative.

Surveys have shown that while students regularly do homework, they view it as closely connected to their classwork and rarely creative or new work.

Recommendation #2.41

That PLTs continue to develop rubrics for assessment tasks and to focus on the use of formative assessment in informing teaching practice when students have not mastered a skill.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.41

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching in collaboration with the three Learning and Teaching Leaders/Facilitator

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2017

Recommendation #2.42

That the system of online progressive feedback be reviewed and compared with best practice in other schools to determine whether it is meeting its objectives.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.42

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching in collaboration with the three Learning and Teaching Leaders/Facilitator

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2017

Recommendation #2.43

That a working party be developed to review the philosophy and practice of homework, with a view to introduction of more creative and interesting activities.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.43

Responsibility: The principal is to convene a Homework Policy Working Party under the direction of the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2019

2.5 Documentation

As noted by the Years 7&8 Curriculum Review, during the past few years there has been a focus at the college on writing of curriculum documentation across the Learning Areas in a common format. The review noted the following points which remain valid and also apply to years 9 & 10:

- There is variability in where each Learning Areas is at with documentation and it remains a work in progress. Many of the documents have been loaded onto Moodle, very few on to Google Docs.
- A number of Learning Areas are still in transition between VELs and the Australian Curriculum.
- Many unit outlines focus on content more than skills and there seems to be a lot of staff emphasis completion of courses. It is not clear as to what are the essential skills for students to have acquired in each Learning Areas.
- English and Mathematics were the only two Learning Areas that have a clearly documented scope and sequence.
- There is little evidence of cross-curricular activities or inter-personal skill development in the documentation.

It will be necessary to complete curriculum documentation for new subjects to be introduced in 2018.

Considerable variation in documentation, course content and assessment was noted between classes in the same subject at the same level. It would generally be accepted that as a matter of justice to students, there should be common curriculum and assessment, while still leaving scope for the individual style and delivery of each teacher.

Recommendation #2.51

That prior to any further curriculum documentation, Learning Areas complete the vertical skills audit across 7 to VCE and implement a horizontal audit across years 7 to 10, in order to determine the 'essential learning' that all students need to have mastered to move to the next level of learning and identify the 'nice to know' areas of skill or content that could be reduced or removed to 'de-clutter' the curriculum, allowing teachers to cover less but go deeper in the learning. The horizontal audit would also provide an opportunity to consider cross-learning area skills and provide better coordination of course outcomes.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.51

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Learning and Teaching Leaders under the direction of the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching and with the support of the Learning Area Coaches and teachers.

Timeframe: A process to be developed in 2016, with the audit to be completed by the end of semester one 2017

Recommendation #2.52

That once decisions have been made on subjects to be taught in 2018, curriculum writing commence under an agreed format and templates for course, unit and lesson planning, with a focus on the inclusion of higher order skills (analysis, interpretation, synthesis, critical thinking) in program documentation, delivery and assessments and less emphasis on content. Expectations should be set regarding location of documentation, format and timelines.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.52

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Learning and Teaching Leaders under the direction of the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching and with the support of the Learning Area Coaches and teachers.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2017

Recommendation #2.53

That curriculum documentation for compliance with the Victorian Curriculum be limited to the minimum in 2017, with greater emphasis given to documentation of the new curriculum to be introduced in 2018.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.53

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Learning and Teaching Leaders under the direction of the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching and with the support of the Learning Area Coaches and teachers.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of 2016

Recommendation #2.54

That a policy of common curriculum and common assessment in a given subject at a given level be implemented across the college.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.54

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Learning and Teaching Leaders under the direction of the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching and with the support of the Learning Area Coaches.

Timeframe: Ongoing

3. PEDAGOGY

3.1 Contemporary Learning and Teaching

Notre Dame currently has adopted a Learning and Teaching Charter. It has been identified that there now exists a need to complement this document with a Learning and Teaching Instructional Framework which gives direction to teachers in planning successful delivery of engaging and effective courses of study.

Classroom observations confirm the findings of other reviews that students are compliant and respectful and that relationships between teacher and students are positive. Data from earlier surveys confirms a trend common in schools where students in junior years are overwhelmingly positive in terms of their wellbeing, connectedness to school and safety, whereas they are significantly less so in later years.

