



Bancroft's Preparatory School

Our Curriculum Policy

Dec 2014

SECTION 6

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Bancroft's Prep School aims to fulfil the potential of each pupil, offering a broad and challenging curriculum with effective feedback to drive children's progress. This policy states in detail the ways we do this.

6.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At Bancroft's Prep we aim:

- To have high expectations of the children and ourselves;
- To raise levels of attainment for all pupils, enabling them to achieve their personal best;
- To develop confident and enquiring learners who are able to make informed choices;
- To provide a wide range of learning experiences that challenge, stimulate and promote thinking and learning;
- To develop self-esteem and personal responsibility, with respect for the feelings and needs of others;
- To ensure equality of opportunity and access to all, regardless of gender, race, special needs, class or faith;
- To provide a happy and safe environment in which to work;
- To promote a thoughtful attitude to the immediate and wider environment.

6.3 TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Bancroft's children in the Lower Phase (Years 3 and 4) are taught primarily by their class teacher. Learning is placed in context and where possible links are made across the curriculum, ensuring a creative approach. This also has the added advantage of allowing the

children to spend the majority of the day with the same teacher. The children have specialist teachers for Games, PE, Art and Music. The timetable allows for a certain degree of flexibility to facilitate this cross-curricular approach to learning.

In the Upper Phase (Years 5 and 6) the children continue to be based in class groups, and the timetable is planned to allow the children to be taught by a larger number of specialist teachers.

- At Bancroft's we recognise that the following are aspects of good teaching:
- A clear focus and purpose to lessons;
- Lessons that are well paced and provide stimuli;
- Well organised resources;
- Appropriate and targeted questioning;
- Teaching matched to assessment;
- Planning informed by assessment;
- Constructive oral and written feedback;
- An environment in which speaking, listening and other basic skills are an integral part of the curriculum;
- Opportunities to consolidate previous knowledge and skills;
- Quality of relationships;
- Knowledge of the subject;
- Knowledge of the child;
- Use of stimuli to engage and involve pupils;
- Shared aims, with the child, support staff and parents;
- Work differentiated according to pupils' needs;
- Clear, high expectations.

At Bancroft's we also understand that effective learning takes place when pupils:

- Understand and take responsibility for their own learning journey;
- Show they understand by doing something they have not done before;
- Apply previous learning in a new context;
- Clearly enjoy the learning process;
- Share their knowledge with others;
- Understand what needs to be done to successfully complete the task;
- Receive constructive feedback;

- Have opportunities to work in depth;
- Are given opportunities to act upon feedback.

6.4 CURRICULUM ORGANISATION

The core subjects of English, Maths and Science are given the most teaching time. In addition, Geography, History, Religious Studies, Music, Art, French, PSHE, PE and Games are also taught throughout the Prep School. ICT is taught integrally through all aspects of the curriculum.

Prep School Subject Allocation 2014-15				
Subject	Alpha	Beta	Prep 1	Prep 2
Maths	8	8	10	11
English	10	10	12	10
Science	4	4	4	4
French	2	2	2	2
History Geography RS	4	4	4	4
Computing	2	2	2	2
Art	2	2	2	2
Music	2	2	2	2
Drama	0	0	1	1
Creative Thinking	0	0	0	1
Games	3	3	3	3
PE/Swimming	4	4	2	2
PSHE	1	1	1	1
Form	3	3	5	5
Total	45	45	50	50

6.5 PLANNING

Teachers plan together in Year Group and Subject Teams. This gives teachers the opportunity to share ideas and ensure continuity and progression across the year group.

The curriculum is planned effectively to:

- Provide continuity and progression for all;
- Promote enjoyment of learning and commitment to learning and achieving;
- Provide rich and varied activities;
- Encourage best possible progress and highest attainment for all pupils;
- Enable pupils to make connections across different areas of learning;
- Help pupils to think creatively and solve problems;
- Help pupils to learn and work both independently and collaboratively;
- Enable pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities;
- Enable pupils to acquire and develop a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding.