Considerable professional learning has taken place in recent years to explore contemporary pedagogy and there are many promising initiatives and practices. However, learning still tends to be largely individual and that there is not a lot of collaborative work undertaken. This was highlighted in the classroom observations where the pedagogical practice observed was quite didactic, with the teacher controlling the learning space. Students sitting in rows for many lessons does not appear to facilitate collaborative learning, shown by research to improve student learning outcomes.

Learning appears to be heavily text based in many subjects, with little opportunity to explore a variety of learning styles and hands on activities. Notebook computers seem to be used for research, word processing, PowerPoint and emails, rather than exploring a wider range of creative usage.

While learning intentions are identified in some classes, and some students were able to explicitly name learning goals, these is by no means universal. Many staff appeared to have little understanding of differentiation and personalised learning, particularly when it comes to meeting the needs of higher achieving students.

2015 Insight SRC School Improvement Surveys indicate that students are at about the median of Victorian secondary schools in their perception of *purposeful teaching* at the College. Teachers rate *teacher confidence*, *engaging practice* and *quality teaching* around the lowest quartile of schools.

Currently students are organized into House groups for learning and teaching and in recent years the Head of House has assumed prime responsibility for monitoring their academic progress. This may have unplanned implications for improving student learning outcomes.

Recommendation #3.11

That a Learning and Teaching Instructional Framework be adopted

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #3.11

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Learning and Teaching Leaders under the direction of the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching and with the support of the curriculum team and teachers.

Timeframe: End of 2017

Recommendation #3.12

That continued emphasis be placed to encourage teachers to adopt contemporary learning and teaching practices including self directed learning, collaborative learning, problem solving, high expectations of students, creative use of technology, identification of learning intentions and learning goals and flexible seating arrangements.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #3.12

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Learning and Teaching Leaders under the direction of the Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching and with the support of the curriculum team and teachers.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Recommendation #3.13

That the influence of the House system on academic outcomes be investigated.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #3.13

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented Leadership Executive

Timeframe: 2019

3.2 Teamwork and Professional learning

If the College is to make a commitment to differentiation and personalised learning, it needs to embed this in teacher practice in all areas and ensure that all teachers have the necessary pedagogical knowledge, data literacy and technological skills to ensure success. Currently there is no clearly articulated professional learning plan for the whole college which is based on its strategic plan and underpins the professional learning needs of each staff member. Professional learning is largely viewed by staff as an individual activity supported by an individual budget.

Professional Learning Teams are in place at Notre Dame and most meet regularly, although some interact online only and most limit their meetings to development of course content, rather than pedagogy and contemporary learning and teaching practice. They are potentially a valuable forum for professional discussion and collaboration, involving the shared use of data and formative assessment to inform teaching practice and improve student outcomes, as recommended by the CoSSI Learning and Teaching Review.

From the beginning of 2016, the Learning Area Leaders have been in a coaching role, giving them the opportunity to work with individual staff to build capacity and improve pedagogical practice. In addition, some Learning Areas have introduced peer visitation as a component of their shared practice.

It was noted that little time has been devoted to professional learning in the area of Learning and Teaching, with only one full day allocated in 2016 in addition to the student free days at the end of the year. In order to progress contemporary pedagogy as a major school priority, a significant time commitment is required with careful planning to utilize it effectively.

Recommendation #3.21

That professional learning be reconceptualised as a whole school activity and a five year whole school professional learning plan based on the school strategic plan be articulated from which teachers develop their own individual learning plans.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #3.21

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Leadership Executive

Timeframe: To be completed and enacted by the end of 2018

Recommendation #3.22

That the purpose, function, leadership and accountability of professional learning teams be reviewed to change the focus from course writing to collaborative learning, the *data, differentiation and delivery* model initially envisaged.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #3.22

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Leadership Executive

Timeframe: To be commenced immediately and completed and enacted by the end of 2018

Recommendation #3.23

That the recent initiatives around coaching and peer visitation be refined, enhanced and extended across the College.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #3.23

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Leadership Executive

Timeframe: Ongoing

Recommendation #3.24

That at least two or three whole days annually be allocated to full teaching staff professional learning in the area of curriculum in 2017 and 2018, with additional time being made available in blocks to Learning Areas for planning purposes.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #3.24

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Leadership Executive

Timeframe: 2016 - 2018



Notre Dame College

Curriculum Review

2016 – 2017

**Recommended Structure for the
Notre Dame Day and Cycle**

Context

Following the preliminary report of the Notre Dame Curriculum Review Reference Group, the group met on 23 August 2016 to consider the structure of day and cycle most appropriate for Notre Dame College from 2018 onwards.

This meeting was in response to the recommendation made in the preliminary report:

Recommendation #1.11

That the organization of the Notre Dame day be reviewed to

- create maximum contact time
- facilitate periods of equal length which may be grouped into doubles as required
- retain the two week cycle
- retain the pastoral period
- consider options for common lessons to facilitate assemblies, Masses, etc.
- consider the balance between semesters one and two
- consider whether the Year 9 Program at Emmaus Campus should retain a different timetable structure and organization of day
- make a recommendation regarding morning pastoral time and afternoon locker time

It is noted that bus times and the St Brendan's lunch and recess times are constraints.

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #1.11

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of the 2016 school year

The discussions of the group were informed by responses from Notre Dame staff to the consultation on 3 May, investigations into structures at other schools and our own experience.

Recommendation

The Curriculum Review Reference Group recommends that both Knight Street and Year 9 Emmaus retain a 10 day lesson cycle. This is based on the flexibility this provides to have uneven numbers of lessons in a given subject across the cycle and to distribute lessons equitably. It was noted that all of the other schools researched based their curriculum on 10 day cycles.

The group recommends movement to 6 x 50 minute lessons per day at Knight Street according to the following times:

Pastoral Group	8:50 am - 9:05 am	15 mins
Lesson 1	9.05 am - 9.55 am	50 mins
Lesson 2	9.55 am - 10.45 am	50 mins
Recess	10:45 am - 11:10 am	25 mins
Lesson 3	11.10 am - 12.00 pm	50 mins
Lesson 4	12.00 pm - 12.50 pm	50 mins
Lunch	12.50 pm – 1.35 pm	45 mins
Lesson 5	1.35 pm - 2.25 pm	50 mins
Lesson 6	2.25 pm - 3.15 pm	50 mins

The advantages of the above recommendation include:

- Adequate time for depth of teaching in a single lesson
- Increased contact time by 18 minutes per day (3 hours per cycle)
- Greater frequency of contact for subjects which don't wish to have doubles
- Decreased impact of interruptions with increased number of contacts
- Double periods appropriate for practical and some other subjects
- Total number of lessons in a cycle allows for fine tuning of allocations
- Similar to current model

Other considerations include:

- There is a need to manage travel time using creative timetabling
- The model fits in with current bus and St Brendan's arrangements
- A 'warning bell' would be sounded 5 minutes before the beginning of the day, end of recess and end of lunch
- This is a model used successfully by many other schools

- Assemblies will be accommodated through calendared 'assembly days' which will incorporate time for the assembly and shortened lessons for all other classes on the day.
- There is no allocated changeover time, in accordance with practice at other schools and consistent with legal and industrial requirements. Staff and students who are required to move will do so without delay and timetabling will attempt to minimize movement.

Industrial implications are as follows:

- 20 hours per week face to face teaching equates to 48 x 50 minute lessons per cycle
- Morning Pastoral Group amounts to 150 minutes per cycle or the equivalent of 3 x 50 minute lessons
- Pastoral Group teachers would also have an allocation of time for their pastoral lesson once per cycle
- Yard duties during the day would be either of 25 minute (recess and lunch 1) or 20 minute (lunch 2) duration

The group recommends moving to 6 x 50 minute lessons per day at Year 9 Emmaus Campus according to the following times:

Pastoral Group	9:00 am - 9:10 am	10 mins
Lesson 1	9.10 am - 10.00 am	50 mins
Lesson 2	10.00 am - 10.50 am	50 mins
Recess	10:50 am - 11:10 am	20 mins
Lesson 3	11.10 am - 12.00 pm	50 mins
Lesson 4	12.00 pm – 12.50 pm	50 mins
Lunch	12.50 pm – 1.30 pm	40 mins
Lesson 5	1.30 pm - 2.20 pm	50 mins
Lesson 6	2.20 pm - 3.10 pm	50 mins

The advantages of the above recommendation include:

- Adequate time for depth of teaching in a single lesson
- Increased contact time by 20 minutes per day (3 hours and 20 mins per cycle)
- Flexibility to allow for team teaching, especially in Maths and English
- Greater frequency of contact for subjects which don't wish to have doubles
- Decreased impact of interruptions with increased number of contacts
- Double periods appropriate for practical and some other subjects
- Total number of lessons in a cycle allows for fine tuning of allocations

Other considerations include:

- A 'warning bell' would be sounded 5 minutes before the beginning of the day, end of recess and end of lunch
- Assemblies will be accommodated through calendared 'assembly days' which will incorporate time for the assembly and shortened lessons for all other classes on the day.

Industrial implications are as follows:

- 20 hours face to face teaching equates to 48 x 50 minute lessons per cycle
- Morning Pastoral Group amounts to 100 minutes per cycle or the equivalent of 2x 50 minute lessons
- Pastoral Group teachers would also have an allocation of time for their pastoral lesson once per cycle
- Yard duties during the day would be 20 minutes duration



Notre Dame College

Curriculum Review

2016 – 2017

**Proposed Curriculum Organisation
at Each Year Level**

Context

This document is to be read in conjunction with the preliminary report of the Notre Dame Curriculum Review Reference Group and the structure of the Notre Dame day and cycle. The suggested structures will only lead to greater student engagement and improved student outcomes if they are accompanied by a commitment to appropriate pedagogical change.

Following the preliminary report of the Notre Dame Curriculum Review Reference Group, the group met on 5 October 2016 and on three other occasions to consider the most appropriate curriculum organization for Notre Dame College from 2018 onwards.

These meetings were in response to the recommendations made in the Interim Report:

Recommendation #2.11

The structure of the curriculum from years 7 to 10 be reviewed in the light of the developing Notre Dame Learning and Teaching Charter and practice at other schools to

- recommend which subjects should be studied and
 - at which year level
 - whether core or elective
 - how much time should be allocated
 - whether year long or semester length or term length
- investigate the options for integrated studies
- incorporate a focus on literacy and numeracy
- address the imperatives of the Victorian Curriculum
- review the access of year 10 students to VCE units

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.11

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of March 2017

Recommendation #2.21

That the senior years curriculum structure be examined to:

- review the blocking arrangements at each level
- review the number of classes allocated to each unit

Implementation Plan for Recommendation #2.21

Responsibility: This recommendation is to be implemented by the Curriculum Reference Group with the support of the external facilitator.

Timeframe: To be completed by the end of March 2017

The discussions of the group were informed by responses from Notre Dame staff to the consultation on 3 May and subsequent consultations, proposals from Learning Area Coaches, investigations into structures at other schools and our own experience.

Recommendations

The Curriculum Review Group recognizes that the suggested structures will only lead to greater student engagement and improved student outcomes if they are accompanied by a commitment to appropriate pedagogical change. Such development must be carefully managed and appropriate professional learning provided to staff. Consolidation and extension of contemporary practices will generate the need for ongoing review of structures to best accommodate the needs of students.

The Curriculum Review Reference Group will continue to meet three times per year as a Curriculum Steering Group to monitor the implementation of the review and suggest further improvements. There will be the opportunity for changeover of group members on a rotational basis.

1. Years 11 and 12

The priorities identified by the Curriculum Review Reference Group are:

- Retention of a wide range of VCE, VET and VCAL options
- Retention of compulsory Religious Education at both levels
- Retention of the ability for year 11 students to apply for wide range of units 3&4 subjects

1.1. Subjects at both year 11 and year 12 should continue to be offered in the current structure of 6 lines of 9 periods and one line of 5 periods. Each VCE or VCAL unit should be allocated two double lessons per cycle (rather than the current 3).