Subject Leaders are responsible for the Progression of Study and the Medium Term Plans across all year groups. Teachers then use these as a platform for their weekly planning.

6.6 ASSESSMENT

The objectives of assessment in Bancroft's Preparatory School are:

- To enable children to demonstrate what they know and understand;
- To enable children to recognise the standards to aim for, and to understand what they need to do to improve their work;
- To identify next steps to allow teachers to plan effectively reflecting the needs of the children;
- To consistently monitor the progress of all pupils;
- To identify those pupils who are making more or less progress than expected so extension and intervention programmes can be put in place;
- To provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their child's learning
- To provide the Head teacher, Management Team and Governors with information that allows them to make judgements about the effectiveness of the school.

Assessment for learning lies at the heart of our assessment policy at Bancroft's. Children learn best when they understand and take responsibility for their own learning journey. They are able to pinpoint what they have done successfully and what they still need to do to

improve. Children are then able to articulate this to their teachers, parents and other interested parties. Children are actively involved with setting learning objectives and generating the success criteria for a piece of work. Assessment of learning also takes place through formal testing.

6.6.1. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING (FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

At the end of every lesson children evaluate their learning against the learning objective and their own success criteria. They write a comment in red pen, detailing what they have done well, and how they think they could improve. Teachers then respond in green pen, building up a dialogue between teacher and child, which celebrates successes and highlights areas for improvement. Both children and teachers initial each other's comments to acknowledge they have been read/acted upon. This method of formative assessment puts children at the centre of their learning and allows teachers to plan their next steps. In subjects where written outcomes are not evident, for example, Games, PE and Music, this dialogue takes the form of a discussion.

Teachers use highlighters to provide children with an instant visual of how they are doing. Yellow highlights indicate examples of the learning objective being met, or evidence that elements of the success criteria have been achieved. Orange highlights show areas for improvement. This form of marking takes place within all subjects with written outcomes, apart from Maths.

The use of peer marking allows children to assess each other's work in the same way that they would critique their own.

Marking symbols:

T: target.

OF: oral feedback given, with a brief explanation of what was discussed.

OA: objective achieved.

SC: success criteria.

Mistaek: highlight a spelling mistake in orange.

SP: for spelling errors, which are then corrected and copied three times by the child.

^: to indicate a word has been missed out.

l: to indicate a new sentence is needed.

//: to indicate a new paragraph is needed.

©: in the margin, to indicate a capital letter is needed somewhere on the line, e.g. titles and names.

P: in the margin to indicate incorrect or missing punctuation.

6.6.2. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING (SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

This involves judging children's performance against national standards and expected norms for pupils within our school. Teachers may make these judgements at the end of a unit of work, of a half term or term, or at the end of the year. Test results in the core subjects of Mathematics, English and Science show children's performance in terms of National Curriculum levels giving us information to allow us to compare their attainment against expected national norms for their peers. Other test results will demonstrate the children's understanding of work covered and provide us with data to compare their attainment with that of other pupils in our school.

On entry into the Alpha year the children undertake age appropriate tests in English and Mathematics. These tests give a National Curriculum sub level and a National Age Standardised Score.

By the end of the Alpha year and then in subsequent years the pupils undertake the test for a year above their chronological age. Age appropriate tests have proved to be of limited use when identifying gaps in children's learning and grouping children effectively. This is a selective school and many children were performing very highly in these tests.

Age standardised scores can be derived from these raw scores. The results of the tests are recorded on the central system by the subject teachers. Test papers are analysed, if appropriate, using a gap analysis to inform teachers' planning

Results will be analysed by the Director of Studies and subject teachers and looked at alongside teacher assessment to identify any pupil performing above or below the expected norm. This will allow intervention or extension programmes to be put in place to enhance the children's learning and to ensure they are working in appropriate groupings in subjects that are ability grouped.