1.2. The pastoral lesson should be retained at both levels, subject to the implementation of the relevant recommendation from the preliminary report:

Recommendation #2.13

That the pastoral program which is delivered once per cycle across the college be reviewed to reflect an articulated, documented pastoral curriculum which is consistent across the college and addresses the emotional and social needs of students and clarifies the expectations of the pastoral group leader.

1.3. At year 12, line 7, which has only 5 lessons per cycle, is to be renamed *Common Time* rather than Study and in addition to providing private study time may also be used for level assemblies, assessments in subjects with large numbers of students and other college priorities. It is suggested that it be constructed as two double lessons and one single per cycle, with one double in the afternoon which may support students being permitted to leave early.

1.4. Religious Education will continue to be offered in line 7 at year 11, blocked for all students. It will continue to be offered across the lines in year 12.

1.5. The range of offerings in Religious Education in years 11 and 12 should be reviewed to ensure they are rigorous, have clear learning intentions, maintain integrity of outcomes and are best suited to the needs of the contemporary student. Consideration should be given to aligning all senior Religious Education within VCE units (which may include the possibility of Religious Education through the lens of Unit 1 VCE Media, Art, Drama, Music, Philosophy).

1.6. External VETs should be blocked together and timetabled for Wednesday afternoons. All other Wednesday classes should be single lessons with minimal repeat between weeks to minimize classes missed by students attending VET.

- 1.7. VET Structured work placement is generally preferred within the student's own time. For VCAL students, work placement will be negotiated on a case by case scenario to best meet individual needs.
- 1.8. Options for supervising private study to minimize staffing should be explored.
- 1.9. The possibility of offering an English group for high achievers at each level should be explored. Criteria for selection would be developed.
- 1.10. All units 3&4 subjects should be reviewed to determine whether acceleration is appropriate.
- 1.11. Development of study skills will be incorporated into the formal Pastoral Program. It is also the responsibility of each individual subject teacher.

2. Years 7 - 10

The priorities identified by the Curriculum Review Reference Group are:

- Encouragement of increased engagement in study
- Promotion of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum
- Ability to experience all options in junior years then increasingly specialize according to interest
- Retention of the Pastoral Period at each year level

2.1. It is essential that both horizontal and vertical curriculum mapping take place to ensure that all key skills and content are covered, to identify where cooperation is possible and to eliminate duplication.

2.2. As a specific period of time cannot be accommodated in the timetable for silent reading, staff are encouraged across all learning areas to build time for reading into their lessons, acknowledging the literacy benefits that come from regular opportunities for reading.

2.3. Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy and Numeracy extension and remediation are to be achieved through targeted programs as well as through emphasis across the curriculum supported by Literacy and Numeracy Leaders. The detailed nature of the targeted programs requires further exploration.

2.4. Learning Enrichment Program

It is suggested that the Learning Enrichment Program be reviewed, including:

- The effective deployment of Learning Mentors
- The development of a Professional Development Programme for Learning Mentors
- Student support provided by teachers
- Consideration of support for high achieving students

Project Based Learning - PBL

Project Based Learning is a rigorous, relevant and engaging education model that promotes self-directed learning. PBL makes learning relevant and useful to students by establishing connections to life outside the school community, addressing real world concerns and developing real world skills. Research confirms that PBL is an effective way to learn in order to deepen the learning experience of each student. PBL enables each student to engage in learning at their 'point of need' in order to further develop their skills as an independent learner. PBL creates an environment where students learn how to collaborate and their social skills improve. PBL focuses on helping students gain experience, understanding and develop new skills that will benefit them in the future.

A PBL subject (eg STEM, STEAM, STREAM or HASS) will be provided at each year level from 7 to 10. The decision to implement PBL is primarily aimed to address the low student engagement data and challenge the learning community of Notre Dame to see the curriculum as interesting and relevant. This will demand a different pedagogical approach for which staff will be prepared through further research and professional learning in 2017. It is hoped that the collaborative approach for specific subjects and units will be valuable and extended and consolidated throughout the curriculum in future years in a dynamic and ongoing process of review.

- 2.5. PBL will be led by the Deputy Principal: Learning and Teaching, the Learning and Teaching Leader Years 7-10 and the Learning Teaching Facilitator Year 9. To support the students and provide ample opportunities to work within different groups at least two classes will be blocked together to allow two teachers from different subject specialty areas to team teach to support students, including the use of learning enrichment resources. It is intended that at Year 7 and 8 there will be one semester of STEM and one semester of HASS PBL. At Year 9 and 10 PBL will continue to be a feature of the core program.

The PBL program is planned to have a strong focus on the development of 21st century skills and may report against the content descriptions and achievement standards of the four Victorian Curriculum General Capabilities, these being Critical and Creative Thinking, Ethical, Intercultural, and Personal and Social.

Outcomes for students in the PBL program could include:

Critical Thinking – These skills focus on a student's ability to think creatively and innovatively, analyze, synthesize, and apply information to new concepts.

Teamwork Skills – These skills focus on a student's ability to cooperate with other students and manage relationships appropriately in order to achieve a common goal.

ICT Skills – These skills focus on a student's ability to use a wide range of current technology with or without assistance.

Literacy Skills – These skills focus on a student's ability to deconstruct an understanding of how to complete a task, focusing on reading and writing.

Presentation Skills – These skills focus on a student's ability to present their projects to an audience in a confident manner using a wide range of resources to enhance the presentation.

Organisational Skills - These skills focus on a student's ability to meet deadlines by planning projects and setting and achieving goals.

3. Year 10

- 3.1. Subjects at year 10 should continue to be offered in the current structure of 6 lines of 9 periods and one line of 5 periods. Each line should be allocated two double lessons per cycle.
- 3.2. Students will select one subject from 5 of the 6 lines. This may either be a year long subject (e.g. English, LOTE) or a semester long elective. Their 6th line will be a combination of Religious Education (5 lessons) and Industry and Enterprise Unit 1 (4 lessons; with the compulsory Work Experience undertaken in the students' own time noting that this may be their current part-time employment or community service).
- 3.3. For a significant part of the year, the 7th line of 5 lessons will be utilized for individual projects across STREAM and/or HASS. An ethical dimension will be included via Religious Education. Blocking allows for projects to commence with group instruction then facilitates students electing to follow an area of interest in consultation with a staff mentor or range of mentors as appropriate. The projects will be concluded with a showcase for parents and the public. Assessment will be via a General Capabilities rubric.
- 3.4. For part of the time, the 7th line of 5 lessons will be used for group activities, possibly including Ball Practice, Driver Education, retreat, physical activity, VCE course counselling and career planning. The details will be determined during 2017.
- 3.5. The 7th line of 5 lessons can also be used for year level Masses as deemed appropriate.
- 3.6. Year 10 students retain the ability to apply to undertake VCE and VET subjects.
- 3.7. The pastoral lesson will be retained as discussed for years 11 and 12 above.
- 3.8. The electives to be offered will be proposed by each Learning Area.
- 3.9. Foundation English, Foundation Mathematics and Foundation Science, along with guided choice of electives, will address the needs of students who may wish to proceed to a VCAL pathway.
- 3.10. All students must complete at least one unit of Science, the exception being students who may wish to proceed to a VCAL pathway who may apply for exemption. Those who wish to study Science at VCE level would be expected to complete two units of year 10 elective Science.
- 3.11. The subject Career Development Skills will be discontinued.
- 3.12. The possibility of offering an English group for high achievers should be explored.
- 3.13. All units 1&2 subjects should be reviewed to determine whether acceleration is appropriate.
- 3.14. Mathematics offerings and pathways at year 10 should be reviewed.
- 3.15. The pedagogy at year 10 should be reviewed to support the transition from year 9.

4. Year 9

The following organization of lessons at **year 9** is proposed.