The test papers, assessed pieces of independent writing and other samples of work are stored in the Individual Pupil Assessment Files.

6.7 MONITORING AND INTERVENTION

Children's attainment and progress is constantly monitored as part of normal classroom practice.

Monitoring informs day-to-day planning for class groups, smaller groups and individuals. We believe effective monitoring will:

- promote higher standards by improving the quality of teaching and learning
- have a positive effect on pupils' motivation and self-esteem
- give clear indications of children's strengths and weaknesses

Our policy ensures pupils, parents and staff are fully informed about a child's progress and achievement.

6.7.1 MONITORING OF PUPILS

Monitoring of pupils' work is primarily the responsibility of the subject teacher, who should be looking for inconsistencies in written and oral ability as well as those pupils who are 'underachieving' or receiving consistently low marks. Children who are performing significantly above their peers also need to be identified. Monitoring of progress is an ongoing process and should be used in the formal and informal appraisal of each child in the classroom.

Any concerns regarding a pupil by a subject teacher should be discussed with the form teacher. The form teacher should then refer the child to either the pastoral or academic team, who will decide whether or not to use the Intervention Programme for the pupil..

6.7.2 LEARNING SUPPORT

Learning support is provided for those pupils who are achieving either significantly above or below the expected levels for pupils of their age. We are a selective school, and the majority of the pupils are working at levels well above the national norms. This means it is essential we compare a child's attainment and progress against those expected for pupils at our school and not solely against nationally expected norms. A detailed outline of Learning Support can be found in our Learning Support Policy.

6.7.3 MONITORING OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Director of Studies is responsible for monitoring teaching, planning and marking across all subjects.

Monitoring of Teaching

- In conjunction with Year Group Leaders, the Director of Studies is responsible for updating the Yearly Overviews.
- In conjunction with Subject Leaders, the Director of Studies is responsible for continually reviewing Progression of Study to ensure continuity and progression.
- Schemes of Work should be reviewed regularly in light of current practice and cross-curricular learning.
- In conjunction with Core Subject Leaders, the Director of Studies should ensure Weekly Plans reflect the Schemes of Work.
- Book looks will be carried out annually across all the year groups and all curriculum areas.
- Opportunities should be provided for informal peer observations of subject coordinators to demonstrate good practice as part of ongoing professional development.
- The Head / Director of Studies will monitor teaching through lesson observations across the year groups the focus of which will be agreed prior to the observation

6.8 REPORTING

We consider reporting back to parents about their children's progress and achievement is essential to allow parents to know how their child is progressing and ensures that education remains a joint venture between home and school

The information provided either in the written reports or during a Parent Consultation should always include positive comments about what the pupil has achieved but also provide an honest reflection of a child's learning and progress both in relation to the pupil's performance within their year group at our school and against nationally expected norms.

Each half term, all parents will receive some indication of how their child is progressing.

- In the Autumn and Spring terms, each year group has parental consultation meetings, allowing parents to meet and receive feedback from teachers.
- Every half term children are graded on their attitude across all subjects and at the end of term on attitude and achievement.
- A full written report, including grades, across all subjects will be sent out at the end of the academic year.

The class teacher's report should contain a general observation on the individual child. This will include comments on academic progress, attitude to work, behavioural or social issues and the extent to which the child is involved in extra-curricular activities in school.

It is essential that the grade matches the comment and is a true reflection of the pupil's progress. Reports should provide parents with an honest appraisal of their child's attitude and attainment over the report period and include comments on improvement or lack of progress in areas significantly mentioned in previous reports. The report should contain achievable targets.