Subject	No of Lessons	Year or Semester	Comment
Religious Education	5	year	Renamed to reflect content
English	9	year	Prefer singles in morning
Mathematics	9	year	Prefer singles in morning
Science	7	year	
Café Emmaus	4	semester	Alternate with PBL
PBL (HASS or STEM)	4	semester	Alternate with Café Emmaus
Health & PE	5	year	One lesson for Health
Electives	4 x 5 lessons	semester	See 3.7 below
Pastoral Care	1	year	

- 4.1. Year 9 will remain at the Emmaus campus. Transfer of staff between campuses should be encouraged in order to ensure all learning areas are appropriately covered.
- 4.2. The year 9 timetable should be developed by the college timetabling process.
- 4.3. Café Emmaus will be retained as a compulsory semester long subject for all students. In the alternate semester students will complete a HASS or STEM PBL unit.
- 4.4. Mathematics classes will ideally be blocked in groups of four on the basis of House affiliation to allow identification and acceleration of an advanced group, preparing them for the option of VCE Mathematics in year 10.
- 4.5. Electives will be semester length to ensure adequate depth of study.
- 4.6. Electives will be offered as proposed by the Learning Areas. Proposals which integrate more than one Learning Area in a single elective are encouraged.
- 4.7. Students must complete at least two Humanities electives. Ideally there will be at least four humanities offered at Year 9.
- 4.8. Students who wish to undertake a language must select this elective in both semesters.
- 4.9. It is intended that these recommendations would invigorate the philosophy of the Year 9 program to focus on applied and hands on learning, fully utilising the flexible physical spaces which are available. The option for integrated curriculum at Year 9 should continue to be explored, particularly within the elective subjects.

5. Year 8

The following organization of lessons at **year 8** is proposed.

Subject	No of Lessons	Year or Semester	Comment
Religious Education	4	year	Single lessons
English	9	year	Priority for singles in am No library lesson
Mathematics	8	year	Prefer singles in am
Science	6	year	One double and singles
PBL - STEM	4	semester	Double lessons
PBL – HASS	4	Semester	Double lessons
Health & PE	6	year	Two lessons for Health
Humanities	5	year	Integrated
Languages	5	year	Single lessons
Arts	6	year	Double lessons, see 4.3 below
Technology	6	year	Double lessons, see 4.4 below
Pastoral Care	1	year	

- 5.1. When a review of the Religious Education curriculum is complete, consideration for the development of a pilot program to enhance understanding of Catholic perspectives in other subject. This could be achieved through the PLT structure.
- 5.2. If possible, Languages should either be taught in blocked groups of four classes to allow two tiers of each language or included in a broader blocking arrangement at two different tiers. It may be necessary to include a third 'beginners' tier for students who wish to swap languages but this would be based on demand. This Languages structure will not be introduced until 2019 as the progression of the year 7 2018 students.
- 5.3. Students will undertake one Arts subjects per semester, selecting from Drama, Music, Visual Arts, Media Arts. This will require blocking of classes.
- 5.4. Students will undertake one Technology subject per semester, selecting from Wood, Metal, Food, Systems, Digital and Textiles. This will require blocking of classes.

6. Year 7

The following organization of lessons at **year 7** is proposed.

Subject	No of Lessons	Year or Semester	Comment
Religious Education	5	year	Single lessons
English	8	year	Priority for singles in am No library lesson
Mathematics	8	year	Prefer singles in am
Science	6	year	One double and singles
PBL - STEM	4	semester	Double lessons
PBL – HASS	4	semester	Double lessons
Health & PE	6	year	Two lessons for Health
Humanities	5	year	Integrated
Languages	5	year	Single lessons
Arts	6	year	Double lessons, see 5.3 below
Technology	6	year	Double lessons, see 5.4 below
Pastoral Care	1	year	

- 6.1. When a review of the Religious Education curriculum is complete, consideration for the development of a pilot program to enhance understanding of Catholic perspectives in other subject. This could be achieved through the PLT structure.
- 6.2. Students will select one language to study before they commence at Notre Dame. If possible, Languages should either be taught in blocked groups of four classes to allow two tiers of each language or included in a broader blocking arrangement at two different tiers.
- 6.3. Students will undertake two Arts subjects per semester, each for an equivalent amount of time, rotating through Visual Arts, Media Arts, Drama and Music.
- 6.4. Students will undertake two Technology subjects per semester, each for an equivalent time, rotating through Wood/Metal, Food, Digital and Textiles.
- 6.5. The pedagogy at year 7 should be reviewed to align more closely with that of the Catholic primary feeder schools. For example, this Review should address collaborative learning, assessment practices and the use of ICT.