Grades are allocated as follows:

Attitude

Grade	Descriptor
A	Excellent
B	Good
C	Variable
D	Poor

Achievement

Grade	Descriptor	Expanded Meaning
6	Excellent	Has produced outstanding work
5	Very good	Has an impressive grasp of the subject
4	Good	Has coped well in most respects
3	Competent	Has a sound grasp of the subject, with some minor difficulties
2	Some concerns	Has consistently experienced difficulties, giving rise to concern over progress
1	Major concerns	Has serious difficulties with the subject

Parents' Evenings

These are important meetings for parents to discuss their children's progress and ideas for future development.

- Teaching staff should provide parents with a realistic understanding of their child's ability and progress.
- If there are difficulties, these should be addressed when they become apparent.
- Teachers should make themselves available to talk to parents at other times as appropriate.
- Regular contact should be made with parents of children with significant difficulties, providing frank detail of difficulties, support given, future targets and any help that can be given by parents.

6.9 HOMEWORK POLICY

Introduction

Regular homework is set throughout the school. Homework is designed to establish good study habits and reinforce work being done in class. It provides the pupils the early experience of working to long and short-term deadlines.

The nature of homework will vary between year groups, classes and individuals, as well as topics of study. However, the School expects that reading should become a regular part of each child's life and in order that good reading habits are formed, this should happen daily. Each pupil will be given a Homework Diary at the beginning of the year and all homework should be written down. This also acts as a source of communication between Home and School.

Alphas and Betas

- In Alphas and Betas, homework is set that consolidates the learning that has taken place during lessons
- In addition to 15 minutes of daily reading, pupils will be set one other daily task which should take approximately 30 minutes to complete
- Pupils may be set a weekly or extended piece of work which can be in any subject
- The class teachers should monitor the amount of homework that is issued
- On some occasions children may be asked to do some simple research to prepare them for the next lesson.

Prep 1 and 2

- Homework will be expected to take up to one hour (including 15 minutes of reading) to complete the tasks per a night
- Pupils may also be set a weekly or extended piece of work which can be in any subject
- The class teachers should monitor the amount of homework that is issued and the deadlines for these pieces of work
- At this stage, pupils should have developed good skills that will allow them to work independently
- In Prep 2 the pressure of external exams determines the homework at various points of the academic year

Homework is not set during holiday periods unless specific tasks have been identified for individual children, or in preparation for Prep 2 examinations.

6.10 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Classrooms are the responsibility of both the teachers and the pupils. Successful classroom organisation contributes to effective learning. It is generally agreed that:

- Children have their own desk space which they are encouraged to keep tidy;
- Pupils are encouraged to take ownership of their own classroom, alongside their teachers;
- Displays reflect, celebrate and support children's work;
- At least one display in each classroom is to be a learning wall to illustrate the learning journey through a unit of work.

Class routines should encourage good work habits:

- The use of sharp pencils;
- Pens can be used when the teacher decides that the individual's writing is neat and mature enough;
- The use of rulers;
- All work dated;
- Resources correctly accessed, used and returned;
- Materials properly cleaned and restored after use.

Resources

- Classrooms are equipped with books and resources appropriate for age range/subjects taught. Specialist resources will be stored in appropriate resource cupboards.
- These will be regularly audited by the subject coordinator, and consumables will be replenished when necessary. Subject coordinators will make resource requests in their annual budget bids.
- Pupils will be taught how to use equipment safely and with care and respect.
- Resources will reflect cultural diversity and have consideration of gender and equal opportunities issues.

6 .11 MUSIC LESSONS

Individual instrumental lessons are offered by the School. Pupils involved should request permission to leave class lessons. It is helpful if class teachers put up a list of names and times on the white board at the beginning of the School day that are clearly visible and act as a reminder to all

A rotating timetable, organised by the Director of Music, should ensure pupils do not repeatedly miss the same part of the same lesson in consecutive weeks

Any problems should be referred directly to the Director of Music.

6.11.1 Equal Opportunities

The School Curriculum is planned and delivered to fully support the age, ability and aptitude of every child. We celebrate every child and enhance learning through equality of opportunity. For further details please see the Equal Opportunities Policy (5vii)